

“PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR PERTH IN 2031”

Motion

Resumed from 11 May on the following motion moved by Hon Ken Travers —

- (1) That the Council note that —
 - (a) the Liberal–National government released in July 2011 a “Draft for Consultation” of their plan “Public Transport for Perth in 2031”;
 - (b) the draft plan proposed two transformational projects by 2020 —
 - (i) the fast-tracking of the northern suburbs railway extension to Yanchep; and
 - (ii) construction of a central northern corridor/Curtin/UWA light rail;
 - (c) the draft plan identified that the following infrastructure was required in the next five to 10 years —
 - (i) a new rail station at Karnup (near Paganoni Road); and
 - (ii) upgrades to Canning Bridge and Stirling Stations;
 - (d) the draft plan proposed a number of on-road bus rapid transit projects be built by 2020, commencing with a bus rapid transit system between Ellenbrook and Bassendean and across to Morley.
- (2) That the Council calls on the government to —
 - (a) explain why it has taken two years to release the final version of this plan;
 - (b) outline whether it is still committed to the projects and the time lines outlined in the draft plan; and
 - (c) provide detailed reasons, including passenger modelling, for any changes it has made to priority projects or their timing.

HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan) [1.05 pm]: I spoke at some length on this motion when this house last sat, so it should be clear to members that I support it wholeheartedly. I commend Hon Ken Travers for putting it on the notice paper and for having the foresight to arrange it to be debated in the weeks that we are looking at the state budget. This is the time when we are looking at how much money has been invested in public transport by the Barnett government. I will have an opportunity on Thursday—which is tomorrow—to reflect upon the budget. I will be doing so in part in relation to transport and what the budget has delivered for transport. That will be an opportunity for me to speak in more detail about exactly what we hope to see in the next little while and whether the budget before us delivers on the transport vision that we were hoping to see.

It should be clear to members in this chamber and to the public that the Greens have developed a public transport plan that is quite integrated. I put a bit of its detail on the record the last time I spoke. I was in the middle of speaking about the cycling network. The reason this is relevant to the motion before us is that we have been in a vacuum of policy for public transport. It has inhibited not only the development of our transport system, but also the city around it. It is a critical part of reaching the targets that we need for density and also the framework for public transport—they work hand in hand. The delay of the “Public Transport for Perth in 2031” plan has had impacts throughout the metropolitan region; in fact, it has had impacts for planning in this state. Had a plan been in place much earlier, we might have been able to capture some of the federal funding that was up for grabs through Infrastructure Australia. We might have been able to put in place some of the dreams and visions that I think all parties have, such as a greater transport network on rail and to be able to extend our heavy rail system and expand some of the bus network into rapid and frequent buses. Also, most importantly, and I think most visionary, it would have put us on a front footing for a future light rail network, which Western Australia still has not established. All these aspects of a public transport system need to work in an integrated fashion with other networks. One aspect that the Greens have proposed is the cycling network and the establishment of cycling infrastructure not only along principal pathways, but also in local areas to be able to get to the supermarket, for example, when people want to ride a bike instead of getting in a car. Alternatives to hopping into cars all the time is part of reducing congestion. I had concluded my remarks by talking about the draft transport plan for cycling that is part of this overall vision that the Greens have. The foundation is already there. We already have 300 kilometres of shared paths—bike freeways that are not shared with pedestrians—and 2 000 kilometres of local bike routes that are well signed and safe for cyclists. We have already captured a great deal of detail about where the gaps are in the current infrastructure. I recently asked a question about the principal shared path between Cottesloe and Fremantle. I will ask another question about that in the estimates

committee. To complement the existing network, we need to create a new network of 1 800 kilometres of safe routes to schools, 2 000 kilometres of protected, cross-town bike paths to enable cyclists to travel from any point to any other point in the Perth metropolitan area, and a new network of 120 kilometres of greenways to link urban bushlands and wetlands to recreational areas. We would like to see Perth become a city with a world-class cycling network that will rival some of the best in the world. To realise this vision, we have already begun mapping where Perth's cycling network's blackspots are. We have a bike blackspots application that people can download to their personal devices such as smartphones. It now works on Android phones as well as iPhones. People have already reported hundreds of issues with the current cycling infrastructure. With just three per cent of the state's transport revenue, these gaps could be addressed and further paths built for the benefit of cyclists and road users. Many of these issues were reported within my own electorate. Road users will benefit from having designated areas for cyclists and these areas will ensure that a safe distance is maintained between the cyclists and cars and other motor vehicles, which is something that members know I have long campaigned for.

The other piece of this puzzle is infill development. We would like to transform our congested and car-dominated roads into a network of high streets, urban villages and liveable local neighbourhoods that are attractive places for people to live, work and play. Redevelopment and regeneration of these areas along public transport corridors would provide more housing choice, jobs, services and local amenities to all people who live in Perth. The Greens have undertaken studies that show that Perth could accommodate more than 250 000 new dwellings along just seven of 18 identified public transit corridors. Medium density infill in Fremantle, Nedlands, Vincent, Claremont, South Perth, Belmont, Stirling, Victoria Park, Armadale and Cockburn would more than exceed the infill target of 124 000 new homes by 2031. This does not always mean that we would want high-rise towers, but infill comprising a mix of low-rise apartment blocks of five to eight stories and terraced houses of two to three stories. I would like to see these buildings completed with genuine community engagement and consummate design to encourage new, better and more sustainable ways of planning and governance to increase the viability of communities and hence public transport in our city.

The budget has illustrated, yet again, that roads will dominate the future of this city if we continue down the same path with the same decision-makers in place, without the public transport plan that we have been waiting for. Really, it is too late. The government has already replied to this motion and said that we may have the plan at some future date, but it is really too late. We would like to see much more progressive development occur and it needs to have certainty where the public transport routes will be. That is not too much to ask; other cities around Australia are delivering it.

To sum up, we already have a viable public transport network plan across the Perth metropolitan area, developed by the Greens in consultation with the public. We are looking at public transport, but it also requires the courage and the vision to think beyond just the public transport network. That vision has to create liveable communities along public transport routes to ensure their viability and increase prosperity and productivity. The vision for public transport that I and my Greens colleagues have includes building necessary infrastructure such as light rail, better-connected heavy rail, and a world-class cycling network to promote Perth internationally as a city of sustainability and liveability. That, Mr President, is what we need to see in Perth's public transport network and that is what we hoped this government would deliver—hopefully, the next government will.

HON PETER KATSAMBANIS (North Metropolitan) [1.15 pm]: It is a pleasure to finally get to speak on this motion. It has effectively been on the notice paper for three years. It is something that piqued my curiosity when I first saw it appear on the notice paper. I have been waiting very, very patiently to get the opportunity to speak on it.

Hon Stephen Dawson: I'm glad it came up before you leave!

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Perhaps it speaks to the processes of this place that it takes a long time for motions to be debated. Perhaps it is something that we need to look at in the future. I am glad that Hon Stephen Dawson said thank goodness I got the chance to speak to the motion before I evaporate into thin air. The chances are, when members look at the notice paper, that most of the motions will never be debated—not now; not ever. It really is a waste of resources but that is the process that we have to live with at the moment.

I have looked forward to speaking on this motion because it is about planning for transport infrastructure, which is a critically important issue for the people of Western Australia. The first thing that has to be put on record about planning for appropriate infrastructure—be it transport or any other form of infrastructure—is that any sort of comprehensive plan that is realistic and genuinely achievable takes time. Nobody is making excuses for how long it may have taken the government to deliver a public transport plan. Quite clearly, the lead speaker for the government, the parliamentary secretary and member for Agricultural Region, Hon Jim Chown, provided some very sound reasoning why, in ever-changing times, it is important to hasten slowly and make sure that we get

things right. These are ever-changing times for finances and projected population growth, and, with that, the spread of the urban conglomeration of Perth is occurring—whether it is larger or smaller and the like—as we slowly but surely change our planning regulations. Essentially, the message is that Rome was not built in a day and we should not expect a comprehensive transport plan to be built in a day. When we are talking about comprehensive transport planning, let us remember what probably was put together in a day or possibly even a quick afternoon—the opposition’s Metronet plan that it trumped out before the last election.

Several members interjected.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: That plan is the perfect example of why it really is essential to apply rigour to the development process of any such plan and for us to take our time to get it right. I am not sure whether opposition members have done that because I note in passing that, every now and again, they come up with the son or daughter of Metronet, “Metronet 2.0” or whatever it is, in their plans for the future. I am confident that, when it comes to comprehensive transport planning, the people of the state of Western Australia have not forgotten the opposition’s woeful attempt at the last election. Just in case members opposite have forgotten, it is really important to put on the record some of the history behind the plan because people should not forget. When it comes up at a future election, people should remember the holes in the original project and look for holes in any new plan that the opposition trumps out. Perhaps, in passing, I may offer some constructive suggestions to the opposition. Let me assure members opposite that it is not my intention but, in highlighting the flaws, quite obviously, perhaps they might go back and look at them themselves. The first thing we have to look at, because it is the one that people remember most, is the much-vaunted train line to the airport. I note in some of the opposition’s statements that it continues to be a priority for them.

In some statements the opposition has recently made, it claims it is its number one priority. I am glad the opposition has finally come onboard with that. When the opposition released its Metronet plan, back in December 2012, there were no costings and no time frames. However, the plan showed a train line to the airport and with no costings and time frames, it was nothing more than a colourful wish list. Later, the opposition came up with a more detailed proposal for its train line to the airport, this phantom train line to the airport. Let us look at some of the specifics of that project. The opposition claimed that its plan maximised opportunities for urban consolidation, which really all it did was copy what the government had announced in 2012 about extending a train line, not just to the airport, but through to Forrestfield to service a growing part of our metropolitan area. To supposedly encourage urban consolidation, the opposition placed a train station, which it named “Airport West”, right in the middle of Tonkin Highway. I am trying to work out how placing a train station in the middle of a highway is maximising opportunities for urban consolidation, but that is what the opposition did. Then it had a Perth Airport station, and it was planned to be built about one kilometre from the airport terminals.

Hon Ken Travers interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: In its document, the opposition stated that it was relying on Perth Airport to sometime in the future build what it called a “dedicated internal people movement system” to get people to the actual terminals.

Hon Simon O’Brien: This is where the Greens’ bike path comes into its own.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Maybe, Hon Simon O’Brien, a dedicated internal people movement system might be a bike path, but how, in goodness name, someone with some bags, perhaps a few kids, a pram and a car seat that they might need at the other end could put their kids on a bike to take them from the train station one kilometre to the airport, is something that defies logic. We are talking about the Greens, of course, so defying logic is their specialty. The airport train station in Metronet that the opposition proposed relied on a third party, the airport, one day coming up with a people movement system, something out of *The Jetsons* perhaps, or a monorail or something like that. To add insult to injury, the route that the Labor Party opposition proposed was either at grade or in trenches that would have had to sterilise major parts of the land corridor running through the airport precinct, on its long and windy way through to Forrestfield. When we look at the long and windy route that the opposition had proposed in its own media statement on 29 January 2013, it claimed WA Labor’s airport rail line would allow people living in Forrestfield and Kalamunda to make the journey to the city within 40 minutes. When I said a long and windy road, I definitely meant long—40 minutes! The Liberal Party plan, the government’s plan that is currently being planned and built, will get people from Forrestfield station to the city in 20 minutes—in half that time. Metronet’s supposed airport link was a total mess. It is the sort of half-baked idea that comes with back-of-the-envelope calculations and you-beaut ideas worked out in a moment, an hour or a day and packaged up as some sort of comprehensive plan. The people of Western Australia should remember that when the snake-oil salesmen on the other side come around at election time again and try to spruik their latest version of a transport plan. Again, I refer to the opposition’s statement. It is interesting that the

“Perth Airport Rail Line” policy document of the opposition, before the last election, had this quote in it. It states —

The Barnett Government has proposed an airport rail line, but its plans are so poorly planned that the project will be prohibitively expensive and unlikely to ever be built.

If members want to know about “poorly planned”, look at the Metronet plan, because that was poorly planned. If members want to know about “unlikely to be built”, guess what? It is being built and it will be delivered for all people who use the airport and for the people of Forrestfield and into Kalamunda and the hills area, to open up that area for exciting new opportunities for local residents. We are building it and that highly partisan political statement of the Labor Party in its policy document was clearly a furphy to mislead the people of Western Australia.

That is just the planning of the airport rail line. Let us move to the costings, to show once more what a rushed, hurried plan can do and how it is a bad outcome for the people of Western Australia. In the policy document, the Labor Party declared —

The estimated total cost of the Perth Airport rail line is \$731.5 million, including rail and road infrastructure for the project (excluding rail cars).

That was the quote. The Labor Party also declared —

It will be the first project of WA Labor’s \$3.8 billion METRONET priority program ...

After a great deal of public pressure in the context of an election campaign, there were demands that the opposition add some substance to these fanciful ideas, these back-of-the-envelope calculations. Finally, after a lot of pressure and a lot of resistance, the opposition submitted its election commitments to Treasury to be costed. Guess what Treasury found? Did Treasury tell the opposition that \$731.5 million was realistic? Not at all. Did it tell the opposition it was just a little bit off the mark and it perhaps needed to shave and measure its project a bit more? No. Treasury said that the opposition had got it horribly, horribly wrong. The Treasury costing was \$1.466 billion for the Perth Airport line that the Labor Party proposed—the long and windy road to Forrestfield, carving up useful airport land, causing major disruption and taking 40 minutes to get people to their destination rather than 20 minutes as the line that is actually being built will do. It was an absolute blowout; Treasury said it was a blowout of \$734.5 million. The gap between what the Labor Party tried to trick the voters of Western Australia into believing the project would cost and what Treasury said it would cost was higher than the Labor Party’s estimated cost by \$3 million. The real cost, as exposed by Treasury, was double what the Labor Party claimed. If that is a comprehensive transport plan, in which one rail line proposed within it will end up costing double what the opposition says it is, it is an absolute joke. It is not comprehensive. It is not real; it is just a sham political document to get the opposition through an election period.

The funny thing is that when that was revealed by Treasury, opposition members could have swallowed their pride and said, “Sorry, we got it wrong. We accept Treasury’s figures and we will move on.” They did not do that. The Leader of the Opposition in the other place, Hon Mark McGowan, went on the ABC *Drive* program on 1 March 2013 and had a chat to Russell Woolf who was the presenter of that program at the time. The Leader of the Opposition took issue with Treasury and picked a fight with the Under Treasurer on that radio program.

Rather than accept the reality of the Treasury costing, Mark McGowan and the Labor Party tried to shoot down the messenger, the Under Treasurer, who —

Hon Ken Travers: The argument, my good friend, was about whether it was in 2012 dollars or escalated. Tim Marney was right and the Treasurer was wrong.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I will get to that. I thank the member for helping me to move on to my next point—and I will.

Mark McGowan wanted to pick a fight with the Under Treasurer. He tried to suggest that the discrepancy was due to some form of escalation. When we talk about escalation, let us go back to the original policy document—Labor’s own policy document. Labor stated that its airport rail policy referred to the estimated total cost, which would be \$731.5 million. Total cost to any reasonable, normal thinking Western Australian means total cost! It includes figures for escalation and externalities and assorted things like contingencies that are built into any proper planning process. Total cost does not mean total cost less escalation or total cost before escalation; it means total cost. The Labor Party was trying to be tricky with its words to hide the fact that it had got it horribly wrong.

It is funny that opposition members always want to hammer the government for the idea of fully costed projects. Quite clearly, opposition members do not understand what fully costed means because if they did, they would not try—even today, as Hon Ken Travers is doing by interjection—to argue that total cost does not include

escalation. Smoke and mirrors might work in Labor Party backrooms, but it does not work and it does not wash with the Western Australian public. Clearly, we need to have this issue on the record. We need to continue to have this discussion. It is very, very important that we have this discussion because, come the next election, the same people who got it so horribly wrong last time—who did not plan or cost it right last time—are going to come up with new you-beaut plans. They are going to draw lines on maps and all of a sudden Perth will magically transform into a city with a subway like New York or London and bike paths everywhere and fairies and butterflies and all the other stuff that Labor and the Greens want to show in their pretty pictures. But the pretty picture will never ever translate to reality for the people of Western Australia.

Hon Ken Travers interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Hon Ken Travers, you moved this motion and I recall from last week that you made your comments in relative silence. I think we can extend that courtesy to every other member.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Thank you, Mr President. It is sometimes enlightening when we start picking holes in the opposition's argument that rather than listen to it and again accept it, they just try to shout us down because they just do not like it. They do not like debate; they like to assert —

The PRESIDENT: Order! I made the point that interjections get to a point at which they get unruly, but I must admit from the Chair that I will have less sympathy if interjections are invited. I will make that comment.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I will get back on to Treasury.

Visitors — Midvale Primary School

The PRESIDENT: While there is a mini-break in proceedings, I welcome into the gallery students from Midvale Primary School. Welcome to the Legislative Council and a debate on transport issues.

Debate Resumed

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I hope that we can enlighten the students and that they go away with a better understanding of how we work in this place.

Back to Treasury's costing of Labor's Metronet public transport plan. As we know, Treasury is an august, independent body that works with the figures that it has to come up with its best possible estimates based on experience and knowledge in this area. I am pretty sure that the opposition wants Treasury's costing of its Metronet public transport plan buried deep down in a black hole and to never see the light of day but, never fear, I always manage to tuck these documents away for a rainy day. Let us go to some of the comments Treasury made about Metronet to show once again how when they get it wrong, they get it horribly wrong in this area. Thank goodness these people were not in any position to implement their horribly wrong plans. On page 5 the Treasury costing advice states —

OTHER ISSUES

- Capacity of the network:
 - Assuming the new Ellenbrook, Perth Airport and North Circle lines each carry 4 trains per hour (TPH), and peak services on the Midland line are maintained at the current 6 TPH, a total of 18 TPH will operate on the line between Bayswater and Perth.
 - The PTA advises that running 18 TPH on the Midland line —

This is very important —

would significantly reduce the reliability of the service (i.e. on time running of trains) which carries an associated safety risk. Should the reliability levels be unacceptable, there are a number of options which could be investigated to address this. These include improved signalling, duplication of the track, or the purchase of additional rolling stock (to increase the number of railcars per train). All of these options would have a significant financial impact which is not included in the costing.

Treasury clearly stated that if the opposition had put together its mad plan, it would lead to real capacity issues on the line between Bayswater and Perth that would need to be fixed and that it would cost a lot of money that the public of Western Australia had not been told about. If the extra money, which the opposition did not have and did not tell the public about, was not spent, it would lead to some serious reliability issues that carry an associated safety risk. That is as comprehensive a putdown of the crazy Metronet plan that can be possibly found. Effectively, Treasury stated that the Labor Party's plan would either lead to increased inefficiency and increased safety risk or it would have to find a hell of a lot of money it had not told anyone about. I will go on, because Treasury was quite interested in what the Labor Party had stated. I quote —

- The PTA has advised that the Joondalup line between Balcatta and Perth will be able to accommodate these services initially, based on current demand projections. However, the addition of the North Circle line will impact on the capacity of the Joondalup line to accommodate future growth in demand. The extension of the line to Yanchep will also lead to a requirement to increase capacity. With the introduction of these two new services, the PTA estimates that by 2025 the number of TPH that would be required to operate on the Joondalup line would exceed the capacity of the line

The opposition's proposal would forever limit the capacity of the network and the Midland and Joondalup lines would become completely saturated. The opposition claimed that it could run more trains along the train lines than the train lines could cope with. That is what Treasury said. It said that the opposition was planning to run more trains than the train lines could cope with. That is a recipe for failure. I think the creators of *Thomas the Tank Engine* could do an entire episode about that sort of stuff. Unfortunately, this is not a fairytale or a kids' program; this is the reality that the people of Perth have to deal with from an opposition that really has no idea about planning for transport projects.

Distinguished Visitor — Hon Tom Stephens

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House): While you take a breath, member, can I welcome into the President's gallery Hon Tom Stephens, who was a member of this chamber for many years, and his guests. Welcome!

Debate Resumed

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: There was another gaping hole in the cost of Labor's plan that would have already blown out to \$1.4 billion before a shovel had even hit the ground. Page 6 also contains alarming information, under "Reliability and Safety Issues". Treasury's costing document states —

- The Labor Party's scope for Metronet is based on the assumption that a number of road crossings on the Ellenbrook, Yanchep and Byford lines will be built as level crossings rather than as grade separated crossings. It is noted that there is a risk that the safety and reliability of the network and for road users could be adversely affected by the use of level crossings, and further work would be required to assess this risk.
- The Metronet plan includes a number of additional services which will lead to an increase in the number of junctions on the network. This increase in the number of junctions on the rail network may adversely impact on the reliability of train services.
- The extension of the Armadale line to Byford included in the Labor Party's Metronet plan is based on the provision of a single track for this service. The PTA has advised that the maximum number of trains that could operate on the single line between Armadale and Byford stations would be 4 TPH.

Four trains an hour —

This compares to the current peak service frequency of 8 TPH between Armadale and Perth. Trains running to Byford would also have a significant idle time at Byford station which would impact on the reliability of the service.

This stuff makes for appalling reading and highlights how hopeless the supposed Metronet plan really was. In the second decade of the twenty-first century Labor is talking about building significant new level crossings, where motor vehicle drivers would sit staring at the walls as the train went by. When building train lines, each train line should be planned separately, without a series of level crossings. The level crossings would have been across the Ellenbrook, Yanchep and Byford lines. A train line should be planned and built properly to eliminate as many level crossings as possible—hopefully all. I do not live in a utopia; I understand that now and again we may have to accept a level crossing here and there, but building train lines primarily based on level crossings will lead to a disaster. We have seen how the Labor Party in other states deals with the issue of clearing level crossings in the future. Before the last state election, the Victorian Labor Party planned to underground a whole series of level crossings. Because it had its costings horribly wrong—just like Labor in Western Australia—once it was elected, it sneakily changed the underground proposal to what it euphemistically called a "skyrail"—that is, railway lines built on stilts through suburban areas, with added noise impact on residents and people on the trains looking down into people's backyards. Perhaps after a Labor government in Western Australia builds a series of level crossings it will come up with a new idea to stick the train line on stilts to avoid the level crossings, although in the twenty-first century we know that the right thing to do is to properly separate grade crossings so that motor vehicles and trains can go unhindered. That is what this government has been progressively doing; it is doing it with the Forrestfield–Airport Link, and would do it with any future rail projects whenever possible.

I turn to the single line idea. A train can go only one way. It is like building a whole series of one-way streets. Perhaps we did that in the nineteenth century. This is the twenty-first century. Building single lines to pretend a project is going to happen is a recipe for disaster, which is exactly what Treasury said would happen—it would have been an absolute disaster.

To be fair to the opposition, I note that it has decided to move on from the dangerous level crossings as part of Metronet 2.0. But buyer beware. Will it be proposing elevated platforms running through suburban streets and neighbourhoods with the added noise and overlooking issues? The Victorian Labor Party did the same, and I reckon the WA Labor Party gets its ideas from its mates in the other states and could possibly do the same thing. It must be really embarrassing for the Labor Party that the first iteration of its plan even contemplated new level crossings in the network. I am glad it seems to have recognised it to be the wrong thing, but buyer beware, people of Western Australia: what it might be proposing in place of level crossings might be just as bad.

In talking about comprehensive public transport and infrastructure plans for Western Australia, let us look at exhibit A for how not to do it—Metronet! I dare say, and I should put on the record, that that failed plan that was universally rejected at the last state election is likely to inform what the Labor Party proposes for the next election. We are all going to be eagle-eyed and watching with suspicion to see whether the Labor Party has its costings and planning right, or whether, after four years of sitting around and patting itself on the back that it had a great plan, it will just trot it out again after changing the colours, a few of the words and the dates and pretend it has a you-beaut solution when really it is a solution full of holes and shows how not to do things.

The people of Western Australia deserve better than this opposition is offering. They deserve a comprehensive, fully considered plan that maps out a realistic and achievable future, not one that is pie in the sky. This government is already proving it can do that. It is building the rail line to the airport through to Forrestfield, despite difficult economic times. It is continuing to invest in road infrastructure, too. Despite what the Greens might say, we continue to invest in cycling infrastructure. It may not be as much as the Greens want, but it is affordable, achievable and well planned, and we are making sure that we are bringing the community with us rather than imposing things on it that it does not want. That takes time and effort. When the opposition calls for a new plan, it should have some patience so that it is right. Hon Ken Travers raised the train line to Yanchep during his contribution. Yes, I, too, want to see a train line to Yanchep—of course I do. I want to see it built in a sustainable manner and properly funded, and I want to see a proper consultation process, such as the consultation process that took place with the extension of the train line to Butler that happened mostly in the last term of this government but was finished off at the start of this term of government. That happened with the extension of Mitchell Freeway that is taking place right now. There was proper community consultation, the wishes and needs of the community were taken into account, and the project was costed only after the community consultation came up with the requirements of the local community, including noise attenuation, obviously, which is a very, very important component. The government did that, rather than rush at a plan without a date, which the Labor Party has done. I do not question Hon Ken Travers' desire to see a train line to Yanchep. I do not question that at all; in fact, if there was one person on the opposition bench who I would say has a genuine commitment and desire to achieve it, it is Hon Ken Travers. But I point out that, just like Metronet, the Labor Party's desire is a wish. There is no date and no costings to it. The opposition has not even clearly articulated whether there would be any other train stations along the way between Butler and Yanchep; and, if so, where they would be. That is because that work has not been done. That work can be done only through a proper community consultation process. I hope that the government can bring the Yanchep rail line on sooner rather than later—believe me! I am happy to put on public record that I am one of the people advocating for it to be done sooner rather than later. When the government releases its comprehensive, properly thought-out and properly costed plan for future public transport infrastructure in Western Australia, I am hoping to see that as part of it. But I do not think the community is served with an opposition that has proven it is an abject failure in providing such comprehensive plans, and complaining about the government's actions when it is getting on with building the critical infrastructure that we need right now.

When I read this motion, I see it for what it is worth: empty rhetoric, trying to hide and trying to camouflage the grey errors in the last Labor opposition plan for public transport in Western Australia. At the next election, the people of Western Australia should remember the fiasco that was Metronet and not take this opposition at its word, but strongly interrogate every single aspect of its plan. Western Australians should look for sneaky level crossings, for areas where the Labor Party will increase capacity beyond what is acceptable on the line, risking both operations and safety; they should look for where the opposition has been sneaky by not including the costs of new railcars when it is costing the new line that will require new railcars; and they should look for holes in its costings, just like with Labor's proposed airport rail link to nowhere, the costs of which were blown out of the water by a factor of two. That is what we get from the opposition that comes into this place and has the hide to criticise the government for its actions, for the fact it is getting on with doing things. As a result, the public of Western Australia and the people in this house see through this motion for the sham that it is.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Somebody annoying you is not a suitable excuse for continuous interjections.

HON AMBER-JADE SANDERSON (East Metropolitan) [1.53 pm]: I, too, rise in some annoyance—not at the motion but at the previous speaker. I support the motion moved by Hon Ken Travers over three years ago—a point that has been made by a number of speakers. It is not a controversial motion. It is not a significantly negative motion either. It simply calls on the government to explain what it has done; and, if it has not done it, why it has not done it. There is no condemnation nor “condemnitis” as has been previously complained about with opposition motions.

This motion outlines a range of plans put together by the Liberal–National government, the draft transport plan that included a range of measures to address some of the congestion and transport issues in the city. Paragraph (2) of the motion states —

That this Council calls on the government to —

(a) explain why it has taken two years to release the final version of this plan; —

Actually, it is now five years —

(b) outline whether it is still committed to the projects and the timelines outlined in the draft plan; and

(c) provide detailed reasons, including passenger modelling, for any changes they it has made to priority projects or their timing.

They are all perfectly reasonable questions to ask. Those questions had absolutely nothing to do with the content of the previous member’s speech. I hope that someone from the government will get up and address those three points, which are perfectly reasonable.

As the motion states, the draft transport plan was around two years of work by this government and it would have cost an enormous amount of money on research to put that together. It was put out for public comment for around three months. It is 2016 and we still have no final public transport plan. The previous speaker said that the opposition had no experience in planning. I grant that this government has a lot of experience in planning transport projects. We have seen a lot of planning around Metro Area Express light rail to Ellenbrook, and bus rapid transit systems, but we have not seen action. The problem is that the government is not delivering on any of its plans.

What we have seen over the past five years with this government’s transport planning is five years of inaction, back-flipping and broken promises. The government canned most if its priority projects. One of those projects was MAX light rail. All members will remember the government’s claims at the 2013 state election that MAX light rail was fully costed and fully funded and would be delivered by 2018. It is 2016 and it is still shelved.

The case for light rail was being made well before the 2013 election. That light rail system, of which MAX was the final plan, was to go to Mirrabooka, Edith Cowan University, the city, University of Western Australia and to Victoria Park. People voted for this plan. People along that corridor voted for MAX, because that corridor is very poorly serviced, as the government knows and as the government’s own submissions have outlined: that corridor is one of the worst serviced corridors for congestion and public transport. People along that corridor feel it morning and night when they are sitting at traffic lights at junctions along Morley Drive, Flinders Street, Wanneroo Road and Alexander Drive, when it takes them 30 minutes for what should be a 10-minute drive out of the city. People in that corridor feel that it is under-serviced. The government made that promise with no federal funding commitment, but it still claimed it was “fully costed, fully funded”. That was a lie, because it was not fully costed and fully funded; the Barnett government did not have a commitment for federal funding at all. As I said, the government has been making the plan for light rail along that corridor for a number of years.

I want to turn to the draft submission to Infrastructure Australia for federal funding called “Perth Light Rail”. This is the government’s own document making the case for light rail and how critical it is along that northern corridor. It was put together by the Department of Transport. It was submitted in 2012, which is not that long ago. The executive summary outlines —

The Government of Western Australia is ... seeking to implement an inner city transit system to alleviate traffic pressures in the central northern corridor and the Perth CBD and to use this as a catalyst for inner city urban consolidation and development to support the objectives of Directions 2031.

... The growth in both in the fringes and inner metropolitan area of Perth is resulting in reduced mobility particularly in the central northern corridor and the central CBD. These are the only corridors without a high frequency/high movement passenger transport service and the transport demand from these corridors is high and continues to grow.

These corridors provide strong connections between key educational institutions such as Polytechnic West ... Edith Cowan University and Mt Lawley Senior High School and the CBD as well as the University of WA ...

The population of Perth is expected to grow to 2.7 million by 2031 and as a result, Perth is facing the challenge of accommodating more people close to good transport links and in particular public transport. There is little opportunity to accommodate more private vehicles as the road environment in the Perth CBD is constrained and will become more so with future developments ...

This proposal has strong links to national priorities such as Developing Australia's Cities ... It also directly contributes to achieving the vision of the *Directions 2031 and Beyond*, the State Government's strategic plan for the Perth and Peel regions.

A new mass transit system will provide a step change in the provision of mass public transport in Perth between the heavy rail system and the general bus based system. It will enhance the connectivity of Perth ...

It is a pretty compelling case. The government refers to the servicing of that northern corridor and how the proposal meets the goals of the national priorities, including developing Australia's cities and improving social equity and quality of life in our cities and regions. As we know, low-income earners who have to live on the fringes of the cities end up paying more to drive into the city or wherever work is. They incur the costs of running a car, such as paying for fuel, to sit in traffic and get in and out of the CBD, because they do not have access to a good public transport system.

The proposal meets the goal of transforming our cities, connecting people in urban living, the Council of Australian Governments' capital cities agenda and the national urban policy "Our Cities, Our Future". It aligns with state plans and policies, such as "Directions 2031 and Beyond: Metropolitan planning beyond the horizon". The report continues —

A key strategic theme of Directions 2031 is accessibility, with the objective that all people are able to easily meet their education, employment, recreation, service and consumer needs.

Key strategies aimed at achieving this objective are:

- Provision of an integrated system of public and private transport networks that connect communities with jobs and services;

This is the government's own submission and position on this corridor and the public transport plan for Perth. Other objectives include —

- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public transport; and
- Encouraging a shift to more sustainable transport modes

I am spending some time on this because I think it is important to put on the record the effort to which the government went to pull together this submission to Infrastructure Australia in only 2012, which was not that long ago. Before the last state election the government was making the case for light rail along that corridor. With that in mind, an election promise for light rail is not such a stretch, because that all points to that being the area that requires the most infrastructure and support for urban transport development. The report continues in some detail to refer to the issue with the northern central corridor —

Perth is a very car-oriented city, generally based around relatively low density suburbs —

Infill is attempting to address that. The report states —

The central northern corridor, which runs directly north from the central City to, and beyond, Mirrabooka, is the only corridor without a high frequency movement passenger transport service. ...

The central northern corridor also does not have a major urban centre to focus employment and services and this creates a need for regional trips.

People are not stopping or gathering anywhere along that corridor; they are all going into the city. The road is heaving under the weight of people travelling from the northern suburbs into the city along that corridor because there is no alternative. It continues —

The transport demand from the central northern corridor is high and continues to grow ...

Two thirds of travel demand on the urban public transport system in the peak periods is made of up workers and students ...

Alexander Drive is the key arterial spine through the corridor to the Perth CBD and carried in excess of 35,000 vehicles per day in 2009.

I would be interested to see what the figures are now. That was 2009; it is now 2016. That would have gone up considerably considering the increase in population in Western Australia. In excess of 35 000 vehicles is a lot. The report continues —

Flinders Street is the secondary artery towards the CBD and in 2011 carried in excess of 17,000 vehicles per day in 2008.

I travel along Flinders Street every day at peak time and I would say that the number of vehicles has increased by more than 17 000. The traffic along Flinders Street is atrocious with the traffic lights and the congestion and the volume of cars travelling along it. There is no alternative around there. People have to go along that road. The article continues —

Wanneroo Road is another key artery along the western side of the corridor which carried in excess of 44,000 vehicles per day in 2008. ...

According to travel time surveys conducted by Main Roads WA, travel times by car along Alexander Drive from Reid Hwy to the Perth CBD have increased by 20% to 25% between 2011 and 2012.

I would be interested to see how much it has increased since then. The article states —

All of this points to the cost of travel in this corridor increasing by 2031. Simply put, the transport network is unable to accommodate the demand for travel by 2031. Roads are at capacity and the public transport network is not only at capacity, but unable to operate efficiently due to a lack of capacity and priority on the road system.

Buses are not coping because they are stuck in the same traffic in which everyone else is stuck. Proposing more buses or more bus routes along that corridor will simply not work. The government has put the case itself that buses along that corridor will not work. It needs to be rail. The report continues —

Lack of Transit Infrastructure along the Central Northern Corridor.

The central northern corridor's public transport service is an important function, however it is the only major transit corridor focussed on Perth CBD that does not have any priority infrastructure ...

1. Buses suffering from the effects of congestion, taking both a significant time to access the city as well as having highly variable travel times resulting in buses being unable to keep to timetable.
2. Public transport therefore is not being as attractive as on other corridors.
3. The reduced attractiveness of public transport contributing to more people driving private cars, which in turn leads to increased congestion and greater unreliability of operation.

It is a self-fulfilling prophecy. This is the government's own case. It is putting a very compelling case for light rail along that corridor. The report states —

Two components of travel time are waiting time —

That has been going up and up over the years. Access to key institutions along that corridor is limited. The report states —

Edith Cowan University in Mt Lawley, along the central northern corridor to the north of the CBD suffers from similar access issues. ECU is planned to grow significantly in the numbers of students and staff by 2021. The adjacent Mt Lawley Senior High School serves a wide regional function for secondary education.

As we all know, it has a number of specialist programs that draw kids from much further beyond its intake area, and it is expected to grow very significantly over the next few years. It continues —

The ever increasing congestion along Alexander Drive and in the Mt Lawley area causes access issues to this precinct, restricting its ability to grow and function effectively.

Finally, the report refers to passenger expectations —

For a number of years to 2011, the Morley Service Area, which covers Alexander Drive and Beaufort Street as well as suburban areas further out, was consistently rated as the worst performing area in passenger satisfaction levels for Transperth principally due to increasing travel time along the corridor and the variability of journey times to the CBD.

This is the government's own case for light rail along that corridor. It is incredible that it has failed to do anything about it. I would like to see the government make public the business cases for the MAX light rail and the Forrestfield–Airport Link project so that we can see why those two projects were prioritised. There is no

doubt that they are both required, but why did the government prioritise one over the other? The government has not been open about that and I would like to see it make those business cases public.

In 2012 the government made a very strong case for light rail along that corridor. It put together the transport plan in 2011, which also made a strong case for some form of rail along that northern corridor. The Liberal–National government went to the 2013 election and promised it was fully funded, fully costed; then it dumped it in 2015. It shelved it in 2015 and said it was to be completed by 2022, which means it will probably never happen.

We have recently seen Minister for Transport Nalder say—bearing in mind that MAX light rail is still government policy and it is still committed to MAX—that he does not think that light rail can go down Fitzgerald Street. That creates more confusion about the government’s policy on light rail along that corridor. He says that light rail cannot go down there, completely trashing his predecessor’s and the Premier’s policy of MAX.

Minister Nalder has also claimed that a bus rapid transit system would be far more efficient and appropriate for that area. In the government’s own words in its submission to Infrastructure Australia, it laid out the case for why a bus rapid transit system is not appropriate for that route. We come to the government’s most recent—what would we call it?—version of MAX, which is a bus. It is one bus and it is the 960 bus.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: Isn’t it a horse and cart?

Hon AMBER-JADE SANDERSON: We will see. This bus is intended to go from Mirrabooka into the city at high frequency. It is not a bus rapid transit system; it is one high-frequency bus. The government is claiming that it is a new service, but that bus replaces two services. As part of that, the government is also removing other shorter services that would service that arterial corridor along the suburbs. We are seeing a reduction in overall bus services to that corridor, I assume to make up the funding for this one bus that will go through. We have gone from heaving roads, the system being at its knees and really needing this funding for light rail, to providing one single bus along that route.

Also another major service is currently under consideration by the PTA along that route. It is looking at changing the volume of services running from Mirrabooka bus station to the city. The service they are currently looking at is the 870. The PTA is also looking at changing another of the smaller bus routes, the 354, that services that 870 route as well and services some of the smaller shopping precincts, such as the Nollamara shops and provides a service for a lot of those people who do not want to go into the city but who just want to go around their local suburbs. The effect of the changes to the 960, 870 and 354 routes will be an overall reduction in bus services for those areas. It will not be an increase at all; it will be an overall reduction in services. When I have looked at the maps and the frequency, I am not the only person who thinks that; the City of Stirling thinks that too. It has made that submission to the minister when asked for comment. When these proposed changes were out for public comment, the City of Stirling made a very clear submission that although it supports the introduction of route 960, route 354 was being removed from service and replaced with 384, which would run on a different route at a lower frequency. An email from a City of Stirling councillor states —

City Officers formed the view that this reduction in service was unacceptable and accordingly advised Transperth on 21 March 2016, and wrote back accordingly.

That is not just Labor Party hyperbole; this is the people who have to run through —

Hon Michael Mischin: Which councillor?

Hon AMBER-JADE SANDERSON: It was from Councillor David Boothman—I am perfectly comfortable saying that. We were both emailed by a local constituent and we have both looked at the matter. He made a commitment to go back to the City of Stirling to see whether it had been involved in any submissions. It had. He forwarded that submission to me and the constituent. I then made a commitment that I would write to the minister to say that any reduction in bus services for that area was not acceptable and would have an adverse effect on the community. That is how that came about. There is nothing to see here.

We are seeing that MAX light rail is now a bus. There is no doubting the cost of congestion to the community. It is about not only the economy, but also the broader community. A number of reports have been released, including an Infrastructure Australia report outlining the chronic congestion around a number of cities in Australia and the cost to the community. Infrastructure Australia found, according to a news article —

Perth’s roads will become Australia’s most congested and its key rail lines approach “crush capacity”, an audit of Australia’s infrastructure needs reveals.

Infrastructure Australia’s examination of the nation’s transport, electricity, water and communication needs has found road congestion will cost Perth more than \$16 billion a year by 2031.

Without change, Perth’s congestion costs will eclipse those of Sydney ...

The IA report ... found seven of the nation's 10 most clogged roads will be in Perth. The other three will be in Sydney.

...

The Mitchell Freeway will be 86 per cent full within 16 years and cost the economy more than \$16 million every kilometre in productivity and delays.

The Tonkin Highway and Graham Farmer Freeway–Orrong Road corridors will be 82 per cent full and Wanneroo Road will be 88 per cent full.

Parts of Leach Highway, Roe Highway, Canning Highway and Kwinana Freeway will grind to a halt in the mornings.

It goes on to state —

... it will be little better on the city's rail links. The Joondalup line is already under stress but the audit believes it and the Mandurah line will reach or exceed "crush capacity" by 2031.

Those catching a bus will face similar pressures, with passenger numbers in Stirling and Canning to double over two decades.

...

The audit warned the State Government ... could expand Perth's south-west and north-west fringes or increase density and public transport into the inner city and middle suburbs.

We know we cannot keep expanding the city. We simply cannot provide the water and amenities for the city to continue expanding. We have to be providing better public transport options for people in the city.

The Committee for Perth media release entitled "The real cost of driving to work" on the RAC report states —

"Getting more people onto public transport would also reduce congestion, which by 2020 will be costing Perth \$2.1 billion every year. To put that figure into perspective, the Perth to Mandurah rail cost \$1.66 billion to build and the MAX light rail is estimated to be \$1.88 billion. Both of those figures are less than the congestion cost, so the question is, not can we afford to invest in public transport but can we afford not to?"

That is a perfectly reasonable question.

The Committee for Perth also released an interesting report entitled "The Rising Cost of Living in Perth" and talks about the impact of congestion and transport on the cost of living. Its report was released in April 2014, not that long ago, just over a year ago. It states —

Perth is the most expensive city in Australia to own and commute to work by car—and the further your commute, the more you pay.

... the Australasian ... Association tells us that commuters travelling to work in the Perth CBD annually spend anywhere from \$9,180 for a 5 km commute ... up to \$22,306 for a 25 km commute to the CBD.

It costs individuals \$22 000 a year to commute 25 kilometres—that is, from Rockingham, Mandurah or Joondalup. That is an enormous amount of money. If we think about that, it is people on low to middle incomes who are usually living in those fringes. They can afford that the least. Twenty-two thousand dollars is an extraordinary amount of money just to get to and from work. It continues —

Ultimately the combined costs of driving to work means that if you live 25km from the Perth CBD ... you could be spending up to \$1,900 a month on car ownership ... not far short of the region's median monthly mortgage repayment of approximately \$2,000.

The report goes on to say —

Accessibility to public transport is a particular problem for people living in fringe suburbs that are not close to the region's rail corridors.

It states that, for example, a two-car household with two people commuting in separate cars could save \$19 000 a year by getting rid of one car and using public transport. But the problem is that the transport is not available for people to use. They do not have a choice. There is no other choice for those families than to spend \$20 000 a year just getting to and from work. Rocket science is not needed to resolve this issue. We have to reduce commuting costs and congestion on our roads. We need to enable people to live closer to where they work, to develop employment hubs that are not simply focused around the CBD, and we need to enable more people to travel by public transport. It is incredibly simple.

The report goes on to provide a number of very sensible suggestions—all of them that we can see from the government's plans are part of the fabric of the government's plan. The problem is that it is not delivering on them. It talks about them, but it does not deliver on them.

The report continues to suggest strategies to achieve this, including —

- Increasing the supply of diverse and affordable housing options close to existing employment centres.
- Increasing ... affordable housing options in suburbs that are well served by public transport.

Hon Lynn MacLaren touched on that —

- Concentrating employment in areas that are highly accessible ...
- Connecting more people to employment and service centres by providing ... public transport ...

None of this is beyond the realms of what this government should be doing.

We see the lack of action on actual public transport projects. I now turn to how the government is managing the roads, which is the only access that many, many Western Australians have to get to and from work, school or university. I refer to the Western Australian Auditor General's report "Main Roads Projects to Address Traffic Congestion". It is not flattering reading. According to the report —

... the Commonwealth Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics ... estimated that by 2020 congestion in Perth could cost the Western Australian economy \$2.1 billion.

In 2005 the figure was \$900 million. That is an enormous increase. The key findings of the report include —

- there are an estimated 2.1 million vehicles on WA roads, up 17 per cent from 2009

...

Neither Main Roads nor DoT have set clear objectives, service performance standards and targets for managing congestion. In part, this is because there is no overarching strategy for dealing with congestion, and no agency is clearly required to lead action ... Main Roads does not have a clear process to prioritise funding for congestion projects, although major projects are assessed by Main Roads and DoT on financial and other broad factors ... Main Roads developed a Traffic Congestion Management Strategy, which identified 49 projects and initiatives ... but it is not clear how these were selected, or how they were prioritised.

Of its 850 kilometres of metropolitan road network, Main Roads WA has comprehensive traffic congestion information on only 78 kilometres. I repeat: 78 kilometres of 850 kilometres. We are not talking about long, lengthy regional roads; we are talking only about the metro area. The Auditor General's report continues —

It does not consistently measure or report the volume of cars and freight vehicles on the whole network, vehicle occupancy levels or the percentage of recurrent and non-recurrent congestion.

They are pretty sad findings from the Auditor General. To me, it indicates a real lack of leadership and buck-passing between Main Roads and the Department of Transport. What I read between the lines is that they are shuffling this problem between each other and no-one is willing to step up and be the lead agency for the minister, to bring those departments together and make them work together to deal with congestion. There are no clear priorities, they do not know how they are prioritised, and they do not even know how much congestion is on the road when there is data for only 78 kilometres out of 850 kilometres. It is a total lack of leadership from the Minister for Transport. It is an example of the complete lack of leadership on transport planning from this government, full stop. That is nothing new.

RAC WA also released a report that looked at the top 10 worst intersections in the city. Three of them serve the electorate of Morley and include Reid Highway–Alexander Drive and Reid Highway–Malaga Drive. That overpass was delayed by two years because of this government's mishandling of the budget. It prioritised other projects. People understand that there is only so much money. The community understands that government does not have a bottomless pit of money, but the community expects those projects to be prioritised appropriately. People in the East Metropolitan Region have to sit and wait in that filter lane on Malaga Drive for many hours. Businesses are also impacted—not just the people commuting, but the businesses in Malaga. The cost of congestion in getting services and trucks and workers in and out of that incredibly important industrial area is enormous. That project should have been prioritised by this government but it was not; it was shuffled off and is two years behind. The other major intersection is at Reid Highway–Mirrabooka Avenue. Three out of the 10 intersections are in that key central eastern area.

NorthLink WA is a road that the government is building. I do not think we have to go far to see that the consultation with the communities that that road will directly affect has been very poor. Overall, people support that road and see the need for it. I draw attention to the example at Hampton Park Primary School. That school was completely left out of the planning of that road. It is right next to the Morley Drive–Tonkin Highway

intersection, and 75 per cent of that school catchment is on the other side of Tonkin Highway. There is currently an underpass. The school was told by the government that its students would have to cross that intersection, which was going to have the biggest roundabout that Western Australia has ever seen. The flow of traffic that will go through that intersection will be enormous. Even on the government's own maps, the school was not there. The school was not on the graphics, the infographics or on the video. The government completely missed this school. It was an appalling case of having to play catch-up. That school will be situated next to what will be an eight-lane freeway, and I mean right next to an eight-lane freeway. It will be elevated as well. There will essentially be a wall right next to the school with an eight-lane freeway next to it. Seventy-five per cent of that school's catchment lives on the other side of Tonkin Highway. That will seriously impact the school community. People will make decisions about where they send their children to school. It is a fantastic school. It is an old school, and it has a great reputation and a great school community, but it will impact them really seriously.

The other impact that should have been managed a lot better is the impact on Lightning Swamp. Its entire road reserve has been removed with the upgrade of Tonkin Highway as part of NorthLink. There is absolutely nothing between this really important wetland and an eight-lane freeway. There is absolutely nothing—no buffer, no reserve. That should not have happened. The government failed in its consultation with that community and the Lightning Park Working Group.

I now refer to the infamous Ellenbrook rail promise. In 2008, Labor promised rail to Ellenbrook, which is a disconnected community. Anyone who lives there will say how difficult it is to access. People love living in Ellenbrook, they love the area, but it is difficult to travel in and out of, and to access the city and airport and major employment regions and hubs because of a complete lack of transport infrastructure. Labor promised a railway in 2008 and, in a shameless attempt to match its promise in the seat of Swan Hills, Colin Barnett said his government would match it. That demonstrates that the Liberal Party will say anything to win. I think the community are pretty wise to that now. It said it had fully funded, fully costed or fully costed, fully funded—whichever way around it goes—rail to Ellenbrook. The Liberal Party promised a rail line to Ellenbrook and then, after the state election, it was summarily dumped. The government said, "The numbers don't add up." The Liberal Party should have done the numbers before it made the promise, because people voted on that promise.

The government dumped that rail and then promised a bus rapid transit system. It spent an enormous amount of money promoting the bus rapid transit system and then dumped that too! The government dumped the bus rapid transit system. In the 2016–17 budget, the government has promised a bus lane. Even the government cannot take itself seriously on its transport promises to Ellenbrook. The Treasurer, Mike Nahan, said very publicly, "I'll understand if the public are a bit sceptical about our transport promises to Ellenbrook." The government does not even believe itself! This bus will not even go into the city; it will stop at Marshall Road. What is the point? The purpose of a public transport system is to move large numbers of people and to take cars off the road. This will put more buses on the road. Those buses will stop at Marshall Road and they will still have to continue along existing lines. We will see the same people driving to Bassendean or to Ashfield rail station and parking there for the day, and getting the bus from there.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: Good luck finding a park!

Hon AMBER-JADE SANDERSON: Yes; if they can find a car park. What is the point of them catching the bus? The cynicism in the community about the government's transport plans is very deep, and is absolutely justified in my view.

The Sunday Times first reported this new bus rapid transit system to Ellenbrook, but it is not a bus rapid transit system. The government has refused to provide any details. In a question yesterday to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport, I asked about the \$49 million allocated to the new bus lane. I asked —

- (1) Can the minister confirm that this amount of money will fund three overpasses or underpasses, three bus stations and 400 car parks?
- (2) What is the amount allocated to the three bus stations?
- (3) What is the amount allocated to the overpasses?
- (4) Can the minister confirm that properties along the desired route still require purchasing ...

The answer was, "It is not possible to provide the information; put it on notice."

Hon Jim Chown: Which means you will get a factual answer.

Hon AMBER-JADE SANDERSON: If it is in the budget, then surely some planning has been done around it. It is outrageous! This is supposed to be a priority for this budget.

Hon Jim Chown: You will get a factual answer —

Hon AMBER-JADE SANDERSON: The minister should be able to give it now!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members! A lot of issues were canvassed in that yelling across the chamber but none of it will be recorded in *Hansard*, unfortunately. I suggest that members who have a point to make leave it till they have the call and then it can be recorded in *Hansard*.

Hon AMBER-JADE SANDERSON: Thank you, Madam Deputy President. In what I assume was the government's attempt to leak some good news before the budget was handed down last week, *The Sunday Times* reported on the so-called bus rapid transport system. Actually, it is a bus lane. I quote —

PLANS for a “bus rapid transit” system for Ellenbrook have been resurrected, three years after the \$110 million project was ditched by Premier Colin Barnett.

It's understood a modified Ellenbrook BRT, less expensive than the busway scheme first touted in 2011, will be promised in the State Budget ...

We know that this is the cheap version; it is a bus lane, not a BRT —

The Sunday Times understands the original route, running from Ellenbrook to Bassendean train station, has been replaced with a dedicated BRT lane along Lord St to Reid Highway.

The buses will then continue on regular routes ...

Potential capacity will not be increased from there; just a bus lane will run up to Ellenbrook. The minister and the member for Swan Hills, Frank Alban, have thrown their hands up; they have given up on trains.

In the *Bullsbrook–Ellenbrook Advocate*, it is stated by the member himself —

Swan Hills MLA Frank Alban supported Mr Nalder's comments that a rail line to the northeast corridor would be at least 10 years away under the current State Government.

There we have it in writing; this government is not going to build any rail out to Ellenbrook for at least 10 years. If this government is re-elected, the people of Ellenbrook will wait for rail for at least 10 years. The article continues, quoting Frank Alban, MLA —

“So as part of our planning we are exploring rail, but we are being honest and say we find it hard to justify a rail in the short term.

“I find it difficult to say there will be a rail out here before 10 or 15 years because there are other priorities that will need it beforehand.

The people of Ellenbrook consider themselves a priority for rail and I think they will demonstrate that at the next election. The article goes on to state that jobs are more important than rail but those two things work together. They are both part of one puzzle—supporting the economy to help create jobs. If there was better public transport out to Ellenbrook, a greater hub for jobs and a deeper industrial area could be created so that people would not need to travel. Those two things are not mutually exclusive.

The real impact of the chronic congestion in our streets does not support the government's infill policy. I generally support infill, but it has to be matched with appropriate transport infrastructure. We cannot continue to expand the city limits along the coast—we just cannot. We do not have the capacity to support those communities. Building residential and high-density areas along transport hubs is the most sensible approach but the problem is that there is a limited number of transport hubs. Local government has been lumped with the planning amendment that it has to increase infill by a certain amount, which is creating tensions in communities; there is no doubt about that. People are saying, “I hate the infill!” They do not necessarily hate having more neighbours but they hate having 20 cars parked on their streets and people constantly using suburban roads as rat runs. People hate the fact that, in a small suburban street, they will have to watch 20 cars pass before they can cross the road to the park with their kids. It is clearly not an appropriate use of those roads. We are seeing more use of rat runs and greater congestion and, frankly, we are seeing more frequent incidences of road rage. Drivers are frustrated and they are getting out and belting or abusing each other because they are sick of sitting in traffic. Drivers absolutely have to have accountability for the way they behave, but people are frustrated. I go up and down Morley Drive. Travelling along Morley Drive, I saw some signs put up there. The government's approach to tackle congestion along Morley Drive is simply to change the light configuration. That is the only plan. The government has Bigger Picture signs all the way along Morley Drive—I would like to know how much they cost—to tell us that the light configuration will change. That is the only major corridor for people coming into Morley from the western suburbs. That is it; there is nowhere else.

We see the impact of congestion and the lack of public transport on our community. If people are sitting in their cars, they are not spending time with their families and it is costing the economy an enormous amount. We are at

a point in the economic cycle when we need to develop more jobs in the city. The government missed the boat on Infrastructure Australia funding for these projects because it had not finalised the plan. That is the whole point of this motion; the government has not finalised the plan. The government has been sitting on a draft plan for five years. The impact of this is felt most by low-income families who are forced to live on the city's fringes and have long and expensive commutes in and out of the city. Their overall quality of life is impacted. I call on the government, instead of using this motion as a political football, to address the last three points in the motion. I look forward to Hon Simon O'Brien and Hon Jim Chown standing up and explaining why it has taken two years to release the final version of the plan, outlining whether the government is still committed to the projects and providing reasons why and modelling for changes that have been made. If the government has changed the plan because times are changing, members opposite should justify it and tell the house why; give us those reasons so we know why it has taken so long.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [2.37 pm]: As a former Minister for Transport a long time ago, my attention was naturally drawn to this motion when it was placed on the notice paper back on 19 June 2013. As we contemplate the third anniversary of that notice of motion, the issues contained within it are as relevant now as they were three years ago or 30 years ago, and they will be next year and the year after that. One thing about being a former minister for anything is probably universally experienced upon departing a portfolio—that is, your relationship to your former portfolio. In the past, I have likened it to being a relinquishing foster parent. You care greatly for the future of your former charge, but you have no rights anymore to have charge of their future, education, upbringing and what have you. In the fairly callous and shallow pool that sometimes identifies itself as politics here and elsewhere, if an interest is expressed, people think either one of two things: firstly, the person has an axe to grind—whether they did or did not—and they cannot let go; or, secondly, which is often expressed by people who do not understand the pressures of portfolio responsibilities because they have not experienced them, they ask, “Why didn't you do that when you had the chance?” It is now quite a few years since I have been a Minister for Transport. Hopefully, that constitutes a decent interval. I might be able to acquaint members, if they are interested, with some of the things they need to know about the matters they have been holding forth about in the course of this debate.

Just as a matter of interest and purely for academic interest, and not with any sense of encouraging unruly interjection, when was the last time members opposite caught a bus or a train?

Hon Stephen Dawson: About a week ago.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Does the member regularly commute by public transport?

Hon Stephen Dawson: If I am in Perth for Parliament, I will catch a train to Parliament on one of the days.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: That is one opposition member, so that is good. Hon Phil Edman will match that, but that is a different story! When a minister has to contemplate these matters on a full-time basis, while around them colleagues in both their own party and the opposition party are trying to do them over while they juggle all the various demands of a portfolio, they tend to find out a bit more. I want to offer something to this debate that might help educate people about the matters they are talking about. This is all about having plans for public transport, because, as members have said, we have to have plans to meet the growth needs of the future and to make sure that Perth does not end up as one great metropolis that cannot be serviced by public transport because it has sprawled too much—and all these other lines that are almost throwaway lines. The truth about the need for public transport plans quite simply is that members opposite are right. Yes, we do need plans, but I do not think people understand how the plans need to be made and the very serious restrictions involved in making those plans, and I do not think they understand the nature of what a plan should look like when it is created. I do not think we have had the sort of public transport plan for Perth that I envisaged. I do not believe we have ever had it in this state and I do not see any prospect of us having one.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: What is this?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: If the member stops flapping around bits of paper and listens, she might learn something, because I am trying to put something back into this debate.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: Didn't you do this one?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: For God's sake! Madam Deputy President, you can lead horses to water, but you cannot make them drink! I am prepared to make available my experience in this space, because I no longer have any skin in the game. I am not worried by the prattle that oppositions seem to think passes for sensible political discourse. I am not scared of anybody. I have nothing to lose. But I can tell members some things that I have learnt and that might help them do the sorts of things that they are pontificating about, such as providing for the future needs of the people they represent. So they should sit tight and they might learn something. The worst that

can happen is that I will waste a darn sight less of their time than has been wasted by others on this matter not only today, but also in the past.

The thing about a plan for public transport is that it is not something that is or should be set in concrete. By its very nature, it should be dynamic because it has to evolve. It has to be able to adapt to circumstances that change, including changes in demographics, changes in the transport task, changes in the way people commute, changes in where people live and where they want to get to —

Hon Jim Chown: Technology.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: — changes in technology—Hon Jim Chown makes a good point as well—changes in the available workforce and changes in the capacity and the relative cost to deliver transport infrastructure and vehicles. A whole range of things make it absolutely necessary that a public transport plan be a dynamic and, to the greatest extent possible, bipartisan plan, yet that seems to be impossible in this town. It always has been and, I suspect, always will be. What I have heard so far in this debate gives me no confidence that any other outcome is likely, but I will persevere because I am used to being a lone voice in all of this.

In opposition, as we approached the very early 2008 election, one of our policies, of which I was the author—there were others that were promises made—was that we needed a plan for public transport in Western Australia. On another occasion, I can talk about other forms of public transport infrastructure that we need to service our state, but that is for another day. In relation to public transport, I recognised a long time ago that we needed a plan. What was the plan before then? It depended on where the marginal seat was and it depended on where the squeaky wheels of sensitive electorates were and how much grease a party wanted to apply to those squeaks. That is what happened. I can remember seeing former colleague Hon Graham Giffard, who, as I recall, had left this place at the time and was a candidate for Swan Hills, in the background of the picture on the television as Alan Carpenter was saying, “We’re going to build a railway to Ellenbrook.” Graham was behind him banging into the ground a sign stating that this was the site of the next railway. That is the sort of stuff that is done on the campaign trail. The only thing is that not one bit of homework had been done to identify whether there was a business case for such a railway or whether there was ever likely to be a strong business case for such a railway; and, if so, when that might materialise so that that this possible ingredient of a public transport plan could be put into being and put on a priority list, along with all the other priorities of people who wanted railways, bridges, buses, trams, pushbikes or whatever else it was, and proper businesslike decisions could be made about the priority of the state. No, that did not happen, because a surprise election had been called at no notice—not to the then Treasurer, Eric Ripper, who was famously on holiday with Hon Ljiljana Ravlich, his partner, at the time. They were taken by surprise. Hon Alannah MacTiernan, the then minister with responsibility for railways, not only was not present, but also would have nothing to do with it throughout the campaign. Was this a symptom of a public transport plan the likes of which Hon Ken Travers has been counselling us about in this debate? Certainly, it was not. The only assessment that had been made was that the then Labor government wanted to win the seat and it calculated, rightly or wrongly, that there were enough votes in promising a railway to deliver it. Members opposite want to think about that when they start lecturing others about a lack of planning if that is the track record—no pun intended—that has been attributed to them because of their association.

That has been symptomatic of public transport policy in large part before and since. As I said in earlier remarks, I think it has ever been so and ever will be so in this state, and I am apparently the only person who, deep down, does not think it should be so and is prepared to stand and say so. Maybe Hon Ken Travers has been around long enough and is sick enough of the bulldust around these subjects that he might also associate with that view.

Hon Ken Travers: I always try to associate myself with your remarks, Simon, but I am continuing to listen to them at this stage.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I am very glad that Hon Ken Travers is in this place to do so. My attention was briefly drawn to Hon Ken Travers’ opening remarks of 11 May, when he said —

When Hon Simon O'Brien was shadow Minister for Transport in 2008, he promised the people of Western Australia that there would be a public transport plan.

I touched on that while Hon Ken Travers was out of the chamber on urgent business a few minutes ago. Hon Ken Travers went on to state —

He then spent millions of dollars to develop the draft plan that was released for public comment in July 2011.

Member, that is not quite right. There was nothing like millions of dollars spent by me on developing that plan. Would the member like to know how the plan was developed? That was my proposal because—Hon Ken Travers will agree with this—Western Australia needed a public transport plan. Things, be it bridges to create rapid bus transitways or railways to Mandurah, cost a heck of a lot of money. We do not have limitless

resources. That money needs to be spent well, for the right reasons, in the right time frame and to meet identified needs—to the extent they can be predicted. My idea for a public transport plan would be a framework that contemplated all those things and provided a shopping list of things we ought to do. That list would have a time line, including the lead-up time to plan properly, the lead-up time for proper budgeting and the lead-up time for funds to be sourced from the Feds—God only knows we need federal funds to do many capital infrastructure works. When it is all put together it becomes a draft plan, which can then be put on the table so everyone—the public, that is—can input and say, “We think that’s a good idea”, or “We think that’s a terrible idea”, or “Why don’t you move it a bit to the left?” or “I don’t like the green shade you’re using on the buses”, or whatever it might be. That way the plan could be, in general terms, owned by everybody, and that would be as close as we would get to bipartisanship. Why do we want that? Because that is one way of having some hope that the plan will be realised and that the infrastructure will be delivered in the time frame it is meant to—in a way that will not send the state broke and will be properly coordinated with policies relating to planning, housing and all the rest of it.

A plan like that has to be a dynamic document; it has to be able to develop. During a boom—if we are allowed to call it that now—in the mining sector that causes a massive net migration into the state that alters the demographic mix, the pressures on public transport, roads, housing and so on are altered. How would we modify our plan to deal with that? Is it the case, as I was advised, that there was a need in the foreseeable future for there to be a further transport corridor to the north? Is there going to be a need to bring forward those plans because of expansion in certain suburbs along that route? What are the main areas of destination for people? This is how it is arrived at; Hon Ken Travers will not be a stranger to this. Places like universities, for example, are major locations for transport termini as people using public transport go about their daily business five days a week.

The only trouble was that the government I found I was a part of did not have much enthusiasm for what I proposed to do.

Hon Ken Travers: But it was in your 2008 election commitments.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I will tell Hon Ken Travers what happened.

Perhaps there was a concern, based on all the experience of observing politics in this state, that if we started to draft grand plans for the future—contemplating for 20 or 30 years’ time—it might overexcite expectations and raise the prospect of underdelivery. Nonetheless, I was pretty sure that people would turn around to me sooner or later and say, “Righto; what plans are we taking forward?” That is why I commenced a draft plan anyway, without telling anybody—in secret, if you like. That was the document —

Hon Ken Travers: So you had to go secret to implement your election commitments.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: So as not to frighten any horses, that is what I needed to do.

I contrast that with members opposite and their record on this sort of thing. I will come to that in due course. It seemed that I was then, and still am, the only person who believed that a model for public transport should be developed through consultation with all stakeholders, rather than those seeking to get some sort of political initiative by being the first to announce something—bang, bang! Members opposite are just the same. That has been their previous record, and it is the record they are displaying now and into the future. Before they start supporting motions written in these terms, they should look at their own house.

I did not get to release a draft public transport plan for consultation because I ceased to be Minister for Transport in December 2010 before that could occur. A public transport plan for Perth in 2031 was then released by a subsequent minister. I do not know what his motives were for that—members can take that up with him if they want—but I know that whether it is this or any other initiative that a minister takes, it is better for someone to have bred and raised a plan themselves and have real ownership of it than to expect someone who inherits something to embrace it in the same way and with the same enthusiasm than would have applied if the original person had been able to pursue the agenda they had initially set out to.

During the 2013 election, there was what was intended to be a “shock and awe” announcement by the Western Australian Labor Party that it was going to build railways. It knew that was popular. It had already showed that was in its DNA, and that during electioneering, as it had with Hon Graham Giffard in Ellenbrook in 2008, it had to go out and announce a railway. As the Labor Party demonstrated then, it does not matter whether the homework had not been done, whether it knew how much it would cost and how many passengers it may or may not carry, it was just going to go out and promise it. Would the Labor Party have delivered it? I do not know. Let us give it the benefit of the doubt. It might well have delivered a railway built within a certain period of time, although I bet it would have taken longer than the Labor Party thought, and I bet it would have cost a lot more than it thought and it would have said “ouch”. We all would have said “ouch” as well because it would have been a massive amount of money spent in the wrong place at that time.

That is what we are talking about here. Why? It is because the opposition did not have a plan either. A plan to Ellenbrook is not an integrated plan. Hon Ken Travers tried to come up with something from within the Western Australian Labor Party, and he was a good transport spokesman for it. He should still be. Who is its transport spokesman now anyway?

Hon Ken Travers: Rita Saffioti.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Oh, dear! She was the then Premier's chief of staff at the time they went out and were banging in signs for Ellenbrook. That is the brains trust now running the opposition's transport policy.

Hon Ken Travers: I am reading your 2008 election commitment here—a policy you wrote—that talks about a railway line to the airport, rail services to Fremantle on the southern line, a rail service to Ellenbrook and an extension of the northern suburbs line to Butler and Brighton. Mate, I think you should claim Metronet as your policy!

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I do not think so.

Hon Ken Travers interjected.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Hon Ken Travers came out with a whiz-bang idea for a thing called —

Hon Ken Travers: No, it's all you, mate! You should take the credit.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I assure Hon Ken Travers that I am in no way involved in the gestation of his Metronet plan, which was basically —

Hon Ken Travers: Do you want me to read from your 2008 policy again?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: No, I do not. You just cannot help yourselves.

The Metronet plan, with all its London Underground styling and so on, was very nice and easy to understand, and it was done like Graham Giffard whacking in his sign at Ellenbrook—that is, times 100. But where was the real planning behind it? I will tell members where the real planning was. It basically was about giving a railway, because everyone wants a railway. That is ALP election folklore: "Everyone wants a railway, so let us make sure we have a railway that goes to every seat that we are trying to defend." Where was the planning and the costing for that? It was not the sort of thing that the opposition could do realistically with the resources of opposition, and it was no surprise that the then government sought to unpick it and did so quite successfully, by examining it in detail and looking at the costings. That is fine. The same thing or some variation on it will happen at the next election. It has already been mooted. We can see it. I suspect that electoral imperatives will weigh heavily on the minds of everyone involved at the time. I do not think that is the way to go about it. It is a great pity that I was not able to put out that draft plan for consultation, because that is what I would have done. I would have sought active input from everyone, including Hon Ken Travers, whose views as the transport spokesman I respected. That is the way to formulate a plan for the future that everyone can have ownership of. Perhaps then we might deliver a public transport system that is planned for and meets our future needs and for which adequate time has been provided to plan and progress it.

They are some thoughts that I will offer for now. My time to debate this matter could continue next week, but I propose to sit down now. However, I will say that I see a light at the end of the tunnel—other than an oncoming train, before anyone interjects—and that is the current Minister for Transport. I think that Hon Dean Nalder actually has the imagination, if the system will allow him, to apply lateral thinking to the logical development of public transport planning policy. He has inherited balls that are in play—previous announcements that have been made—but he is not scared to question any of that and take control of his own ministry, despite the slings and arrows that will no doubt come and will continue to come at him in from all angles.

Hon Ken Travers interjected.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: There is a limit to how much dialogue we can have about this on the floor of the chamber, but I hope I have given members something to think about, when next they find it so easy to point out how things should happen, when they do not have the knowledge to understand the situation fully.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.