

ACT's Light Rail Project - Capital Metro

September 2012

On Friday 21 September 2012, ACT Chief Minister Katy Gallagher announced that if re-elected, the ACT Labor Government will establish the ACT's first large-scale private sector partnership to plan, finance and develop the first stage of a Light Rail Network for Canberra, known as Capital Metro. The ACT elections will be held on Saturday 20 October 2012. ACT Labor currently holds minority government with the support of the ACT Greens.

The Chief Minister's announcement is available [here](#).

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Capital Metro

Stage one of Capital Metro will be a light rail service with vehicles capable of carrying up to 200 people at 8-10 minute frequencies along a 12km route from Hibberson Street in Gungahlin to the City Centre. The proposal will involve major stations at Gungahlin Town Centre and Dickson Group Centre with high quality stops 750m-1.5km apart at various points along Flemington Road and Northbourne Avenue, terminating between Allara and Rudd Streets close to the City Bus Interchange. In earlier planning stages, Capital Metro stage one has been known as the City to Gungahlin Project.

Stage one of Capital Metro will be developed on the median alignment along Flemington Road and Northbourne Avenue. It is proposed to retain the existing verge and median widths along Northbourne Avenue and also provide dedicated 3 metre wide segregated cycle lanes to improve cycling safety along Northbourne Avenue. Flemington Road will include 1.5m dedicated cycleways in the verge. Improvements will also be made to pedestrian infrastructure along the corridor.

The development will help manage congestion on the crowded Flemington Road Northbourne Avenue corridor and the broader Canberra road network. Currently travel delay during the AM peak is approximately 16 minutes. The completion of Capital Metro stage one is projected to reduce travel delay by up to 6 minutes based on the business as usual scenario. Capital Metro's travel times are estimated to be at least 30 per cent faster than general vehicle traffic.

Capital Metro stage one is anticipated to be completed by 2018, with construction estimated to commence in 2016. This timeframe is comparable with the Gold Coast light rail project, which is now under construction and is estimated to have an 8 year project life from project inception to completion.

Options currently under consideration for the second and subsequent stages of Capital Metro include Kingston (East Lake) to the City via Barton, Woden to the City, Woden to Erindale and Tuggeranong, as well as to Belconnen, Weston Creek and Molonglo.

Funding

The current revised total project cost estimate is \$614 million. This cost estimate will continue to be refined as the project progresses through forward design. This figure includes feasibility, design, construction and vehicle purchase including a light rail depot.

Funding for Capital Metro stage one project delivery and construction will be through a private sector partnership, with finance and delivery models to be developed as part of work in 2013-14 and 2014-15.

In order to progress this project, ACT Labor will commit to \$30 million in capital funding. This \$30 million funding will be used to undertake the next stage of concept and design work, and development of funding and financing analysis and models in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 period.

A submission was lodged with Infrastructure Australia for Nation Building II funding from the Federal Government in early August 2012. The submission seeks \$15m from the Federal Government for feasibility and forward design during 2013–14 to 2014–15. If successful, a dollar for dollar matching contribution would be required from the ACT Government. The forward design and feasibility work would provide the basis for seeking further funding from the Federal Government and would explore options for private investment. The announcement of any funding from Infrastructure Australia would occur in conjunction with next year's Federal Budget. In the meantime, work will continue on this project.

More information about Infrastructure Australia is available [here](#).

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	TOTAL
Capital	\$15m*	\$15m*	-	-	\$30 million*
Recurrent**	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$15m	\$15m	-	-	\$30 million*

* This is ACT Labor's committed funding. This will reduce to \$7.5 million each year if the funding submission to Infrastructure Australia is successful.

** Recurrent funding will be provided to the Capital Metro Project Office (currently the Gungahlin to City Project Office) from the Land Development Agency. The LDA is not budget funded.

Background

For some time the ACT Government has also been investigating options to construct Light Rail Transit from the Gungahlin Town Centre to the City Centre as the first stage of a broader rapid transit network across the city.



In 2012, ACT Labor established the Gungahlin to City Project Office, now known as the Capital Metro Project Office, to coordinate the delivery of rapid transit and urban redevelopment along the Gungahlin to City corridor.

Detailed engineering and economic analysis has been undertaken as part of the project, with the economic analysis confirming a strong benefit cost ratio of 2.34 for Light Rail Transit on the Gungahlin to City Corridor, supported by more people and jobs moving into the corridor over the next 20 years.

The Capital Metro project is part of the Government's Transport for Canberra strategy to improve Canberra's public transport network. Other improvements to public transport in the ACT currently underway include the extension of Red Rapid services to the Kippax Group centre to service West Belconnen, Real Time Bus Information, the construction of the ANU Exchange Bus Station, the new Belconnen Community Bus Station and the Belconnen to City Transit way project.

Further Information

City to Gungahlin transport options Fact Sheet:

http://www.transport.act.gov.au/studies_projects/City%20To%20Gungahlin%20factsheet.pdf

City to Gungahlin Concept Report:

http://www.transport.act.gov.au/studies_projects/City%20to%20Gungahlin%20Concept%20report.pdf

City to Gungahlin Project update April 2012:

http://www.transport.act.gov.au/studies_projects/City%20to%20Gungahlin%20transit%20Update%202012.pdf

Community Survey findings:

http://www.transport.act.gov.au/studies_projects/City%20to%20Gungahlin%20survey%20findings.pdf

Transport for Canberra website:

http://www.transport.act.gov.au/studies_projects/northbourne_study.html