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ALLOW ME TO CUT THROUGH THE RUBBISH

Ben Harvey decodes what Treasurer Rita Saffioti really meant in her Budget speech

Treasurer Rita Saffioti had plenty to say after handing down the 2025-27 State Budget. But here is what she is actually telling the West Australian public.

In this Budget, the Cook Labor Government doubles down on our efforts to boost housing supply. And what she meant, John Curry says he's pulling every lever. He's pulling something but it's not producing any houses.

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

Dwelling investment is forecast to grow by 3.3 per cent in 2025-26, the strongest growth in 12 years. That's a lot of cardboard boxes.

Our unemployment rate has remained consistently low by historical standards. Any means can get a job. Just ask my speedometer.

Our fiscally conservative approach to budget management continues to be recognised. Mental notes do not count when meeting this line.

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

We are creating a new Grand Carers Gold Card. Codenamed: Operation Golden Girls.

In this Budget, we are delivering targeted measures to support families most in need. Like struggling prisoners who can not

afford two mortgages so have to leave to West Perth.

These investments will see more than 5000 social and affordable homes delivered over the next four years. Which means every year will have a Picasso for a neighbour.

This Budget will deliver a \$48 million investment to establish two Housing and Infrastructure Advanced Manufacturing Facilities. They're actually cardboard box factories.

This Budget provides \$682 million to support regional housing supply. We welcome \$70 million of investment by the State, RHP and Hancock Prospecting to support this initiative. WA but 2.8 have we come.

We are working across Government to unlock new land supply. Welcome to Perth's newest suburb: Dogears.

This Budget will deliver a \$100 fuel support payment to every WA driver's licence holder. Which won't even get you to Lancelin, so you'll have to walk the rest of the way home.

We are boosting hospital maintenance by \$214 million. And we'll probably still have bloody lead in the water at the children's hospital.

We are also implementing measures to improve patient flow. If you've got to discharge, you'll be discharged!

We are stepping in to support older Western Australians to receive the appropriate care in the appropriate setting. They'll get a Pseudol in the carport.

We are investing an additional \$60 million to transition older patients from hospital to community settings. Like freeway underpasses.

We are investing \$83 million to support the development of the green iron and steel

industry. Codenamed: Operation Horse Pocus.

We continue this momentum with an additional \$70 million including funding for the 2026 Kimberley Total Solar Eclipse. Because we like it when the position is in the back.

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. Baccarat? What racetrack?

Over \$44 million of additional funding will be provided to the creative industries. To support the people who wrote this Budget.

This Budget continues our commitment to our Made in WA strategy. Warrumbly is real if taken out of box.

\$107 million is budgeted over the next four years to deliver the WA-made electric ferries, BYO cars. And batteries.

This Budget continues our Government's track record of supporting the most vulnerable in our community. Like Lachlan Hunter.

We are investing a further \$45 million in our Cool the Schools program. The kids all get an icy pole.

Mr Speaker – as you would have heard, many of the new initiatives we have described today are in regional Western Australia. Codenamed: Operation Vialat Vain.

Western Australians are exceptional, hardworking and positive people. We start down threats. Like Baz.

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

Full speed ahead on racetrack, whether Basil believes it or not

JOHN FLINT

Treasurer Rita Saffioti rebuffed latest one of the Opposition's pet bores.

She said the \$217.5 million Perth Park racetrack project at Burwood Park was not budgeted to cost a cent more.

National MP Lachlan Hunter was booed and suspended from the Legislative Assembly during a fractions Question Time on

Wednesday during Harry's changes over the Government's spending on the contentious racetrack.

Opposition Leader Basil Zengelis was also called to order three times, during the verbal war.

"We have to wait until the Budget is brought down," Premier Roger Cook told racetrack detractors.

Ms Saffioti told the media that

they could allow the Opposition's fear of accelerating costs on the project because it was still budgeted at \$217.5m.

It is referred to as "Perth Park" in the Budget papers. Mr Zengelis said it was hard to believe that the price hadn't budgeted.

"There appears to be some modern economic miracle, or modern economic miracle which has taken place in this area

where absolutely everything is going up," he said.

"This is a State Government, which desperately struggles with transparency. If you walked around and asked everyday West Australians, do you believe that after the scope of the project, the name of the project, the elements of the project, have all changed so consistently since it was first announced, but the price has not changed.

"I think fair-minded West Australians, would look at you and say that doesn't reconcile with what I know."

The proposed Supertards racetrack and entertainment precinct is opposed by the City of Perth and the Town of Victoria Park.

The racetrack and amphitheatre, which Mr Cook said many Western Australians support, are due to open in 2028.