

## Committee for Geelong Priorities for Government 2021/22

### Overview:

#### Geelong's Growth

Prior to COVID and now fuelled by trends related to the pandemic, the greater Geelong region is one of the fastest growing cities in the country. Residential growth is booming, and property prices are escalating in the Geelong region. The increase in migration from Melbourne to the Geelong region has been clearly documented with Geelong recording the third highest net migration figure in Australia.

*"More than 9,100 people left Melbourne and moved to Geelong in the 2019-20 financial year, with a total of 15,000 Australians choosing to relocate to the region. ABS data shows around 10,700 people left Greater Geelong leading the area to record a net internal migration of 4,977. The region recorded the third highest net migration figure in Australia behind Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. It was the only region in the top five not in Queensland. <ref: Geelong Advertiser, 16 June 2021 Geelong migration equal to Melbourne population loss>*

With the opportunity for people to choose to live in Geelong and work from home on a more regular basis, we believe that this strong level of population growth will continue and must be supported by a range of initiatives (please refer to priority list below.)

Part of this challenge includes the impact of COVID-19 on the purpose and function of cities across the globe. In an opinion piece from the Committee for Geelong (<https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/opinion-piece/cbd-must-adapt-to-life-after-pandemic/>), and prior to the release of the Central Geelong Framework Plan, these issues and opportunities were highlighted.

The following trends and data provide food for thought:

- More people are predicted to continue to work from home than prior to the pandemic.
- International data predicts that over twenty per cent of office workers will continue to work from home in some capacity. Prior to the pandemic, this figure was five per cent.
- As less people commute to CBDs, office space demand is predicted to decline. While office spaces are currently reinventing floor plans to ensure that social distancing is complied with and the need for private offices brought back into focus, the demand for office space will lessen.
- Consumer spending in the CBD will decrease, with some research stating the decline

- to be somewhere between five and ten per cent against pre-pandemic levels. CBDs are vital parts of our community and perform value-added roles including agglomeration, entertainment, cultural experiences, and larger-scale social interaction. However, we now need to revision our CBDs, and design healthy, sustainable environments for people to live, work and play in. There will be a need for mixed use spaces, co-working in cafes and hubs, spaces with fresh air and room to walk outside, and more green spaces

While there will be return to the CBD for some office workers, not all will return. A clear opportunity for the Geelong CBD is to incentivise and plan for increased residential living acknowledging Geelong's expected significant growth including the need for an additional 73,400 dwellings. This includes the expectation in the City of Greater Geelong's Settlement Strategy that 50 percent of all new dwellings will be delivered through infill development by 2047 and that social and affordable housing are essential infrastructure. (For more information please refer to a range of links to Committee for Geelong submissions related to the Central Geelong Framework Plan at the base of this document).

### The need for a 'Plan Geelong'

The Commission of Inquiry into the City of Greater Geelong made several findings – and those outlined on page 13 of the Inquiry report

[https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0023/165254/Geelong-City-Council-Report.pdf](https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0023/165254/Geelong-City-Council-Report.pdf), include:

- *Urgent priority be given to the development of a 20 to 30-year outcome focused vision and strategy for the Council and the City developed in consultation with key business, community and other stakeholders; and*
- *The long-term vision and strategy to guide Council's approach to investment in and advocacy for the economic development, population growth, environmental sustainability and community services of Greater Geelong. **Subsequent development of long-term capital investment, business and advocacy plans to guide the Council's work for the City will be essential.***

The City of Greater Geelong has delivered on a community vision – the Clever & Creative vision (<https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/clevercreative/default.aspx>) - however, this Vision does not yet deliver on the need for a strategy and subsequent development of plans for long term capital investment, business and advocacy.

The Committee for Geelong believes that there is a need for an overarching Plan Geelong (akin to a Plan Melbourne) to fully develop the opportunities presented to harness Geelong growth sustainably and ease Melbourne's population pressures.

The Committee for Geelong has long advocated for a 'Plan Geelong'. Our history of research and policy development includes Resilient Geelong research paper (2020), Winning from Second report (2016), and Australia's Gateways to Growth report (2019) – a collaboration between the City of Greater Geelong, the City of Newcastle, and the Wollongong City Council. Links to these reports can be found at the base of this document.

In essence, Geelong does and will play a significant role in easing the population pressures of Melbourne whilst maintaining liveability, affordability and accessibility – but only if the planning is long term, strategic and supported by all levels of government. Until this work is agreed and completed – it is very difficult to align other significant planning work conducted by local and state governments.

### **List of current priorities 2021/22**

Please find to follow a range of priorities and projects supported by the Committee for Geelong for discussions with Government. This list is not exclusive but represents the key initiatives considered vital at this point in time leading to the May 2021/22 Budget processes.

**More detailed briefings on priorities listed below can be provided on request.**

#### **1. Public Transport network planning and infrastructure**

- \$1,000,000 commitment to fund the Department of Transport to deliver a Greater Geelong Metropolitan Public Transport Plan linking to the G21 Integrated Region Transport Strategy and the Growth Areas Transport Investigation Study.
- A dedicated rail station at Avalon on the Geelong-Melbourne line between Little River and Lara stations as part of Geelong Faster Rail.
- \$7.5 million for a trial of Advanced Rail-less Trams in Geelong
- Business case funding for the Melbourne Metro Two Tunnel as outlined in Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051, Recommendation 61: *Prepare for Melbourne Metro Two and direct Geelong rail services: Within five years complete a business case for the Melbourne Metro Two Tunnel project, and protect the land required to construct it. Consider using the tunnel to re-route Geelong services direct to Southern Cross and consider new stations or relocating existing stations.*
- Finalisation of the planning and delivery of a second tunnel between Geelong and South Geelong station. Consideration to the potential for a subway station in Central Geelong as part of Revitalising Central Geelong.

#### **2. Progression of the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCEC)**

- An update on the current business case for the GCEC, to identify new opportunities, for example: technology capabilities
- Create a local stakeholder working group inc. firm project timeline
- A commitment for additional funding (if required) to build the Centre
- Establishment of a local Trust to drive the business of the GCEC.
- Ensure that the architecture of the building is reflective of Geelong's UNESCO designation as a Creative City of Design.

#### **3. Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan**

- Implementation funding for the refreshed Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan projects including the ongoing development and funding for the Green Spine (a key project of the Committee for Geelong instigated project VISION 2) and the policy direction and funding for the Living 3220 project which aims to increase residential living in the Geelong CBD from 2000 residents to 12,000 residents.

- The Geelong Advertiser highlighted the Committee for Geelong’s call for more residents into the CBD (1 December 2021, p.9). Full media statement here: [A CBD to call home - Committee for Geelong](#)

#### **4. Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Opportunities**

- \$15 million for Stage 1 of the You Yangs Precinct Masterplan, including improvements to visitor infrastructure & education infrastructure and ensuring there are strategic links to the new Aboriginal Cultural Tourism business case project, the Creative Industries Strategy for the G21 region and focus on Traditional Owner engagement and cultural tourism objectives.
- Support Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation to develop a Cultural Tourism Business Case.

#### **5. Sustainable and Collaborative Creative Industries in the G21 Region**

- \$90 million for Geelong Gallery expansion into Geelong City Hall
- Funding to support the implementation of the Creative Industries Strategy for the G21 Region – *Making Change*.  
(REF: [https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/CI\\_STRATEGY\\_2021-2026-web.pdf](https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/CI_STRATEGY_2021-2026-web.pdf) and Case for Support document [https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CI\\_CASE-FOR-SUPPORT-web.pdf](https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CI_CASE-FOR-SUPPORT-web.pdf))

#### **6. Business case for Roadmap to Zero Emissions: Geelong Jobs Report**

The Roadmap to Zero Emissions: Geelong Region Jobs Analysis report < <http://geelongrenewablesnotgas.org/zero-emissions-jobs-for-geelong/>> is a key first step for our community to understand clearly the economic opportunity to reach zero emissions while creating sustainable jobs in our economy.

The Committee for Geelong’s ‘Resilient Geelong’ report published in late 2020 recommends that this work be conducted as a pathway to zero emissions, future proofed, local economy.

In 2022, the Committee for Geelong will embark on a new strategy, and we see this Roadmap to Zero Emissions report as a foundation for deeper analysis and a key action area for us for the next 3-4 years. Part of that deeper analysis could incorporate new 2021 Census data to update the report, and the potential to develop a business case to define the level of public and private investment required in the region to make these jobs a reality.

**Please see below for source documents for reference:**

Submissions to the Central Geelong Framework Plan

<https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/CFG-Submission-Central-Geelong-Framework-Plan-07JULY2021-FINAL.pdf>

<https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/CfG-and-UDIA-Submission-30-September-2021.pdf>

**Research reports:**

Resilient Geelong: Reasons for success and challenges for a post-COVID-19 future

<https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Johnson-et-al.-Resilient-Geelong-Research-Paper.pdf>

Australia's Gateway Cities: Gateways to Growth

<https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Australias-Gateway-Cities-Report-and-Appendices.pdf>

Winning from Second

<https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Winning from Second web-01-Geelong-1-18.pdf>

<ends>

**For more information please contact: Jennifer Cromarty, Committee for Geelong**

**M: 0413 241 033 / [jennifer.cromarty@committeeforgeelong.com.au](mailto:jennifer.cromarty@committeeforgeelong.com.au)**

