



18 June 2024

Tom Whiting
Senior Strategic Transport Planner
City of Greater Geelong

Dear Tom

Submission to the City of Greater Geelong Integrated Transport Strategy for Geelong

The Committee for Geelong welcomes the opportunity to put forward a submission to the Integrated Transport Strategy for Geelong.

We play a critical role in strategic planning to guide investment and improve liveability in central Geelong and the region based on deep engagement with our communities. Our membership comprises over 130 business and community organisations.

Through our regular member engagement, transport consistently rates as the biggest issue facing Geelong's continued growth. This was reiterated in our most recent member survey earlier this year.

Given this feedback, the Committee has been proactive in understanding the challenges, putting forward suggested priority initiatives, and advocating to Government.

This has included the release of our Future Geelong Map in late 2023, concluding our Future Geelong project; a project completed to imagine Geelong at a population of one million people and how we can achieve this growth while protecting our lifestyle.

The map is available [here](#) and includes a number of priority transport projects.

Many of these projects align closely with the G21 Integrated Transport Strategy released mid-2023, of which the Committee was a contributor and supporter.

The strategy highlights that Geelong's rapid population growth, which will continue for another two decades, has not been matched with transport infrastructure investment, particularly public and active transport. We are one of the most car dependent communities in Victoria and congestion is escalating dramatically on our key arterials.

The lived experience is reflected in the modelling and analysis for the transport strategy (undertaken by transport experts Veitch Lister) which shows that Geelong faces a 490% increase in peak hour commute times within 15 years on all roads leading into and out of the city if no investment is made in alternate transport modes.

In light of the Geelong Fast Rail project being abandoned in the Federal Government's 2023 Infrastructure Review, \$2 billion allocated to the Fast Rail project by the Commonwealth Government will go back into the Federal Infrastructure Pipeline. The \$2 billion matched investment by the Victorian Government appears lost given commentary in the recent State Budget.

Committee for Geelong

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We have implored the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments to reallocate the \$4 billion investment to other transformative transport infrastructure projects needed for the Geelong region. Specifically:

- Construction of the Avalon Airport Train Station, in line with the proposal put forward by Avalon Airport. This proposal is a cost-effective way to deliver rail connection to Melbourne's second airport and provide improved public transport connections for the thousands of employees working at the Avalon precinct.
- Completion of the Bellarine Link extension of the Geelong Ring Road. This project will not only complete the Ring Road and connect the growth corridors of Geelong to the Bellarine, but critically take heavy vehicles out of Central Geelong- something that is critical to attracting more people to live in our CBD.
- Development of a public transport and active travel link in the corridor preserved between Armstrong Creek and Geelong.
- Removal of level crossings on the Geelong-Melbourne line at Lara, North Shore and McKillop Street, Geelong. These level crossings are safety hazards, disruptive to traffic and regularly cause disruption to the Geelong-Melbourne train service.
- Re-directing Geelong services back through the Werribee line as part of broader initiatives to improve frequency, reliability and comfort on the Geelong line.

These projects align to the Committee's Future Geelong project, and form part of the G21 Integrated Transport Strategy. We believe they will contribute to improved public transport outcomes for the broader Geelong region.

Furthermore, they will provide positive economic outcomes by connecting people with places of employment and create improved pre-conditions for increased housing density within Central Geelong and along Geelong's rail corridor.

Geelong is Australia's fastest growing region, and our transport infrastructure needs investment to match this growth. We believe much of the work in developing an Integrated Transport Plan for Geelong has been completed, and would direct the City of Greater Geelong to these previous pieces of work.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Michael Johnston'.

Michael Johnston

CEO

Committee for Geelong