



Media Release

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2014 Priority Projects list released

G21 has released a list of priority projects it will advocate for on behalf of the region during the state election year 2014.

At it's February Board meeting in Queenscliff, the G21 Board decided on two projects with equal top priority for the November state election.

- **Geelong Future Cities Project**
(redevelopment of the GPAC and planning for the upgrade of the Geelong Gallery)
- **Yarra Street Pier Redevelopment**
(purpose built cruise liner facility accommodating visiting cruise ships, naval vessels and tall ships)

In addition to this, the G21 Board has recognised 13 other key projects to seek funding for. These are (in alphabetical order):

- **Addressing Disadvantage**
(support to complete the regeneration of Northern Bay College, support for a Northern Health Hub and projects that address community, education and employment issues in Colac, Norlane, Corio and Whittington)
- **Apollo Bay Harbour Precinct**
(creation of a safe harbour for commercial and recreational use, with associated infrastructure)
- **Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area**
(development of further infrastructure to serve the new urban growth area)
- **Avalon Airport**
(support for the retention of Jetstar and the expansion of domestic services, a rail link to the airport, support with the introduction of new businesses into the hanger heavy maintenance facility and in attracting an international carrier).
- **Central Geelong Revitalisation**
(implementation of the Central Geelong Action Plan that will transform Central Geelong into a smart vibrant city)

- **Convention and Exhibition Centre**
(development of a Convention and Exhibition Centre which will allow the G21 region to compete globally for business events)
- **Geelong Ring Road Connections**
(links from the Ring Road across to the Portarlington Road, upgrading freight connections to the Port of Geelong and the duplication of the Midland Highway to Bannockburn)
- **Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct**
(delivery of primary road, drainage and associated infrastructure to attract high quality industrial operators to the precinct)
- **G21 Regional Trails Network**
(development of a major network of foot, bike and horse trails across the region, including the Great Ocean Walk, Bellarine Rail Trail and Barwon River Parklands)
- **Land 400**
(support in securing Geelong as the base for design, engineering, manufacturing and maintenance of the Australia combat vehicle – Land 400 Sentinel Military Vehicle)
- **Portarlington Safe Harbour**
(stage 1 of the redevelopment of existing harbour facilities at Portarlington to better support commercial aquaculture and recreational fishing, boating and tourism activities)
- **Regional Rail Connections**
(upgrades to regional rail connections to support an increase in services beyond Geelong, through Colac and Warrnambool).
- **Transport Links to Melbourne**
(support in accelerating western access to the East-West Link which will ease traffic congestion on and around the West Gate Bridge).

G21 CEO Elaine Carbines said that all of the projects identified will plan for the region's future needs and directions; growing jobs, accommodating future growth and adding to the prosperity of our communities.

"We have identified a diverse range of projects that are ready for investment and will stimulate considerable economic outcomes for our people. These projects will continue to diversify our economy, will create employment and add to the liveability of our region," Ms Carbines said.

"Both the reconstruction of the Yarra Street Pier and the Geelong Future Cities project are key examples of this. Economic modelling suggests that every visiting cruise ship pumps \$1 million into the regional economy, while GPAC's redevelopment is essential to the cultural and social vibrancy of the wider G21 region."

Ms Carbines emphasised the importance of going into a state election campaign with a robust understanding of what the region needs, and taking a strong, unified approach to their championing.

“In the past the advocacy by G21 during election years has been crucial in gaining important infrastructure and social improvements for the region. Just over a year ago we announced our campaign to upgrade Great Ocean Road as a regional priority. Only nine months later it was fully funded. Our hope is that some of these projects that have been identified will garner the same success in coming months,” Ms Carbines said.

Ms Carbines said board members had subjected all potential projects to a rigorous assessment process.

“We have a well-honed process which assesses projects for their potential regional benefits, their cost, feasibility and practicality,” Ms Carbines said.

“The projects given ‘priority’ status by the G21 Board will be actively supported at every opportunity by the G21 board and its members over the next year.

“The G21 board, including the five G21 mayors, will be in Canberra next week to meet with key ministers, shadow ministers and their advisers. It will be an opportunity to explain and advocate for each of the region’s Priority Projects.”

Ms Carbines said G21 projects which didn’t make the ‘priority’ list this year could continue to be pursued by the organisation’s eight subject-specific Pillar Groups, made up of experts in their specific fields.

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