



# Media Release

1 May 2018

## Election Budget delivers for G21 region

G21 welcomes funds for a City Deal in today's State Budget and calls on the Turnbull Government to provide at least matching funding in next week's Federal Budget.

"A City Deal for Geelong and the Great Ocean Road is now a giant step closer with today's \$153.2 million allocation," G21 CEO Elaine Carbines said.

"Pleasingly, funds have been earmarked for significant projects which will benefit the region's visitor economy in the long-term, such as a convention centre, facility improvements along the Shipwreck Coast and central Geelong revitalisation works.

"Now the onus is on the Turnbull Government to make an allocation in next week's Federal Budget in order to deliver on its side of a proposed City Deal.

"The benefits to the region of a City Deal can't be overstated. This is a transformational economic opportunity."

Ms Carbines said G21 especially welcomed funding for the GROW (G21 Region Opportunities for Work) project, a joint initiative of G21 and Give Where You Live Foundation to address disadvantage in the region.

"The government has recognised the achievement and value of GROW, a local-grown initiative, with a \$750,000, allocation.

"The principles of the GROW project — using local social procurement to create jobs in targeted areas of disadvantage — have been recognised and adopted by the Government. Similar projects will now be rolled out and funded in other areas of the state.

"G21 calls on both the Federal and State governments to embed the GROW local procurement principles in all budget-funded projects in this region, including projects as part of a City Deal and the new Lara Prison construction.

"Once again Geelong has been a trail blazer."

Ms Carbines said other worthy region-building initiatives to receive funding included the Geelong Project, Skilling the Bay and Runway Geelong.

“G21 also welcomes infrastructure funding for new and upgraded schools, maintenance of the region’s roads and upgraded sporting facilities.

“Disappointingly the Budget failed to provide much-needed funding for duplication of Barwon Heads Road to service the increasingly heavy traffic volumes to Armstrong Creek growth area.

“Nor does there appear to be funding for an emergency services hub for Armstrong Creek, to house police, fire and SES. A community of this size needs appropriate fast-response emergency services, as a recent tragic fire in the area starkly demonstrated.

“Surprisingly, there were no funds for the duplication of the rail between Geelong and Warun Ponds stations. This work is an essential prerequisite to increased services through to Colac and Warrnambool.

“The Budget also failed to provide specific solutions to the overcrowding, unreliability and excessively-long commute times of Melbourne-Geelong train services.

“We welcome news that a potential Geelong-Melbourne fast rail will be scoped as part of a \$50 million package to investigate improved regional rail links.

“However, at best, any resulting fast train will be seven or more years away. Commuters are packed in like sardines now. They can’t wait for seven years.

“Greater numbers of residents are relocating to our region, which is the fastest growing in the state. Many of them commute to work in Melbourne. This will be a critical issue as we approach the November State election.

“G21 notes and welcomes a verbal commitment by Transport Minister Jacinta Allan last week that an Avalon Airport rail link would be part of the scoping work. Rail to Avalon is a must if our airport is to development to its full potential.”

## **Summary**

G21 acknowledges and welcomes a number of key elements in the Budget for the G21 region, some of which were pre-announced in recent days:

- **\$153.2 million for a future City Deal** for Geelong and the Great Ocean Road, to be shared between a convention centre, the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan implementation and central Geelong revitalisation (specific allocations yet to be announced);
- **scoping work for a fast rail link from Geelong to Melbourne as part of a \$50 million detailed investigation** around a proposed rail link to Melbourne Airport and connectivity options to regional centres;

- funding of **\$36.1 million for building and upgrade work at schools** across Geelong, the Bellarine and Surf Coast including:
  - \$20.2 million for construction of the new Armstrong Creek West Primary School to open in 2020
  - \$3.9 million for the design and early works of the new Armstrong Creek Secondary School
  - \$600,000 for Ceres Primary School to deliver the next stage works of their master plan
  - \$1.6 million for Highton Primary School to upgrade and modernise facilities
  - \$1.9 million for Torquay P-6 College to upgrade and modernise facilities
  - \$1.3 million for Surfside Primary School to upgrade and modernise facilities
  - \$600,000 for Moolap Primary School to upgrade and modernise facilities
  - \$400,000 for Wallington Primary School to upgrade and modernise facilities
  - \$1.2 million for Oberon South Primary School to upgrade and modernise facilities
  - \$1.5 million for Northern Bay P-12 College Wexford Campus to upgrade facilities
  - \$300,000 for Teesdale Primary to upgrade and modernise facilities
  - \$2.1 million for Barwon Valley School to refurbish classrooms and facilities in poor condition;
  
- **Funds for major sporting infrastructure projects**, including:
  - \$1.2 million to upgrade a pavilion, change rooms, oval amenities and netball amenities for St Mary's Football and Netball club, Geelong;
  - \$860,000 to upgrade facilities and courts at the Ocean Grove Tennis club;
  - \$564,000 for upgrades to change rooms and spectator facilities at South Barwon Football and Netball Club;
  
- **\$77 million for road works within the south-west Victoria**, including:
  - **\$550,000 for planning an upgrade to Grubb Road**, Ocean Grove;
  - **\$39.9 million for upgrades to Princess Highway west**, from Colac to South Australia;
  - **\$9.8 million for upgrade of the Birregurra-Forrest Road, Skenes Creek Road, Forrest-Apollo Bay Road** (is an element of the G21 Great Ocean Road Priority Project)
  - Urgent maintenance of sections of **Anglesea Road, Bells Beach Road and Belmont-Corio Road**, and dozens of other roads in need of repair;
  
- **\$750,000 for GROW**, a local initiative of G21 and the Give Where You Live Foundation to create jobs in targeted areas of disadvantage;

- **\$1.6 million for the Skilling the Bay**, a regionally driven project led by The Gordon and delivered in partnership with Deakin University and the Victorian Government to prepare Geelong for the jobs of the future;
- **\$1.3 million for Runway Geelong**, an initiative to foster and accelerate innovative start-up businesses;
- **\$2.8 million for the Geelong Project**, which is led by Barwon Child, Youth & Family and is a partnership aimed at intervening early with young people at risk of disengaging from or leaving school, becoming homeless and entering the justice system. The partnership includes Swinburne University, headspace Geelong, the Geelong Region Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN), and three pilot schools—Northern Bay Secondary College, Newcomb Secondary School and Geelong High School;
- **\$689.5 million to build a new 700 bed maximum-security men’s prison** at the Lara Prison Precinct.

Other allocations include:

- funds for drug and rehabilitation services in the Barwon region;
- funds for a new emergency department crisis hub at Geelong University hospital;
- funds for maintenance of community bushfire shelters in Colac-Otway Shire;
- funds for Geelong TAFE;
- for a new government procurement office in Geelong to help regional businesses get more government supply opportunities; and
- funds to construct a new 30-bed residential addiction treatment facility in Barwon.
- funds for extra buses and more services across the Bellarine and Lara.

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