



Speech by

**Mr T. SULLIVAN**

**MEMBER FOR CHERMSIDE**

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Hansard 10 June 1999

### **TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr SULLIVAN** (Chermside—ALP) (6.39 p.m.): I rise to support the amendment moved by the Transport Minister. I would like to remind the House of two major public transport infrastructure projects being advanced by this Government and how an integrated transit system is being developed. These are just two examples of the successful work of this can-do Beattie Labor Government.

The first project is the Brisbane Light Rail Project—a major \$235m transport investment. The public transport task in the inner city is considerable and requires significant improvements to the capacity, service levels and overall attractiveness of the public transport system. To address these issues, the State Government, in consultation with Jim Soorley's Brisbane City Council, has developed the Brisbane Light Rail Project, a network which will be 11 kilometres long and which will connect to major destinations in the city area, including the Brisbane CBD retail core, the Riverside precinct, South Bank parklands, QUT's Gardens Point campus, the Fortitude Valley area, the Royal Brisbane Hospital and existing major bus, ferry and rail stations.

One of the key features of the project is that it will be the first time that modern light rail technology has been applied in Queensland. Unlike the ill-conceived Briztram concept of the previous Government, the light rail network is being planned on narrow gauge to allow for possible future expansion onto the heavy rail system, which has the same narrow gauge. This clearly shows the visionary integrated planning approach of this Government, typified in the Integrated Regional Transport Plan.

**An honourable member:** Hear, hear!

**Mr SULLIVAN:** I thank the members on the crossbenches for their support. I hear them say "Hear, hear" to that. It is a good plan to link the projects into the same gauge. We have learnt from our mistakes with different rail gauges. This clearly shows the visionary approach of this Minister.

The system will be integrated with other modes and will be given priority in the road system, using advanced intelligent transport systems whilst providing frequent, reliable and convenient service. The Brisbane Light Rail Project is a vital transport initiative for Brisbane. The aim of the project is to provide an accessible, environmentally friendly system that acts as an inner city distributor. It will also promote urban renewal and tourism.

It is anticipated that the system will carry 40,000 to 50,000 passengers a day. Service frequencies of 10 minutes will ensure that the system provides a high level of services to passengers needing to move around the Brisbane CBD area—making light rail competitive with the private motor vehicle.

The first phase of public consultation for the project concluded on 12 February 1999, and expressions of interest for private sector involvement were received in May 1999. The strength of the companies in the bidding consortia shows that the project has been well received by the private sector. The strength of the companies that have shown interest indicates that decisions made by this Minister were the correct decisions.

Detailed planning and environmental assessment is almost complete. Community consultation is a major factor in all these major projects and I am pleased to advise the House that, unlike the major problems caused by Briztram for residents, the Brisbane Light Rail Project has been well received by

the local community. Detailed proposals will be called in July 1999. Construction will start in 2000, with Stage 1 completed by 2001. The project is a good example of a joint venture between the public and private sectors in delivering a major project. The Government secured the \$65m Commonwealth Centenary Funding Grant from the Federal Government. The entire project is planned for completion by the end of 2002.

Another major infrastructure project is the Brisbane Airport rail link, out near where I live in the northern suburbs of Brisbane. A rail link to the airport was started by the former Goss Government in 1995 when proposals from the private sector were received. This Government has delivered financial closure for the project.

The Brisbane Airport rail link will link the Brisbane CBD with stations at both the international and domestic airport terminals. It will consist of eight and a half kilometres of new rail linking the existing Queensland Rail network near Toombul to the airport. The design and construction phase started this year, and trains will be running to the airport by mid-2001. The rail link is expected to attract 2.3 million passengers in its first year of operation, rising to 16.5 million by 2035. We expect the project to provide in the order of 500 full-time jobs during the 27-month design and construction period, and ongoing job opportunities during its operation. That is another example of a can-do Government. It is a project that is going to create jobs in the construction phase and in the future. This project is a first for Queensland in being a fully privately funded public transport infrastructure project. This project has laid the groundwork for many future private sector investments.

I would like to say more about the integration of these systems, but I will be running out of time. Suffice to say that public transport operators are involved in planning the services and operations which will make the infrastructure work effectively. The integrated ticketing project will play an important role in integrating all different modes, including bus, rail, ferry and light rail, with the ultimate aim of making public transport as seamless and attractive as possible. These are examples of the can-do work of this can-do Minister in this can-do Government.

Time expired.

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