



# Media Release

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## **Federal Budget confirms funding to G21 region**

Confirmation of funding to specific projects for the G21 region in last night's Federal Budget was acknowledged, G21 CEO Elaine Carbines said today.

G21 also welcomed funding to accelerate Stage 2 of East West Link, a new commitment made by the Australian government following the 2013 federal election.

"The Budget confirmed funding for a number of previously-announced and ongoing initiatives across the G21 region," Ms Carbines said.

"Considering the tight current economic climate, it was always unlikely that the Budget would include funding of large new regional projects.

"However, pleasingly the budget includes \$1.5 billion to accelerate construction of the western access of East West Link. This is a vital initiative that G21 and the region has been pushing for some time.

"We highlighted this as a major issue over a year ago, and have strongly advocated federally that the timing and staging priorities for East West Link Stage 2 needed to be reviewed. We are pleased now that our hard work has paid off.

"This project looked like it was 10-plus years away. Already the congestion on and around the West Gate Bridge is a major hindrance to commuter and business traffic between Melbourne and Geelong. Accelerating this project will facilitate healthy growth in the G21 region, allowing businesses to prosper and investment in the region to strengthen, creating a strong and resilient community", Ms Carbines said.

G21 also welcome the establishment of the National Stronger Regions Fund, which will spend \$200 million a year over five years on social and economic infrastructure in regions with high unemployment, and the \$155 million Growth Fund, which has been created to generate jobs for employees and supply-chain businesses affected by the closure of local automotive manufacturers.

"These two funding streams will help to further develop our region's economy, and provide a targeted funding source for many of our unfunded Priority Projects," said Ms Carbines.

"Further, confirmation of funding for a range of previously-announced projects acknowledges Canberra's ongoing commitment to the G21 region".

These include:

- \$3 billion for construction of East West Link (\$1.5 billion for construction of the eastern section (Stage 1), \$1.5 billion that will accelerate delivery of the western section (Stage 2))
- \$185.5 million to continue construction of the Princes Highway duplication between Winchelsea and Colac
- \$25 million for the Great Ocean Road upgrade
- \$19.7 million for duplication of the Princes Hwy West from Waurin Ponds to Winchelsea
- funding to complete the Regional Rail Link
- \$4.17 million for water infrastructure in the Golden Plains Food Production and Employment Precinct
- \$3 million for the Geelong Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases
- \$3.78 million for the Colac Sporting Precinct development
- \$3.5 million for the Shell Road Reserve Park upgrade
- \$2.5 million for the Colac Central Reserve upgrade
- \$500k for Banyul Warri Fields youth and play zone
- \$480k for the Meredith Integrated Community Hub
- \$200k for the Grovedale Sporting Club lighting upgrade
- \$50k for the Lake Colac Master Plan
- \$40k for the Dereel Men's Shed
- \$30k for the Rokewood War Memorial.

“G21 and its member municipalities look forward to continuing to work with the Federal Government, including its local parliamentarians, to ensure effective implementation of the projects,” Ms Carbines said.

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