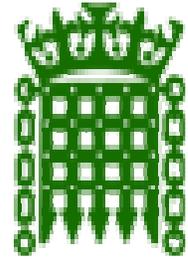


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All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA
Ref: LR Applg Parliamentary Tea v. 2012

"The past we inherit, the future we build"



'Bold' light rail system to 'transform' Perth

Date September 2, 2012 Courtney Trenwith WA Today



The light rail network will run from Balga to the CBD.

A new light rail network linking Perth's inner northern suburbs and the CBD is a "bold" project that will transform transport in the city, according to the state government.

The exact route and timetable for the 22 kilometre line was revealed today but the price tag - expected to be well above \$1 billion - will not be determined until at least 2014.

The Metropolitan Area Express, nicknamed MAX, will run from the Balga TAFE campus south along Alexander Drive and Fitzgerald Street to the CBD and then divert west to the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre in Nedlands and east across the Causeway.

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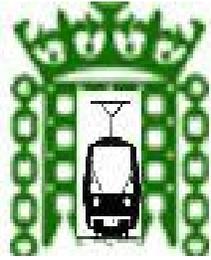
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Light Rail (UK), Transport & Training Services Ltd
Warrington, Cheshire, England,
United Kingdom WA2 8TX
Tel 01925 242500, Fax 01925 243000
01925 339223
Mr Jim Harkins FCILT
www.applrguk.co.uk
Email applrguk@aol.com
www.lightrailuk.com

RSVP to applrguk@aol.com

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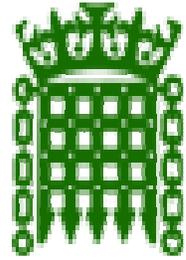


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<http://images.watoday.com.au/file/2012/09/02/3602998/Map%2520-%2520low%2520res.pdf>

Stage two proposes extending the line to the University of WA, Curtin University and the new sports stadium at Burswood.

Construction of the initial line is due to begin in 2016 and take two years to complete.

Light rail is considered by many as crucial to meeting Perth's public transport woes within the next 10 years.

Perth's population is expected to reach 2.7 million by 2031 with public transport patronage predicted to double by then.

The state government has struggled to convince the public that it intends to build a light rail network but Transport Minister Troy Buswell said he had been working hard on the project behind the scenes.

Today's announcement does not come with any funding on top of the \$11 million previously put towards the initial planning, but it commits the government to a timeline to complete the project.

Premier Colin Barnett said the "bold" plan was "a major step forward" for public transport in Perth.

"This is an absolute transformation of public transport in Perth," he said.

"It's probably the greatest advancement since the electrification of the Perth rail network and the [construction of the] Mandurah line.

"MAX will power Perth commuters into the future, helping to reduce congestion into the city from our inner north and manage population growth as the city expands to as many as 2.7 million people by 2031," he said.

Mr Buswell said the light rail system would bring about significant changes to land use along that transport corridor and inject "a real dynamic" into the city.

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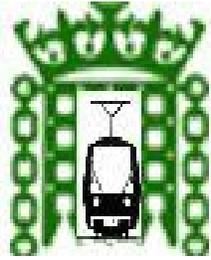
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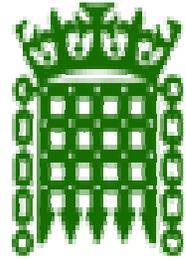


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MAX would provide public transport in areas that were unable to meet current and future demand.

It would likely carry 35,000 passengers per day by 2031 - similar to the present patronage on each of the Midland, Armadale and Fremantle heavy rail lines.

Carriages would be 30-40 metres long with capacity for 200-300 people each.

The route includes stations at 500 metre-1.5 kilometre intervals, including at Mirrabooka Shopping Centre, Dianella Shopping Centre, Terry Tyzack Aquatic Centre, Edith Cowan University and Mt Lawley High School, North Perth and the soon-to-be-opened Perth Arena.

"Light rail has been assessed as the most suitable option in these areas," Mr Buswell said.

"It can move many more people in one lane than any number of buses and cars."

Mr Buswell said he hoped the federal government would contribute beyond its \$4 million so far, but other funding options including private investment also would be considered.

Opposition transport spokesman Ken Travers said using existing lanes on roads such as Fitzgerald Street would compound traffic issues caused by the closure of Riverside Drive for the Waterfront project.

"If you're trying to deal with congestion you've got to stop bad decisions like the closure of Riverside Drive and the closure of the Wheat belt rail line," he said.

Mr Travers questioned whether the government would complete the project.

"They've done nothing on public transport for four years... or whatever they've done they've been very slow to do," he said.

"They haven't built their commitments from the last election [including the Ellenbrook rail line]. How can you believe they're going to build a light rail in six years time, by which stage they'll be in their third term."

Labour last year said it could construct a light rail network between the Causeway and Thomas Street in West Perth using surplus money raised by the Perth parking levy.

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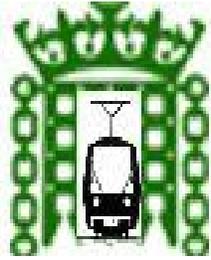
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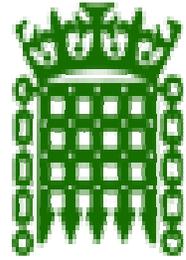


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The 5.7 kilometre line would be a starting point, Mr Travers said at the time.

Labour is yet to formally commit to light rail but is expected to announce its detailed public transport plan in the lead up to the state election.

Mr Travers said the Opposition would need to wait until after the mid-year budget review to assess the state's finances.

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