



Speech by

Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Gold Coast, Public Transport

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs) (10.22 am): I have great news for the Gold Coast. Last Friday the Premier and I visited the Gold Coast to announce the company that will construct and operate one of Queensland's most significant transport projects to date. GoldLinQ, a consortium which includes companies Keolis, Downer EDI, McConnell Dowell, Bombardier and Plenary, will build and operate the Gold Coast's rapid light rail system stretching from the new University Hospital to Broadbeach. We welcome working with GoldLinQ in our newest public-private partnership on a project that represents a golden new era for the Gold Coast and its residents.

This is a project that will deliver more than 6,300 direct and indirect jobs and when completed in 2014 will give Gold Coast residents and visitors easy, hassle-free commuting. Following the completion of roadworks later this year, construction of the light rail corridor will begin with track expected to be laid in the second half of 2012.

Stage 1 of the light rail project includes a 13-kilometre light rail corridor that will service the new Gold Coast University Hospital, Griffith University, the Southport medical precinct and the fastest growing recreational centres of Southport, Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach. Early works for the project, which started in August last year, are progressing ahead of schedule despite 30 wet weather delays. To date, more than \$25 million has been invested in the local community sourcing labour and materials.

The Queensland government is a forward-thinking government. We have known that public transport on the Gold Coast needs to be transformed over the coming years to be able to deal with increasing demand. By 2031 the Gold Coast will be a city of more than 800,000 people. That is a lot of people who will need a high-frequency, easy to use public transport option and that is why this project is so important. In the not-too-distant future we will have a world-class public transport system which will change the way people move around the coast. This project will see the Gold Coast's reputation as an iconic Queensland tourism destination strengthened nationally and internationally. In years to come Gold Coast rapid transit will be an integral part of everyday life on the Gold Coast and local residents will have a public transport system unique to this exceptional city.