

Committee for Geelong Priorities – 2022-23 Victorian Election 2022

For 20 years, the Committee for Geelong has provided an independent and strategic voice for the region. Our role is to provide strategic leadership, advocacy and influence, and to leverage the economic and social prosperity of the Geelong region. Our 130 members represent a breadth of organisations both by sector and size: from SMEs, large commercial enterprises, government agencies and not for profits through to global corporations.

The Committee for Geelong engages with members and stakeholders to develop priorities that aim to deliver on our purpose – *To Design Geelong's Best Future*. The following priorities have been discussed with government over several months and will continue to be a part of the dialogue with government, opposition and other current and potential Members of Parliament in the lead up to the November State Election.

Pre-election request

The Committee for Geelong is calling for the public release of the Central Geelong Framework Plan and the Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan refresh prior to the State Election.

These two pieces of work are vital for the ongoing growth and planning of our CBD. The Committee for Geelong has been deeply engaged with the progress of the Central Geelong Framework Plan - please refer to our submission lodged during part of this process [CFG-Submission-Central-Geelong-Framework-Plan-07JULY2021-FINAL.pdf \(committeeforgeelong.com.au\)](#)

Overview – Geelong's Growth

Prior to COVID and now fuelled by trends related to the pandemic, the 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 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. <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.

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).

We strongly support the need to increase the residential population in the Geelong CBD to 12,000 over the coming decades as part of the need to re-invent Central Geelong and increase amenity and safety.

Here is a recent article in the Geelong Advertiser on this issue <https://www.geelongadvertiser.com.au/news/geelong/geelong-workers-shun-cbd-offices-for-long-weekend/news-story/bc2a7ad28b8b517e11d0cdc59348a8a5> and an opinion piece with an overview of the need for planning documents to be released or launched <https://committeeforgeelong.com.au/opinion-piece/planning-key-to-citys-livability/>.

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 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 - 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 to fully develop the opportunities presented to harness Geelong growth sustainably and ease Melbourne's population pressures.

We have 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.

Commonwealth Games – legacy infrastructure investment

The Committee for Geelong is very excited at the prospect of a regionally hosted Commonwealth Games in 2026. As the largest regional city in the state, we are very well placed to support this significant international event. Geelong has a long history of hosting elite, world-class events, and can provide the necessary supports and activities for the expected increase in visitors. Kardinia Park is well placed as our local sporting hub with significant investments from your government into the precinct including GMHBA Stadium as a focal point for the Closing Ceremony.

With over \$500 million invested in the visitor economy-focused Geelong City Deal, the region can be a focal point for the 2026 Commonwealth Games including the planned Geelong Convention & Exhibition Centre on our waterfront – an asset that would also prove invaluable as part our local offering to the Games experience.

In support of the Commonwealth Games bid, the Little Malop St cultural precinct including our globally recognised Geelong Regional Library and the soon to be developed Geelong Arts Centre can offer an incredible creative experience for visitors. A vital and unique aspect to cultural storytelling is the opportunity to learn and showcase First Peoples and Wadawurrung Traditional Owners as part of our voice to the world. Using the Brand Geelong campaign and recognising Wadawurrung language including 'Djilang' in Commonwealth Games storytelling is important for our community. <More information on Brand Geelong here: [Greater Geelong - Discover what makes Geelong Greater \(greater-geelong.com.au\)](https://www.greater-geelong.com.au)>

The Committee for Geelong sees the importance of strategic investment into infrastructure, particularly in terms of affordable and social housing as well as public transport infrastructure including advanced rail-less trams as a solution to mass, sustainable transit options. As one of the latest growing cities in the country, we need to fully embrace this opportunity to not only showcase our wonderful region and existing assets but leverage the potential investment to design our future for all.

Committee for Geelong current priorities 2022/23

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 November election.

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 Network 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 (full proposal available on request)
- 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 for a subway station in Central Geelong.

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

The Committee for Geelong acknowledges the significant announcement in late December 2021 with increased funding for this vital project. Further to that announcement, the Committee for Geelong is requesting:

- The establishment of a local stakeholder working group
- Increased local representation on the Trust to drive the business of the GCEC
- Ensure that the architecture and design of the building is of a global standard, fit for purpose, globally competitive and reflective of Geelong's UNESCO designation as a Creative City of Design
- Ensure the role and heritage of Wadawurrung Traditional Owners is incorporated into the design and story-telling opportunities in the internal spaces.

3. Release and funding for the refreshed 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 funding for the Living 3220 project which aims to increase residential living in Central Geelong from 2000 residents to 12,000 residents.

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.

5. Sustainable and Collaborative Creative Industries in the G21 Region

- \$113 million for Geelong Gallery expansion into Geelong City Hall incorporating an immediate request for \$5 million to fast track the project in light of the Commonwealth Games

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

The Roadmap to Zero Emissions: Geelong Region Jobs Analysis report

<<https://www.geelongsustainability.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Geelong-Net-Zero-Jobs-Report-V1c.pdf>> 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 the following page for source documents for reference.

Source Documents

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