

Media Release

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PUBLIC TRANSPORT WINNERS AND LOSERS IN STATE BUDGET

The state budget announcement that the extension of the Northern Suburbs railway to Butler is still on track for completion by 2014-15 will be warmly welcomed by Butler residents, the UDIA said today.

Funding for extra train sets to service the increased demand is also good news that will be welcomed by tightly squeezed patrons on the Joondalup line, though they'll still be feeling squeeze until they're delivered in 2013-14. An additional 15 three-car train sets will be ordered in 2011-12.

However Ellenbrook residents have a right to be angry that planning funds for an Ellenbrook rail line go off the rails after 2012-13, putting a much-needed line to the suburb on-hold indefinitely.

UDIA CEO Debra Goostrey said the budget was also a mixed bag for homebuyers. Efficiency gains made in processing land developments in one area, making housing cheaper, were off-set by efficiency losses through "economies" made elsewhere.

"We welcome the increased employees in Land Accessibility Planning and Policy Development," Ms Goostrey said.

"This should reduce land supply delays and the cost of providing new lots to homebuyers," she said.

Employee numbers in that section of the Department of Planning will be boosted from 270 in 2009-10 to a target of 385 in 2011-12.

"However the demise of funding for the Electronic Land Development Program, an initiative which takes land development processing into the 21st Century, will wipe out many of the efficiency gains in approvals."

"This flies in the face of the government's housing affordability strategy announced last week which emphasised the need to increase efficiencies in the land approval system."

"This won't help affordability for new homebuyers and the sad state of the WA housing market is reflected in the fact that the government has revised its transfer duty estimates down by \$435 million, or almost 27 per cent," she said.

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