



Infrastructure Victoria
Level 34
121 Exhibition St
MELBOURNE VIC 3000.

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Committee for Geelong (CfG) is delighted to be provided with the opportunity to lodge a submission to Infrastructure Victoria on Laying the Foundations.

Please note that the CfG's submission is not confidential and we therefore give consent for it to be made public.

Thank you for taking the time to review our submission and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours faithfully,

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COMMITTEE FOR GEELONG

SUBMISSION TO INFRASTRUCTURE VICTORIA

ON

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS – SETTING OBJECTIVES AND
IDENTIFYING NEEDS FOR VICTORIA'S 30-YEAR
INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

11 MARCH 2016

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1 Introduction

The Committee for Geelong (CfG) is pleased to lodge a submission to Infrastructure Victoria's *Laying the Foundation – Setting Objectives and identifying needs for Victoria's 30-year infrastructure strategy*.

Please note that the CfG's submission is not confidential.

The CfG is an independent, member-based organisation that advocates for the best overall long-term outcomes for Geelong. Our members represent the broad political spectrum and a breadth of industry both by sector and size. We work with members, leaders, stakeholders and governments to provide strategic leadership and influence to leverage the economic potential of the region to make Geelong a world-class place. As an independent advocate for Geelong, the CfG has a history of achieving genuine results by actively looking at ways to solve problems and confront challenges.

The CfG welcomes the opportunity to comment to the Laying the Foundations objectives which inform Victoria's 30-year Infrastructure Strategy, scheduled for release in late 2016.

2 Background

Geelong is Victoria's second largest city with a population of approximately 220,000 people. The regional economy is diverse – health, education and service sectors are now the key employers, however manufacturing is still important. Geelong also serves and important role in servicing Western Victoria.

The *Laying the Foundation* has identified the future population of the Geelong (G21) region of approximately 430,000 people. The CfG believes this projection significantly underestimates the future projections for Geelong and the wider region. We believe that Geelong could better position itself as Victoria's 'second city' and capture some of the additional 2.5 million people projected to live in Melbourne by 2046. Geelong is transforming and its infrastructure (the Port of Geelong, Avalon Airport, together with its road and rail connections), world class health and education services, employment and lifestyle opportunities are attracting many new residents and businesses to Geelong. These aspects make the Geelong region an ideal location to accommodate significant population growth.

Infrastructure is fundamental to facilitate the future growth of Geelong and the region. Transport and economic infrastructure is particularly important. On average, 12,000 people commute to Melbourne from Geelong for work, with 4,000 commuting into Geelong. The Port of Geelong, Avalon Airport and rail freight is also projected to grow by 2046.

2.1 **Draft objectives**

The CfG supports the Guiding Principles to collaborate, drive improved outcomes, use evidence wisely, consider non-build solutions first, promote responsible funding and financing and be open to change. We would also encourage Infrastructure Victoria to

actively seek innovation and alternative funding, delivery mechanisms and projects.

The Draft Objectives proposed in *Laying the Foundations* align with CfG's strategic objectives:

- Economic prosperity and innovation
- Infrastructure and capacity
- Community leadership and advocacy

CfG's Strategic Objective 2 specifically seeks to enhance the infrastructure and capacity of the Geelong Region by:

- Actively supporting the development of Avalon Airport
- Develop a rail strategy for Geelong that is evidence based and deliverable
- Develop a 50 year port and land freight infrastructure strategy and advocate for the development of Geelong Port
- Actively support the development of social infrastructure that advances the liveability of Geelong (including Vision 2, cultural infrastructure, and the completion of Simonds Stadium redevelopment)

The CfG actively supports population growth of the Geelong region and infrastructure provision is fundamental in providing a sustainable, liveable and thriving city. Development of a Second-tier city policy, combined with our commitment to the securing investment in defence, manufacturing and agricultural sectors - and more broadly job creation in the region - will need to be supported and enhanced by infrastructure commitments.

The CfG supports the Laying the Foundation Draft Objectives:

- Respond to population growth and change;
- Support healthy, safe and vibrant communities;
- Reduce disadvantage;
- Enable workforce participation;
- Lift Victoria's productivity;
- Support Victoria's changing globally integrated economy;
- Promote sustainable production and consumption;
- Protect and enhance natural environments;
- Support climate changes mitigation and adaptation; and
- Build Resilience to shocks.

3 Response to Laying the Foundation

3.1 Population growth and change

Geelong is Victoria's second largest city and the CfG supports the development of a strong national second-tier city policy for Australia's largest city economies (outside of the major cities in each State) which will benefit the nation's overall future economic performance. National and state policy agendas must be complemented by whole-of-

government policies that formally acknowledge and support the development of Australia's second-tier cities, including transport infrastructure planning. With the Victorian Government formally recognising Geelong as the State's 'second city' in its recently revised Plan Melbourne Refresh, together with representations made by the CfG to the 2015 national senate inquiry on the future role and contribution of regional capitals, Australia's second-tier cities are becoming increasingly important in their role in addressing future growth.

The CfG is actively seeking improved transport infrastructure including road and rail connections throughout Victoria, and particularly between Melbourne and Geelong. The CfG supports an integrated transport planning system which delivers a cost effective, efficient and sustainable movement of people and freight in and around the city and across the State.

The CfG's 'Geelong on Track' initiative aims to improve rail services between Melbourne and Geelong, and within Geelong. At present, approximately 12,000 Geelong residents commute to Melbourne for work and this number is expected to rise. Improvements to the road network and the further development of rail services, including the Regional Rail Link, should be complemented with more incentives for investment and job creation in regional areas, including Geelong.

Improvements to road infrastructure connections are critical to Geelong's future growth. Investment in the Western Distributor project will help to ease traffic congestion, and the CfG encourages the State Government to continue to focus on long term solutions for connections from western Victoria to eastern Victoria.

The CfG lodged a submission to the Victorian Government's Regional Network Development Plan (RNDP) process in 2015. The RNDP will set the long term future transport requirements for Victoria and has not yet been released.

Geelong's proximity to world-class education, health and lifestyle choices, together with its proximity to Melbourne, makes it an attractive and more affordable option for many. Improving access to Melbourne and around the Geelong region, is expected to have a positive impact on regional growth.

3.2 Support healthy, safe and vibrant communities

The CfG supports investment in creating vibrant, sustainable and healthy places. Investment in cultural and sporting infrastructure, such as the redevelopment of GPAC and the Geelong Gallery, together with the completion of Simonds Stadium and the Safe Harbour project by the Royal Geelong Yacht Club, are crucial to fostering a strong and active community. We recommend that Draft objective 2 is amended to also include access to regionally significant sporting infrastructure.

3.3 Reduce disadvantage

Reducing disadvantage is a key objective and the CfG believes that the draft needs focus on improvements to accessibility, as well as addressing housing affordability and social justice. The Geelong Region is positioning itself as a centre of excellence for disability and health services. The establishment of the Transport Accident Commission, together with

decisions to locate the Victorian Worksafe Authority and the National Disability Insurance Agency headquarters in Geelong have assisted with the growth of this sector. The CfG agrees that the Draft Strategy needs to focus on this sector and more broadly supporting investment to improve housing affordability and access to services in the most disadvantaged parts of our region.

3.4 Enable workforce participation

The draft needs seek to address the access to employment in Melbourne, provide better links to non-city employment and access to childcare. The CfG requests Infrastructure Victoria to expand the draft and emphasise the importance of education (particularly Year 12 attainment rates) and also refer to improving links in and around regional areas for both employment and education.

3.5 Lift Victoria's productivity

The Port of Geelong is Victoria's largest specialised bulk goods port, trading in both dry and wet cargo including petroleum products, grain, woodchips and fertiliser. Last financial year the port handled more than 13 million tonnes of cargo, worth \$8.4 billion. It is a vital component of Victoria's transport infrastructure and plays a key role in the economic health of not just the city and surrounding region, but the state as a whole. The draft needs a greater focus on freight and airports, which would be supported by the CfG.

A recent economic impact study forecast commissioned by the Victorian Regional Channels Authority (VRCA) highlighted that jobs and trade will grow by 50 per cent in the next two decades. Getting infrastructure right – both on land and water – will play an important part in maximising growth and lifting port productivity.

Key drivers of infrastructure needs at Geelong's port include:

- The Geelong Refinery, owned by Viva Energy Australia, produces about half of the state's petrol and other fuel needs. Pipelines connect the refinery with Viva Energy's terminal and other customer terminals at Newport, from where the majority of fuels are distributed.
- Terminals Pty Ltd operates a bulk liquid storage facility adjacent to Geelong Refinery, using the Refinery Piers for the movement of product from vessels to shore.
- Geelong's port provides a vital hub for the movement of bulk goods from Victoria's agricultural industry.
- Grain is transported to GrainCorp's terminal at the port via rail and road for export via bulk vessels or packed into containers for export through the port of Melbourne.
- Woodchip exporters use the port, with the loading of woodchips onto vessels possible at two separate berths.
- A number of port users take advantage of Geelong's proximity to Melbourne to trade through the port with the majority of goods destined for metropolitan Melbourne.
- The port generates a diverse range of workforce skills across many varied businesses and organisations. ICT infrastructure and services also provide opportunities for productivity improvements with port users and for growth of the large service industry supporting the port.

The Geelong Port-City 2050 report aims to establish Geelong as a Port-City. Ports have been the origin of many cities, driving their economic development and forging strong links between the city and port. Over time, as cities grow and their economies diversify, those links can diminish. The City-Port Project considers how ports can be key drivers of urban economic development and how they interact with the urban environment.

There are strong parallels between the Port-City concept and Laying the Foundations' principles and objectives. These centre on how the port, as a significant hub of infrastructure, can drive supply chain competitiveness and deliver economic development locally and regionally while mitigating negative impacts and providing opportunities to boost amenity.

Ports are a key link in the overall logistics chain for import and export trade. Any weak links between the port and other components of that supply chain can have a negative impact on the port's competitiveness. This, in turn, can spread ripples right down the line, right across the state. Given this, the delivery of the Murray Basin Rail project will provide vital support to growth in our region.

Promoting responsible funding and financing is a key in the push to improve infrastructure. Geelong's port has a mix of private and public ownership of infrastructure. Significant developments can require support from private and public entities. It is vital that Infrastructure Victoria carefully consider ways to support co-investment from public and private sources to meet future infrastructure funding needs.

When it comes to infrastructure projects, co-ordinating the timing and investment of infrastructure between government organisations and levels of government can be a challenge. Different decision-making processes and criteria can complicate infrastructure development co-ordination.

Geelong's port is a cornerstone of Geelong's economy. It has helped shape our city's past and will continue to play an important part in its future.

3.6 Support Victoria's changing globally integrated economy

Geelong is well-positioned to grow its international competitiveness. Its access to port, air and rail infrastructure ensure the manufacturing, agricultural, service and tourism industries have direct access to markets. CfG believes that continued investment in Avalon Airport is a priority for our region. As Melbourne continues to grow, there will be increasing pressure on metropolitan airports, particularly from urban encroachment. Avalon Airport, with its access to port and road infrastructure together with the planning for rail, is ready to accommodate significant growth. The CfG is pleased that global connectedness is recognised in the draft objectives.

3.7 Promote sustainable production and consumption

Sustainability and waste management is a key consideration for Victoria's future. Managing water, food security and energy efficiency will be increasingly important. Long term waste management infrastructure planning is crucial. Many communities are vocally

opposed to new waste recovery and landfills, but they are, and will continue to be a crucial part of managing our communities.

3.8 Protect and enhance natural environments

Protecting and enhancing the natural environment is also very important. The CfG supports sustainable development in sensitive environmental locations. The draft needs are also supported.

3.9 Support climate change mitigation and adaptation

The CfG supports sustainable development in sensitive environmental locations. The draft needs are also supported.

3.10 Build resilience to shocks

The CfG supports this recommendation and the draft needs are also supported.

4 Conclusion

The CfG welcomes the *Laying the Foundation* document and we look forward to continuing to work with Infrastructure Victoria to leverage the economic prosperity of our region.

5 Contact Details

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