



Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Transport and Tourism Connections, Funding

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.55 am): Last year the Palaszczuk government announced almost \$6 million in state funding to 18 projects across Western Queensland under round 1 of the \$10 million Transport and Tourism Connections program to boost outback tourism and jobs. This program improves access to significant tourism sites by partnering with local councils to upgrade the surrounding road and transport infrastructure. We have unique sites across Western Queensland that are drawcards for tourists such as the dinosaur trail at Winton and the scenic Hell Hole Gorge National Park at Quilpie.

With drive tourism increasing in popularity for domestic and international tourists, it is essential that we make sure our incredible sites are easy and safe to visit. A number of projects have already been completed. Longreach Regional Council's project to pave and seal River Farms Road; the Barcaldine Regional Council's parking improvements on the Capricorn Highway between Alpha and Barcaldine at Oak Street; and the Blackall-Tambo Regional Council's upgrade to the Blackall Aquatic Centre car park. Weather permitting, we expect the delivery of the remaining round 1 projects to be completed by the middle of this year.

In building on the success of round 1, I am very proud to announce today that the Palaszczuk government, via the transport and main roads department, will soon be seeking nominations from relevant local governments for round 2 of the program, with around \$4 million in state funding available for priority projects. Round 2 will be extended beyond Western Queensland to cover rural and regional Queensland outside of South-East Queensland to maximise the benefits of this funding. Funding for upgrades will be capped at \$500,000 to deliver a wide spread of projects across regional Queensland. This \$10 million program allows the Palaszczuk government to work with local governments and the private sector to upgrade infrastructure to improve access to Queensland's most significant tourism experiences. It is another example of how the Palaszczuk government is delivering for all Queenslanders no matter where they live in our state.