



Submission to Infrastructure Victoria

In May 2016, Infrastructure Victoria released 'All things considered – Exploring options for Victoria's 30-year infrastructure strategy'.

The purpose of the paper was to table all the options considered for meeting Victoria's infrastructure needs to invite interested parties to contribute their views and ideas.

The paper is part of the broader process designed to set out the Final Strategy for Infrastructure Victoria going forward.

The following submission is GTA's response to the "All Things considered" Options Paper.

GTA Consultants commends Infrastructure Victoria the development of a 30-year infrastructure strategy for Victoria. The need for a long-term consideration of Victoria's infrastructure needs and responses is critical. Achieving such planning with transparent, independent and expert infrastructure advice is an imperative.

Solutions for 10 Million Victorians

We endorse Infrastructure Victoria's solutionsfirst approach, focusing on what can and needs to be undertaken to meet our immediate and future infrastructure needs. Further, we commend the application of multidimensional criteria assessment to properly balance the needs of all into the future.

A focus on changing behaviour, managing demand, and optimising what we have before looking at supply. Submission to Infrastructure Victoria solutions is logical. Also important is an integrated approach to land use and transport planning as the two are inextricably linked.

The level of change in Victoria over the next 30 years cannot be understated. The Victorian Government projects the state's population to almost double to 10 million people by 2051. Melbourne will become a city of almost 8 million. Over half of regional Victoria's 2 million plus population will reside in the cities of Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat.

This change is substantial, real and must be planned for and addressed as a matter of urgency.

Accordingly, we emphasise the need for Infrastructure Victoria's 30-year infrastructure strategy to be a fundamental rethink in approach. Victoria must build for the future now.

We acknowledge the multiple infrastructure classes that comprise a successful, functioning state, and specifically for Melbourne as a large 'world' city. That said, without efficient and effective movement of passengers and goods, our potential future competitiveness, prosperity and liveability will decline on international comparisons.

Development of necessary transport infrastructure, particularly mass-transit must be a core focus and new infrastructure will be a large component of the overall solution.

The future is now

Infrastructure development takes time. Infrastructure also possesses a long design life. In just over five years Operational Traffic Modelling Victoria's population will be 6.5 million people. In 15 years, it will be almost 8 million. The speed at which we progress through community discussion, planning and delivery of infrastructure solutions must increase. Further, are the discussions, planning and designs we are conceiving truly fit to meet future capacity?

We urge Infrastructure Victoria to fully consider all infrastructure options in the context of this imperative.

Funding and financing

Reform of the transport sector can no longer be delayed if we are serious about tackling our future challenges in a cost-effective and meaningful way. Our infrastructure task is urgent and significant. It requires unprecedented investment. We acknowledge the chapter devoted to funding and finance options and urge Infrastructure Victoria to increase emphasis on the development of long-term sustainable solutions to raise revenue and finance infrastructure.

We believe a critical step is in user charging, particularly broad-based road user charging.

Creating a vision for Victoria and Melbourne

As a community, we need to devote more time and effort to framing, debating and responding to the problems and needs we face now, and those likely to be faced into the future. We note and acknowledge the nineteen needs outlined in the paper. However, simply addressing and satisfying these needs is not enough to properly plan for Victoria's future.

We need clarity of understanding and support for a vision for Victoria, for Melbourne, and for our regions and regional cities:

- How do we achieve liveability and prosperity, global competitiveness and relevance and a unique sense of place?
- What is the right balance for Victoria between a 'Citystate' and a 'State of cities'?
- What do we need to be, what do we want to be?
- To what extent do we set the shape of our cities and regions, or do we simply react?

Intergenerational equity is a key issue for large transport infrastructure investment (such as metro rail services) where decisions about which project gets built span multiple electoral cycles. We strongly support an approach that builds bi-partisan support towards a longterm plan where certain areas of Melbourne, and our regional cities and beyond, are not overlooked due to pressures of the day.

Accordingly, we strongly advocate that a successful 30-year infrastructure strategy must articulate a clearstrong vision for Victoria and Melbourne.

Engaged community

We acknowledge the opportunities for public contribution and submissions in Infrastructure Victoria's processes to date and the consultation process that includes citizenjuries.

Imperative is the engagement of the community in a vision for Victoria, and particularly Melbourne. The community needs to understand many of the broader questions about the shape and style of our city. Urban form outcomes are a critical part of any infrastructure discussion and we support further work on developing an agreed 'Melbourne Model' of population and employment densities, spatial distribution and supporting urban form.

More specifically, the community must develop a deeper appreciation of our infrastructure needs – what they are, the trade-offs to be made and the consequences of certain courses of action.

Infrastructure Victoria must play a leadership role in developing community understanding and appreciation of the need for change, the trade-offs to be made and the outcomes we want as a community. The emphasis must be on community engagement, not simply community consultation.

Technology

Technology will play an increasingly important role in how people and goods are moved about in the future. We note the references throughout the options paper to the impact of technology and support implementation of specific solutions such as Transport Network Information Centralisation, Advanced Traffic Management and Leveraging Big Data. Adoption of driverless vehicle technology is a high-profile topic of debate and its emergence must be seriously considered along with predicted main-stream adoption of electric propulsion for road based transport.

Government must tackle technology implications in a coordinated manner to shape desirable outcomes rather than respond on an ad-hoc basis. We believe Infrastructure Victoria has a pivotal leadership role to play and technology coordination must form a key pillar of any long-term state infrastructure strategy.

Selective options commentary

In the context of the information outlined in the first part of this submission, we also provide the following commentary on selective infrastructure options outlined in the All Things Considered Options Paper:

■ Metropolitan Rail Network Planning:

The multitude of options tabled relating to rail infrastructure across Melbourne suggests long-term master planning of the city's rail network is unresolved. Further the combination of suggested capacity upgrades, line extensions and consideration of additional 'cross-city' metro solutions and their various interdependencies demand a whole of network approach, not a project by project assessment.

We strongly advocate a re-visit of our rail infrastructure needs and a planning process aligned to a 30-year vision for Melbourne based on a population of 8 million.

■ Melbourne Airport Fast Rail Connection:

Given Melbourne's ongoing role as a major international gateway to a service based economy, we endorse the delivery of a heavy rail link between Melbourne (Tullamarine) Airport and the central city.

■ Freight supply chains road network developments:

We support inclusion of major road network improvements to underpin freight supply chains. These may include including Eastern Freeway to Citylink connection, North-East Link, Citylink to Western Ring Road connection, Melbourne Airport new road link, development of an outer metropolitan ring road and regional highway upgrades.

■ Melbourne to Brisbane freight rail line:

We welcome the inclusion of the 'Inland Rail' project with a recommendation of greater focus and emphasis on developing 'last mile' infrastructure and connectivity with additional projects such as the Port of Melbourne to metropolitan container shuttle and the Webb Dock rail freight access.

■ New port:

Commensurate with a city of 8 million people Melbourne will require a new port to meet demand in the handling of imported goods. We support this option and reinforce the urgency to progress planning and development.

■ Multi-modal freight hubs:

Victoria needs to realise improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of goods movement. In part this will be realised through multimodal hub freight handling complemented by increased automation and '24/7' operations. To enable this, we support appropriate freight precinct land use planning.

■ Regional connectivity:

We note several options tabled in response to regional mobility and connectivity. Specifically, we endorse deeper consideration of options for more efficient, frequent and rapid rail connections between Melbourne and regional cities, Operational Traffic Modelling especially Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat and the Latrobe Valley. With the collective population of Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat set to exceed 1 million by 2051, we urge strong consideration of direct rail transport connections between these regional cities for passenger and goods movement. In the very least, we endorse the preservation of transport corridors to provide for future services.

- **Climate change and infrastructure resilience:** We commend the inclusion of infrastructure options to transition Victoria to lower carbon energy supply and use. We also welcome options to improve resilience and adaptability of critical infrastructure to emerging challenges, such as climate change impact. Specifically, we endorse introduction of an Infrastructure resilience assessment test, development of Emergency Traffic Management and Data centre location diversification.
- **Optimising road network performance and recovery:** Congestion will be a critical ongoing challenge into the future. New technology and transport analytics methodologies are creating new opportunities for traffic management and road network optimisation - an area where we are providing leadership. Victoria should be progressive in application of these approaches and innovations. Accordingly, we strongly advocate increased application of traffic management systems, leverage big data and develop contingency plans to manage and recover from key corridor incidents.

Conclusion

On behalf of GTA we thank-you for this opportunity to submit a response to the All Things Considered Options Paper.

Effective assessment and selection of the infrastructure options that are adopted by Victoria's 30-year infrastructure strategy is important.

We appreciate the complexity of the task in drawing together inputs and assessing options to meet our existing and future infrastructure needs.

The work being undertaken by Infrastructure Victoria is of critical importance – we are approaching an unprecedented convergence of population growth and a need for Melbourne and Victoria to be globally competitive and relevant. At stake is our prosperity, a level of liveability we take pride in and a sustainable future.

Fundamental is the development and resounding articulation of a vision for Victoria, Melbourne and our regions that engages and is endorsed by us as a community. It is a shared responsibility for us to realise our potential together.

⊕ For more information on Infrastructure Victoria's 30 Year Infrastructure Strategy visit:

www.infrastructurevictoria.com.au/30-year-strategy

