



WA State Budget

Delivering for WA

2026-27

Budget Paper No. 1
Treasurer's Speech

2026-27 Treasurer's Speech

© Government of Western Australia

Acknowledgement of Country

The Government of Western Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community. We pay our respects to all members of Aboriginal communities and their cultures; and to Elders past and present.

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Reader's Guide to the 2026-27 Budget Statements
(available in digital format from www.ourstatebudget.wa.gov.au)

Speech by

Hon Rita Saffioti MLA

Deputy Premier; Treasurer; Minister for Transport; Sport and Recreation

Thursday 7 May 2026

Mr Speaker, I move that this Bill be read a second time.

This Budget is being delivered in a time of great economic uncertainty.

The tectonic plates upon which our global economy rest have shifted unexpectedly, exposing fault lines that no one could have foreseen.

Despite the distance of our State from the Middle East conflict, households and industry have been impacted by these world events.

The unpredictability and ever changing nature of the conflict, has created uncertainty in the WA economy and our community.

Our job as a Government has been to cushion Western Australian households and our domestic economy from the impact of these fast moving plates.

Our Government has had to be nimble in shaping this Budget against the backdrop of war, to ensure our policy decisions protect Western Australia.

It is in this time of great global economic uncertainty, that I am proud to present our WA Labor Government's tenth Budget.

Mr Speaker, the economic and financial fundamentals of our State are strong.

More Western Australians than ever are in full time jobs, education or training.

Our economy has been the fastest growing in the nation.

Despite this strength, we know that households face challenges in balancing their budgets.

In particular, since the recent global economic upheaval.

This time last year we began to turn the inflationary corner.

Interest rates were on the way down, and we thought we were through the worst of it.

Then came February 28 and its aftermath.

Mr Speaker, today we are announcing new cost of living measures that will support WA households.

This Budget will deliver a \$100 fuel support payment to every WA driver's licence holder – supporting more than 2.1 million Western Australians.

Our nation-leading fuel payment will deliver real financial support directly to Western Australian motorists.

On top of this, the Cook Labor Government will deliver a third round of the Student Assistance Payment to WA families.

Families will be entitled to \$250 for every secondary student and \$150 for every primary and kindergarten student.

For a seventh consecutive year, household fees and charges will be kept well below inflation, in line with our government's long-standing commitment to keep household fees and charges affordable.

In this Budget, the Cook Labor Government doubles down on our efforts to boost housing supply.

New investment, new measures, new ways to support Western Australians to get into a home that's right for them.

This Budget also contains the biggest ever injection for health and mental health services.

An unprecedented additional spend of \$9.1 billion is being invested in this Budget.

This includes, \$6.5 billion of additional funding for activity in our hospitals. More doctors, more nurses, and more beds.

I am proud to say that in the last three Budgets alone we have invested an additional \$18.2 billion towards health and mental health services.

And we are doing this, at the same time as embarking on the biggest investment in hospital construction in our State's history.

\$5.5 billion is committed to investing in health infrastructure over the next four years.

And this Budget, continues our commitment to creating jobs and growing the State economy, by delivering the infrastructure, training and our Made in WA strategy.

ECONOMY

Mr Speaker, the war in the Middle East has had far reaching and material impacts on commodity prices, financial markets and economies around the world.

Higher oil and fuel prices have added to inflationary pressure.

Western Australia has not been immune from these impacts, including higher costs for fuel, airfares, fertiliser and construction materials.

The International Monetary Fund has revised down global economic growth to 3.1 per cent this year and headline inflation up to 4.4 per cent, a shift from the downward inflationary trend of recent years.

As a result, the forecast for the Perth CPI (excluding electricity) has risen to 4 per cent in annual average terms in 2025-26.

And beyond the Middle East, the global environment remains highly uncertain with heightened geopolitical tensions, ambiguity over US trade policy, and slowing economic growth in China.

Despite this barrage of economic turmoil, Western Australia's economy remains steadfast.

In this Budget, WA's domestic economic growth has been revised up to 3.5 per cent in 2025-26, together with growth of 2.25 per cent in 2026-27.

Our economic growth is being driven by strong private sector activity, including business investment, dwelling investment and household consumption.

It's important to note, that more than 85 per cent of WA's economic growth is being driven by the private sector, highlighting the resilience of our economy.

Business investment increased by 5.7 per cent in 2025 and is projected to grow by 6.75 per cent this financial year.

Dwelling investment is forecast to grow by 9.5 per cent in 2025-26, the strongest growth in twelve years.

Household consumption has grown by 3 per cent in 2025 – the strongest in the nation.

Likewise, Western Australia's overall economic growth, measured by GSP, is forecast to grow by 3.25 per cent in 2025-26.

Western Australia's economy continues to be the nation's powerhouse.

In the year to February, we accounted for over 45 per cent of national exports, worth \$238 billion, far outpacing the next closest State, Queensland, with just 19 per cent of national exports.

Our strong economy is creating jobs and opportunities for Western Australians.

Since coming to office, our WA Labor Government has created over 380,000 jobs.

This equates to 29 per cent growth in employment over this period, far outpacing the rest of the nation.

Our unemployment rate has remained consistently low by historical standards.

This is even more extraordinary given the population growth that has occurred over the past five years.

Population growth peaked in late 2023 and has since moderated, with growth of 2.2 per cent in the year to September 2025, and expected to average 1.5 per cent over the next four years.

STATE FINANCES

Mr Speaker, the unstable global economic conditions that are disrupting financial markets, supply chains and global growth, reinforce the need for responsible financial management.

A strong set of books helps us weather the economic storm.

We will not be swept off course; this Budget will support Western Australians in navigating our way through the changing and unpredictable swell.

Mr Speaker, I am proud to announce that we will deliver our eighth consecutive operating surplus this financial year.

We are forecasting an operating surplus of \$3.5 billion in 2025-26, \$2.4 billion in 2026-27, with surpluses maintained across the forward estimates.

And Western Australia continues to have the lowest debt burden in the nation.

Net debt is expected to be \$34.5 billion as at 30 June this year, \$4.5 billion lower than forecast in last year's Budget.

As a share of the economy, net debt is expected to be just 7.1 per cent, compared to an average of 19.2 per cent across other States.

When we came to Government, net debt as a percentage of GSP was the worst in the nation. And today, it is by far the best.

And despite a record asset investment program of \$44.3 billion over the next four years, Western Australia's net debt to GSP is forecast to be just 8.9 per cent in 2030. This is well below the other States.

Mr Speaker, to put this into further context.

Together with our capital investments since 2017, we will have invested over \$100 billion in public infrastructure across WA by 2030.

Even with this incredible investment, our net debt to GSP in 2030 is forecast to still be far lower than what we inherited.

Our fiscally conservative approach to budget management continues to be recognised by both major rating agencies, with WA continuing to be the only State in the country with a triple-A credit rating.

But we know that the job of prudent financial management never stops.

That is why in this Budget we are implementing a range of fiscal measures to reinforce our commitment to financial discipline and efficiency.

At the same time our government continues to fight for Western Australia's fair share of the GST.

Every other State and Territory is seeking to tear up the 2018 agreement.

We will not back down.

In fact, we will double down in our fight to protect the 2018 agreement and ensure Western Australia is not punished for our economic success.

Meanwhile, even with the reforms, Western Australia will still only receive 82 per cent of our population share next year, providing more than \$2 billion to other States.

Instead of criticism from the other States, a simple thank you would be nice.

REAL COST OF LIVING SUPPORT

Mr Speaker, our WA Labor Government has a record of delivering cost of living support to Western Australians.

In the face of global price shocks, our government will deliver more than \$1 billion in cost-of-living relief in the Budget year.

Supporting WA families

Mr Speaker, in an Australian-first, we are introducing a \$100 fuel support payment for Western Australians.

Every Western Australian driver's licence holder – more than 2.1 million people – will be eligible for this payment through the ServiceWA app.

In this Budget, we will also roll out our third consecutive round of the WA Student Assistance Payment, providing \$250 for every secondary student and \$150 for every primary and kindergarten student.

This payment is expected to benefit the families of more than 500,000 students right across WA.

This means a family of four with two kids in high school would be eligible to receive \$700.

And our support is already making a difference for young families like Dean and Emma from Byford. They will receive student assistance payments to help with school costs, they've reduced their power bills through the Residential Battery Rebate, and they now have access to a brand new METRONET train station on their doorstep.

Mr Speaker, we will continue to make our world-class public transport system more affordable and accessible.

In this Budget, we will permanently make public transport free for students going to and from school.

And public transport will remain free on Sundays under WA Labor.

Meanwhile, our Go Anywhere fare is delivering real savings everyday for our community.

Just five years ago, a Dawesville resident was paying almost \$21 for their daily commute into the city. Today, that is \$5.60.

This is a saving of nearly \$1,800 a year.

Importantly, over 550,000 concession card holders can now pay as little as \$1.28 to Go Anywhere on the network.

Additional targeted support for families

Mr Speaker, in this Budget, we are delivering targeted measures to support families most in need.

We are boosting support to families with concessions through a 10 per cent uplift to the Energy Assistance Payment, Dependent Child Rebate, and Air Conditioning Allowance.

On top of this, we are extending the Energy Ahead program which has assisted more than 6,000 low-income households bring down their energy bills.

We are extending our Rent Relief program, to ensure those experiencing rental stress can stay in their home, having already helped 4,200 families.

We are continuing to invest in KidSport vouchers, providing \$300 to support kids playing sport.

Mr Speaker, combined, these initiatives mean a family with two school-aged kids with eligible concessions could receive around \$3,600 in cost of living support this Budget.

Supporting families in regional WA

Mr Speaker, we continue to roll out specific initiatives to support regional Western Australians.

Our Australia-first – and only – Regional Airfare Zone Cap is locked in, with \$108 million committed over the forward estimates.

Since 2022, over 400,000 Western Australians have accessed the scheme, with over 800,000 zone cap fares flown.

Kununurra residents can save up to \$769 per flight, while Karratha and Kalgoorlie residents can save up to \$829 and \$723 respectively.

We have also halved Transwa fares, again delivering big savings to regional Western Australians.

Regional pensioners continue to have access to the Regional Pensioner Travel Card, which was boosted to \$775 in the last Budget.

And of course, extra measures are being delivered to support families and businesses in Exmouth, Coral Bay and surrounding areas in response to Cyclone Narelle.

Additional support for foster and grandparent carers

In this Budget, we are extending additional support to foster and grand carers who play a vital role in caring for young people in our community.

We are creating a new Foster and Grand Carers Gold Card.

This will unlock additional support to foster, family and grand carers, including energy bill relief of \$377 this year.

In addition, the Foster Carer Subsidy, Respite and Clothing Allowance will be increased by 10 per cent to more than \$530 a fortnight.

Grand carers will also receive a cost of living payment of \$500 for the first child and \$250 per additional child in their care. This is in addition to the annual Grand Carers Support Scheme payment of \$1,000 per grandchild.

HOUSING

Mr Speaker, this Budget delivers a record investment, and a range of new initiatives to support housing supply.

Over the past five years Western Australia has had the strongest economic and population growth in the country, and at the same time, like other jurisdictions, experienced significant supply chain interruptions.

We know that this has put pressure on our housing market.

And we understand that Western Australians want to have the same opportunities that their parents and grandparents had to have a home they can call their own.

That's why in this Budget we intensify our efforts to boost housing supply, unlock land, and improve housing affordability with a record \$4.7 billion of new investment.

This brings our Government's additional investment since 2021 to more than \$10.8 billion.

Just last week, the Housing Industry Association ranked Western Australia as the State making the best progress in building new homes.

This is on top of recent data that shows:

- building approvals grew 12 per cent over the last year to 25,000;
- housing completions increased by 46 per cent over the last three years; and

- the construction workforce is at record levels.

But we know there is more to do.

And that is why in this Budget we are delivering the biggest housing supply plan in the history of our State.

Investment in social and affordable housing

Mr Speaker, in this Budget we deliver an unprecedented investment into social and affordable homes.

Our program of social housing investment has already delivered more than 4,000 homes since 2021.

This Budget continues this investment with a further \$1.5 billion, including:

- social and affordable housing projects in Cannington, Ballajura, Butler, Midland, Kelmscott, Subiaco, Bassendean and Perth;
- 1,426 new social and affordable homes through the Housing Australia Future Fund; and
- the strategic purchase and construction of 165 social housing dwellings, refurbishment of 215 properties, and acquisition of land to deliver a further 233 homes.

These investments will see more than 5,000 social and affordable homes delivered over the next four years.

We are continuing the WA Rent Relief program and bolstering homelessness services by investing an additional \$91 million, including an additional \$28 million for 44 frontline homelessness accommodation services across the State.

We are also providing \$41 million to support expanded operations at Indigo Junction Youth Shelter in Midland, the Perth Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation Facility, and the Safe Night Space for Women in Northbridge – that was previously shut by the Leader of the Opposition.

We are also expanding Entrypoint and housing support services for people in regional WA.

Meanwhile, the East Perth Common Ground is now in operation while the Mandurah Common Ground will be completed shortly.

Unlocking land supply and supporting infrastructure

Mr Speaker, we are working across Government to unlock new land supply and new homes, through the biggest ever targeted expenditure on water and energy infrastructure.

\$522 million will be spent, including \$289 million in the North Ellenbrook and East Wanneroo corridors to unlock 64,000 lots.

A further \$127 million will be invested to unlock development at METRONET station precincts at Ballajura, Yanchep and Byford, and \$23 million in regional locations including Albany, Eaton, Australind and East Boyanup.

We are also boosting the Infrastructure Development Fund by \$40 million to support density projects.

This existing fund will support 10,000 new homes across the State, and this funding boost will continue that momentum.

The Regional Housing Support Fund will be increased to \$75 million to support key worker, community housing and residential subdivision projects.

A further \$570 million will be spent to boost land supply:

- in suburbs such as Eglinton, Alkimos and Forrestdale;
- in METRONET station precincts; and
- to remediate and redevelop land at Kensington and ECU Mount Lawley.

Boosting our construction workforce

Mr Speaker, we know that having the tradies to deliver the housing supply we need is essential.

Our construction workforce is at record levels underpinned by our investment in training.

This Budget continues that momentum with \$51 million of additional investment, including:

- boosting the Group Training Organisation Wage Subsidy Scheme by an additional 330 to now more than 1,300 places;
- keeping TAFE courses in construction free or low fee, to train more tradies including plumbers, bricklayers and plasterers; and
- extending the Construction Visa Subsidy and Build a Life programs, including a further 1,100 places.

We are also continuing a range of initiatives through the Construction Training Fund, including grants to support businesses that employ apprentices; supporting private training providers to expand training capacity; and apprentice attraction and retention initiatives.

Supporting housing productivity and innovation

Mr Speaker, this Budget includes a game changing investment that will significantly enhance our ability to deliver thousands of new apartments.

This Budget will deliver a \$48 million investment to establish two Housing and Infrastructure Advanced Manufacturing Facilities at Kwinana and Neerabup.

This new initiative will deliver new homes, hospitals and other public infrastructure at lower cost and at faster speed.

Supporting first home buyers

Mr Speaker, in this Budget we deliver a range of stamp duty changes to support Western Australians to buy their own home, and to increase supply.

From today, we are providing more assistance for first home buyers.

We will be increasing the first home owner stamp duty exemption threshold for established homes to \$600,000, and the concession threshold to \$800,000.

These changes will save first home buyers up to \$22,500 on the cost of buying their first home.

We continue to incentivise new housing supply by lifting the first home owner stamp duty exemption threshold for vacant land purchases to \$450,000, and concession threshold up to \$550,000.

Plus, this Budget extends, increases and broadens our off-the-plan stamp duty relief.

This means whether you are a first home buyer or a senior looking to downsize, you'll save tens of thousands of dollars when building a new apartment, townhouse, villa or unit.

The Cook Labor Government will also invest \$375 million to build 500 affordable homes to be sold to Western Australian first home buyers, supported by Keystart's Shared Equity program.

These initiatives will support people like Georgia, a young renter from Cockburn who works in retail and lives with her partner, to get into the housing market and own their first home.

Housing finance

This Budget includes new housing finance measures to support new apartment projects get off the ground faster.

A \$250 million pre-sale guarantee, delivered through Keystart, will unlock around 1,200 new apartments and townhouses and address financial barriers to higher density housing developments.

This will be complemented by a new \$250 million First Home Buyer Commercial Financing Facility delivered in partnership with the Commonwealth.

This is in addition to our Keystart initiatives that continue to roll out, including:

- the Urban Connect shared equity program;
- loans for modular home construction; and
- the Build to Rent kickstart loan scheme.

Regional housing

Mr Speaker, as I said earlier, we have massive investments underway to unlock land, development and housing right across WA.

This Budget provides \$692 million to support regional housing supply.

This includes \$419 million for accommodation for key Government workers, including more than 500 homes through our Seven Cities initiative.

We welcome \$170 million of investment by Rio Tinto, BHP and Hancock Prospecting to support this initiative.

We are also revamping the Home Owner Subsidy Scheme to support Government workers put down roots in regional communities, as well as boosting the GROH Build to Lease investment program.

Mr Speaker, we are supporting developments right across regional WA, whether it be in Albany through the Hardie Road Project, the Kununurra Water Lily Place development, or Pringle Village in Kalgoorlie.

DELIVERING HEALTH AND HOSPITALS

Mr Speaker, in this Budget, our WA Labor Government is investing like never before in health and hospital services, boosting spending by over \$9.1 billion.

Investing in our hospitals

In hospital services alone we are spending an additional \$6.5 billion. This is the biggest ever injection of spending in hospitals in the State's history.

In this budget year alone, our WA Labor Government will spend \$12.1 billion on hospital services to provide high-quality healthcare across our State and ensure that Western Australians continue to get the healthcare they need.

Over the past three years, we have increased health spending by 27 per cent.

On top of this, we are undertaking the State's biggest ever hospital building program.

We have committed a record \$5.5 billion over the next four years to build, upgrade and maintain hospitals across our State.

This includes an additional \$1.5 billion in health infrastructure this Budget, including a \$500 million boost to the Building Hospitals Fund.

Work is well underway on the new Women and Babies Hospital, while contractors have been selected for the new Mandurah Hospital and new Royal Perth Hospital emergency department.

The Geraldton Health Campus Redevelopment and Joondalup Health Campus Stage 2 will be completed in the coming months.

We are investing like never before in regional hospitals, with over \$800 million of investment over the next four years in Bunbury, Tom Price, Albany and Meekatharra.

We are also investing \$56 million to support regional cancer and palliative care services, the Pilbara Health Initiative, and South Hedland Step Up/Step Down facility.

Mr Speaker, we're building hospitals, upgrading hospitals, and buying a hospital.

This Budget includes \$225 million to acquire and commission Mt Lawley Hospital as a public facility.

In addition, we are boosting hospital maintenance by \$214 million, which is on top of the \$1.1 billion of recurrent spend on maintenance and medical equipment over the next four years.

Supporting our hospitals

Mr Speaker, we are also implementing measures to improve patient flow and ensure Western Australians can stay healthy and out of hospital.

We are investing \$433 million for our winter strategy and to provide additional supports in the community, including:

- rolling out immunisation programs including free flu, FluMist, and RSV vaccinations;
- training 200 extra pharmacists to diagnose and treat common conditions in the community;
- supporting people experiencing homelessness with post-acute care; and
- supporting extended care paramedics.

Mr Speaker, this is all about providing more care in the community for seniors like Steve and Jean from Midland.

We're helping Steve and Jean to protect themselves against influenza, to access healthcare closer to home, and, ultimately, to stay out of hospital.

Investing in aged care

Mr Speaker, over 300 people are currently in our hospitals awaiting an aged care bed or Commonwealth support package.

At the same time, aged care providers are reporting occupancy of over 95 per cent, which means more older Western Australians are staying in hospital for longer than required.

While we continue to lobby Canberra for our share of aged care beds and home care packages, we are stepping in to support older Western Australians to receive the appropriate care in the appropriate setting.

We are investing an additional \$60 million to transition older patients from hospital to community settings through programs such as the Transition Care Program and 150 Time to Think Beds.

We are also rolling out our \$100 million Aged Care Low Interest Loan Scheme to unlock additional concessional aged care beds.

Investing in mental health

We are also making a significant \$414 million investment in mental health services across Western Australia. Initiatives include:

- \$15 million to pilot a new Crisis Recovery and Intervention Support Service;
- operationalising additional mental health beds at Joondalup Health Campus;
- \$43 million to provide virtual triage and crisis care;
- \$30 million to expand suicide prevention initiatives for young people in our suburbs and regions; and
- \$49 million to support social and emotional wellbeing to provide culturally informed mental health services in regional Western Australia.

DELIVERING A STRONG ECONOMY AND JOBS

Mr Speaker, Western Australia continues to power the nation's economy.

However, we know that Western Australia's economic success is not guaranteed.

We take nothing for granted, and will continue to deliver the ingredients to drive economic success.

Made in WA

Mr Speaker, in this Budget the Cook Labor Government backs in our commitment to Made in WA.

We are establishing the Made in WA Energy Affordability Investment Program, including \$153 million in loans to enable manufacturers to improve energy efficiency and invest in advanced manufacturing equipment.

We are investing \$85 million to support the development of the green iron and steel industry, including a \$75 million investment in a collaboration with BlueScope, Rio Tinto and BHP.

And we will continue to make our new trains, electric buses and our new electric ferries here in WA.

Strategic industries

Last year we committed \$1 billion to the Strategic Industries Fund, and in this Budget we are allocating \$92 million to enable key projects across our industrial hubs, such as Kemerton and Boodarie.

We are also designating the Western Trade Coast as the first-ever State Development Area. This precinct extends from Munster to Rockingham, and will serve as a critically important industrial, defence and transport hub that will contribute around \$20 billion to the State's economy annually and support 43,000 jobs.

We are also investing an additional \$113 million in industrial land development across the State, including land releases at Karratha, Neerabup, Rockingham, and \$32 million for the Newman Light Industrial Area.

Investing in economic infrastructure

Mr Speaker, this Budget continues our strong focus in delivering economic infrastructure to support new projects and development.

Over \$15 billion will be invested in water, energy and port infrastructure.

This includes \$150 million to deliver the 50 megawatt Kalgoorlie Vanadium Battery Energy Storage System.

A further \$30 million will go towards the Investment Attraction Fund to support job creating projects that diversify our economy.

On top of these initiatives, an additional \$973 million will be invested to expand the Western Power network, connect residential and industrial customers, and maintain existing assets.

An additional \$55 million will be invested in our ports, including the construction of a bypass channel at Port Hedland to ensure uninterrupted activity through the port.

This Budget includes our joint commitment with the Commonwealth to the \$1.1 billion Anketell Road Stage 1 project and \$118 million to progress the broader Westport program.

The Cook Labor Government is making investments to secure Western Australia's water future in a drying climate.

\$659 million will be invested for the State's share of the Dampier seawater desalination plant to secure water supply for the West Pilbara.

Water Corporation will also be spending an additional \$167 million in maintenance and infrastructure upgrades.

On top of this, \$57 million is being invested to plan for Perth's next desalination plant, \$53 million for a new Regional Water Source Fund, and \$13 million to enhance conservation of the Swan and Canning Rivers and extend the Healthy Estuaries program.

Energy decarbonisation

Mr Speaker, this investment combined with strategic energy decarbonisation initiatives will shape the diversification of WA's economy for years to come.

We are streamlining processes and reducing red tape to unlock over 1,100 megawatts of electricity from new wind farms by the end of 2029.

In addition, we are committing \$1.4 billion to the Clean Energy Fund to facilitate new transmission projects, including stage 1 of Clean Energy Link East.

This project, combined with Clean Energy Link North will deliver 3 gigawatts of renewable energy to commercial, industrial and residential customers and create 800 local jobs.

Supporting tourism, creative industries and science

Mr Speaker, we continue to invest in our tourism, cultural and science industries.

Our ambitious approach to attract more events to WA has paid off with over 10 million visitors over the past year.

In this Budget we continue this momentum with an additional \$70 million including funding for the 2028 Kimberley Total Solar Eclipse, new Aboriginal tourism programs, and additional funds to Business Events Perth.

We are getting on with building Perth Park – our premier sporting and entertainment precinct that will help boost our local tourism economy, support our live music and arts industry, and create new sporting opportunities for Western Australians, including for cycling and motorsport.

Over \$44 million of additional funding will be provided to the arts and creative industries, including major arts organisations and the iconic FRINGE WORLD festival.

And we are establishing a \$500 million Major Projects Fund to partner with the Commonwealth and industry to progress major projects such as Scitech and the Aboriginal Cultural Centre.

CONNECTING OUR STATE

Mr Speaker, this Budget delivers on our commitment to keep our community connected with over \$2.7 billion of additional transport investment across our State.

In a State as large as WA, investing in our roads and public transport is essential to keep people and freight moving.

Our stage 1 METRONET rail projects have been completed.

METRONET has seen the delivery of 23 new stations, 72 kilometres of new rail lines and the removal of 15 level crossings.

Those opposite argued:

- that the suburbs didn't need it;
- that no one would use it; and
- that we were building it too early.

How wrong they were.

Together with our METRONET investment, we made public transport simpler and cheaper to use.

And now we are seeing more people than ever before use our public transport system.

Another project the Liberal Party opposes is the expansion of the ferry service – METRONET on Swan.

\$107 million is budgeted over the next four years to deliver the WA made electric ferries, and new terminals.

We have also locked in \$14 million to make permanent the Broome town bus service. The expanded service will ensure residents and visitors can access improved and affordable public transport.

Mr Speaker, very shortly, those living in the South West will see a new bright orange Australind train on the tracks.

There won't be just one railcar set though, but four serving the region.

When the old Australind was first commissioned in 1987, the advertisements promoted the new Australind as "the train that thinks it's a plane".

We won't be that bold this time around, but will be committing \$45 million to increase the number of services to and from Bunbury.

We have also committed additional investment to support Perth's growing public transport network, including:

- \$68 million for further depot upgrades to support our electric bus rollout;
- \$50 million to replace the Sutherland Street rail bridge support structures; and
- \$65 million to complete the Stirling Bus Interchange project.

There are a number of new road projects that are being funded, including:

- \$124 million to improve connectivity at the Murdoch Health and Knowledge Precinct;
- jointly committing with the Commonwealth to Stage 1 of the Anketell Road project; and
- \$83 million for Stage 1 of the Great Northern Highway – Fitzroy to Gogo project.

Mr Speaker, we are investing \$340 million to support a range of road safety initiatives, including:

- \$61 million for community awareness campaigns and school education programs;
- \$36 million for the Driving Access and Equity Program; and
- \$22 million for greater police presence and law enforcement on our roads.

Across our coastline, we are also investing to support the recreational and commercial boating industry, including \$89 million for the next phase of the Bunbury waterfront transformation, and further investment in key maritime facilities.

BUILDING STRONG AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Mr Speaker, this Budget continues our Government's track record of supporting the most vulnerable in our community and keeping our community safe.

Police and justice

In this Budget we inject an additional \$530 million in our hard-working Western Australia Police Force, including funding for Operation Regional Shield, an additional 15 community liaison officers and continued support for PCYCs in regional Western Australia.

We are investing \$955 million to fund a range of initiatives across the Justice system including:

- \$47 million to bolster the capability of the Director of Public Prosecutions;

- \$71 million for the continuation and expansion of youth justice initiatives, including therapeutic Children’s Court programs and continued implementation of a therapeutic model of care for young people in detention;
- \$61 million to extend services at all Target 120 sites and maintain supports for young people and their families;
- \$41 million for the Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy;
- \$88 million on prison expansions and upgrades;
- \$92 million for Criminal Injuries Compensation payments; and
- \$30 million for the National Redress Scheme.

Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence

Mr Speaker, in this Budget we enhance our efforts to end the stain of domestic violence in our community.

We are investing an additional \$106 million to boost accommodation, shelters and services, including:

- \$33 million of operational funding for existing refuges and safe houses, including Munda Mida and Warlang Bidi therapeutic refuges;
- \$30 million to bring new refuges and safe houses online in Newman, Bunbury, Narrogin, Albany, Mandurah and Innaloo; and
- additional funding for the Family Violence Perpetrator Intervention Program and the Leave Safe Stay Safe program.

And we are investing \$14 million for out-of-hours social workers and the Ngala Thriving Families service navigation program, together with additional funding for sexual assault support services.

Child protection

Mr Speaker, in this Budget we invest an additional \$619 million in child protection.

This includes \$421 million for the continuation of critical out-of-home care services and supporting service delivery for children in care.

We are boosting funding for the Home Stretch WA program by \$30 million.

And as outlined earlier, we are backing foster and grand carers with a \$46 million boost to support these carers who play a vital role in our community.

INVESTING IN EDUCATION

Mr Speaker, the record breaking commitments in this Budget continue with a significant \$1.7 billion boost to education.

Building schools

An additional \$981 million will be injected into new and improved school infrastructure.

We are investing \$379 million to deliver major upgrades to Karrinyup, Byford, Cowaramup and Glen Forrest Primary Schools, together with upgrades to Como, Champion Bay, Belridge and Geraldton High Schools.

We are opening four new primary schools for the 2028 school year and progressing the new Alkimos North Senior High School.

There is a major boost to maintenance and minor works in this Budget, with an additional \$408 million.

This will include expenditure on general maintenance and a range of works like replacing roofs, hardcourt improvements and toilet upgrades.

We are investing a further \$46 million in our Cool the Schools program, bringing our total commitment to \$89 million to complete improvements at 45 schools.

And we are adding a further \$96 million to boost classroom capacity at Harrisdale Senior High School, as well as Piara Waters, Riva and Inglewood Primary Schools.

Supporting kids with disability

We are providing additional supports for kids with disability, including a \$310 million uplift to disability funding for public schools and establishing a new Disability and Inclusion Professional Learning Hub.

This reflects a more than doubling of our investment into supports for kids with disability in our schools, from \$388 million in 2020 to more than \$800 million in 2026.

This is on top of the nearly \$361 million of new State and Commonwealth investment over the next five years to establish Thriving Kids services that will support children under nine.

INVESTING IN REGIONAL WA

Mr Speaker, as you would have heard, many of the new initiatives we have described today are in regional Western Australia.

In fact, in this Budget, we are committing \$2 billion of additional investment in regional infrastructure, bringing our total pipeline of works to \$9.5 billion over the next four years.

When it comes to regional roads, we are spending over \$3.6 billion over the next four years.

And we continue to co-invest with CBH in regional rail facilities to deliver greater productivity in our agriculture industry. This includes siding upgrades and extensions at eleven CBH sites, plus a major upgrade to the Midland main line.

In addition, we are making targeted investments in the College of Agriculture, supporting biosecurity incident and response activities, and extending the Aboriginal pastoral program which is successfully creating job opportunities in agriculture.

This Budget we continue our support for Royalties for Regions with over \$4 billion of funding over the next four years.

CONCLUSION

Mr Speaker, this is a Budget that delivers on what matters to Western Australians.

In this time of economic uncertainty, I am proud that we are providing a record level of cost-of-living support.

I am proud that we are making record investments to unlock more housing supply and help first homebuyers.

I am proud that we are investing in our hospitals more than ever before, and undertaking the biggest hospital building program in our State's history.

And I am proud that we are doubling down on our efforts to keep our economy strong and create more jobs for Western Australians.

It is the Cook Labor Government's strong economic and responsible financial management that provides the capacity to invest in the future of Western Australia.

Western Australians are aspirational, hard working and positive people.

We embrace opportunity and even when times get tough, we stare down threats and keep forging our path.

This Budget is a positive plan for our future, and I commend the Budget to the House.

I would now like to proceed with the formalities.

Appropriation (Recurrent 2026-27) Bill 2026 is for recurrent services, which comprise the delivery of services and administered grants, subsidies and other transfer payments.

Recurrent service estimates of \$40,800,028,000 include a sum of \$3,791,194,000 permanently appropriated under Special Acts, leaving an amount of \$37,008,834,000 that is to be appropriated in the manner shown in the Schedule to Appropriation (Recurrent 2026-27) Bill 2026.

Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill to the House.

