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JILLONG 2030: MISTAKES, CHALLENGES & URBAN VISIONS

David Jones
Deakin University, Victoria, Australia

Abstract No. 0236

Abstract
Geelong has long been a second cousin to Melbourne economically and in development. Whilst historically wishing to capture the role as administrative capital of the new colony of Victoria, it missed out due to the entrepreneurism of Melbourne. Despite this, it embraced contemporary industrialism, particularly automotive, and built upon its port and wool export capacities. Politics, intransigence and lack of economic investment compounded the failure to create quality urban fabric and enable innovative planning. The last 50 years have witnessed attempts to re-chart a robust and co-ordinated urban framework and vision, aided by the former Geelong Regional Commission (GRC) and more recently the amalgamated City of Greater Geelong (CGG), resulting in varying successes and several failures. Urban design has repeatedly, and historically, surfaced as the catalyst for creative and successful growth in Geelong, or Jillong at the Wathaurong described the place. This paper considers the planning, urban design and environmental legacy of Geelong. It critiques its successes and failures, drawing out the salient issues and themes that underpin its opportunities and quality place-making adventures, and considers the key challenges it now faces. Importantly, it sets forth the six planning and design challenges it must confront in the next 10 years to create a robust, creative, healthy and environmentally liveable place, of which urban design regeneration surfaces as a core need, or the city will continue along its haphazard pathway without cohesion and purpose.

Categories Environmental
Keyword 1 12. Urban design
Keyword 2 17. Regional development
Keyword 3 25. Urban regeneration

Introduction
In contextualising Geelong, it has a long been a ‘poor cousin’ to Melbourne yet affords similar design and environmental qualities and advantages. Geelong was named in 1837 by colonial Governor Richard Bourke, being a corruption of the Indigenous Wathaurong word Jillong thought to mean ‘land’ or ‘cliffs’ associated, and is located on the shores of Corio Bay within the larger Port Phillip Bay. Corio Bay affords a relatively deep-water sheltered harbour from the larger windswept Port Phillip Bay.

Surveyed in 1838, three weeks after Melbourne, Geelong became the key port for Western District wool export for the burgeoning colony of Victoria. But, due to a failure of entrepreneurism by its town’s people, Geelong failed to capitalise on its easy access to the goldfields which Melbourne captured thereby establishing its pre-eminence as the colonial governance and trade capital of the colony and later state.

Progressively Geelong has diversified into wool, rope making, paper manufacturing in the 1860s-1900, thereupon into industrial growth linked to wool, cars, aluminium and infrastructure up to the 1960s, and since the 1960s more into service industries including education. Proclaimed as a City in 1910, a collection of small councils in the region were amalgamated in 1993 forming the City of Greater Geelong (CGG) which now encompasses some 200,000 residents with some 250,000 in the Geelong region overall.

Implicit in the above historical sketch is lost opportunities and a lack of innovativeness and creativity. The latter has been stifled by a dearth of funds to underpin and drive projects because of the lack of a buoyant mixed economy, and a fragmented local governance regime often thwarted by Labor party aspirations and allegiances resulting in a dis-co-ordinated voice unable to express strength of purpose as a competitor to the dominant Melbourne business and governance systems. In many ways these negative traits have saved Geelong from the onslaught of suburbia that has engulfed Melbourne enabling slow growth. But this lethargy is changing.
With local government amalgamations, the purpose and presence of Geelong has been changing, and the governance of Melbourne is readily recognizing the virtue of ‘regionalism’ coined from the former Department of Urban & Regional Development (DURD) ‘decentralisation’ agendas of the 1970s, of which the Geelong Regional Commission (GRC) was one result. For Geelong, this DURD agenda enabled the establishment of the Geelong Regional Commission Act in 1977 that was revoked in 1993 with the establishment the CGG under the City of Greater Geelong Act 1993.

Recent changes have resulted in a more co-ordinated local government voice and a re-awakening to the necessity of regional strategic planning as the way forward, recognising that the legacy of the GRC and its agendas were relevant and appropriate despite the past local council antagonism to this organisation. This recognition is being driven by the CGG and G21 Regional Alliance (G21), a highly successful quasi-advocacy task formed from partner stakeholders, that has been successful in project and fund advocacy for Geelong and in developing ‘The Geelong Regional Plan – a sustainable growth strategy’ (207) that identified 15 priority projects including the recently completed Geelong (freeway) Ring Road and the duplication of Princes Highway west (in progress). The late 2000 period has also witnessed the Victorian government relocate its Transport Accident Commission with 850 employees from Melbourne to central Geelong, Ford Australia increasing and diversifying its capacities, new waterfront edge residential complexes, the renewal of the old foreshore wool stores into a major professional education hub by Deakin University, and the announcements of a major new hospital for Geelong partnered by Deakin University and Epworth Hospital adjacent to the former’s Waurn Ponds campus, and shifting the new car export port from Webb Dock in Melbourne to Corio Bay in Geelong are demonstrations of this change.

Allied with these actions and policy determinations is the designation of Armstrong Creek as a major greenfield growth corridor, the re-invention of Avalon Airport as an international terminal, and the designation of the ‘Western Wedge’ as a major urban renewal precinct linked to the railway station integrating Deakin’s Waterfront campus expansions and a prospective international conference centre. Armstrong Creek is a major Greenfield growth corridor, stretching from Geelong southwards to Torquay that will provide for up to 22,000 dwellings and a potential population of 54,000 people.

Such is placed in the context of continued massive suburbanisation expansion westwards from Melbourne into the City of Wyndham corridor enveloping Point Cook to Werribee and slowly spreading towards the verges of the You Yangs and Werribee riverine catchment. Thus, Geelong is within the wider economic sphere of influence of the Melbourne metropolitan area and becoming increasingly intertwined by such projects as the internationalisation of Avalon to enable Melbourne’s second international airport.

Further, while G21 is well respected as a co-ordinating voice, a sub-voice via ; 2050 is now evolving. Bellarine 2050 represents a range of business interests located in the Bellarine Peninsula, to the immediate east of Geelong city, and is a clear reaction to the failure of the CGG to represent and envisage their concerns and interests of “Our Place, Our Future” (Committee for Bellarine 2011: 1; http://www.committeeforbellarine.com.au/).

This physical and economic planning is, notwithstanding its historical errors, has either stifled or impeded creative and innovative growth in Geelong.

Planning and Governance
Historically, the management of urban growth in the Geelong region has involved a regional approach in different forms and aspirations. This has resulted in disjointed experiments with regional planning in an unsustained manner. The Geelong or “Barwon (River) Region” includes the City of Greater Geelong (CGG) and the Shires of Surf Coast, Golden Plains and the Queenscliffe Borough. The City was created from eight former local government areas that were amalgamated under the Kennett government during the early 1990’s (Bellarine, Corio, Geelong, Geelong West, Newtown and parts of South Barwon, Barrabool and Bannockburn).
The City is Victoria's largest municipality with a population of 216,330 (ABS Census 2009) with a regional population of 285,817, sustaining a 1.3% growth rate. Growth rate patterns and the employment profile information are provided in the following Tables.

Table 1
Population Growth 2009-2026

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government Area</th>
<th>Population 2009</th>
<th>Population 2026</th>
<th>Growth Rate (% pa)</th>
<th>Area (km²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Greater Geelong (CGG)</td>
<td>216,330</td>
<td>269,653</td>
<td>+1.3%</td>
<td>1,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surf Coast (S)</td>
<td>25,458</td>
<td>34,781</td>
<td>+1.9%</td>
<td>1,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queenscliffe (B)</td>
<td>3,318</td>
<td>3,349</td>
<td>+0.1%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Plains (S)</td>
<td>18,173</td>
<td>24,387</td>
<td>+1.8%</td>
<td>2,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colac Otway (S)</td>
<td>21,817</td>
<td>23,114</td>
<td>+0.3%</td>
<td>3,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Barwon Regional)</td>
<td>285,817</td>
<td>355,287</td>
<td>+1.3%</td>
<td>8,944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>5,443,228</td>
<td>6,711,190</td>
<td>+1.3%</td>
<td>227,590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Greater Geelong (2009), Economic Indicators Geelong: Open for Business, p. 2

Table 2
Major Industry Sectors (Barwon Region) 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>No. Of Employees</th>
<th>% of Workforce</th>
<th>Annual Output ($m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>15,505</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>$13,807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>14,887</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>$2,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care &amp; Social Services</td>
<td>13,228</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>$1,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>10,249</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>$2,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education &amp; Training</td>
<td>9,690</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>$1,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation &amp; Food Services</td>
<td>7,562</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>$943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration &amp; Safety</td>
<td>6,363</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>$844</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Greater Geelong (2009), Economic Indicators Geelong: Open for Business, p. 3.
### Table 3
**Major Employers (Barwon Region) 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Employers</th>
<th>Employees (Full Time Equivalent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barwon Health</td>
<td>3,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Education</td>
<td>3,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deakin University (Waurn Ponds &amp; Waterfront)</td>
<td>1,486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Greater Geelong</td>
<td>1,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avalon Airport</td>
<td>1,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford Motor Company of Australia Ltd</td>
<td>1,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeway</td>
<td>1,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target (Head Office &amp; Retail Operations)</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Education System</td>
<td>906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karingal Inc</td>
<td>841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport Accident Commission (TAC)</td>
<td>715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoa World Alumina Australia Ltd</td>
<td>668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon Institute of TAFE</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Greater Geelong (2009), Economic Indicators Geelong: Open for Business, p. 3.

### The Geelong Region as a Regional Urban Management Entity

The benefits of a regional approach were first recognised as early as 1963 when eight of the municipalities cooperated to establish an approved planning scheme to cover the urban areas. This included Geelong, West Geelong, Newtown & Chilwell, Corio and Bannockburn, Barrabool, Bellarine, and South Barwon, which subsequently agreed to the establishment of the Geelong Regional Planning Authority (GRC) in 1969.

The region has been the subject of investigation as a growth centre for over 50 years. During 1967, the Victorian Town and Country Planning Board in its report ‘Organisation for Strategic Planning’ stated that “Geelong merited investigation as a practical alternative to the further growth of Melbourne” (Planning workshop 1975:27). As a result of this report, the government determined to establish a regional planning authority together with a Statement of Planning Policy. In 1969 the Geelong Regional Planning Authority was subsequently established. The Statement of Planning Policy for the Geelong region noted that:

> The region centered on Geelong shall be promoted and planned as a location for large scale urban growth including business, industry and housing. The region shall be planned to accommodate a greatly increased share of the expected growth in the Port Phillip area to the optimum limits determined by regional planning studies. The planning of the region shall ensure that acceptable environmental standards are achieved and shall have regard to the high quality of the environment generally and the coastal areas in particular and the need to preserve established recreation opportunities’ (Planning Workshop 1975:28).

In March 1972 the Minister for Planning requested that the Authority’s planning studies be expanded to include:

- **a)** Advising on ways and means by which the future population of Melbourne can be contained to a figure well below that envisaged in the current Melbourne and Metropolitan Master Plan now on exhibition;
- **b)** The means and measures which should be adopted to attract as much as possible of this population to areas outside the metropolis and the Port Phillip district, and
- **c)** The role which Regional Planning Authorities can play in assisting towards this objective (Planning Workshop 1975:27).

The Whitlam Commonwealth administration of the early 1970’s also provoked considerable interest in the Geelong region. During October 1972, the Federal Government established the National Urban and Regional Development Authority (NURDA), subsequently replaced by the Cities Commission in December 1972. An external Advisory Committee to NURDA advised on proposed growth centres - four metropolitan growth centres and nine regional cities identifying Geelong as being one of the metropolitan growth centres. In its report Review of Matters Considered by the Cities Commission Advisory Committee December 1972-August 1975 it stated in 1973 that:

> Geelong had many advantages which favoured its development as a systems city. These advantages included a varied and broad economic base, a rich hinterland, transport facilities and attractive recreational opportunities (Cities Commission 1975:16).
The Cities Commission in 1973 reinforced this conclusion and recommendation to the Victorian state government arguing that accelerated growth of the Geelong region could make a major contribution to a more equitable and effective distribution of population in the Port Phillip region (Planning Workshop 1975: 29). Pursuing this objective, irrespective of Victorian state government angst, financial assistance was provided to undertake planning studies and various commitments including a new CSIRO Animal Health Laboratory and the establishment of a fourth Victorian University at Geelong, now Deakin University. The basis of DURD’s policy which was re-stated in the Commonwealth’s 1974/5 Urban and Regional Development Budget paper no.8:

The Australian and Victorian Governments have agreed that Geelong will be established as a growth complex to accommodate accelerated growth and so become an important element in the structuring of future urban growth in the Port Phillip region. Following strategy studies undertaken in the region over the last 18 months, the Governments have agreed to a further phase of more detailed studies and the establishment of a development organisation to undertake the planning and development of the growth complex. Financial assistance will be provided when a formal agreement has been concluded (AGPS 1974: 29).

The Geelong Regional Planning Authority (GRPA) was established in Victoria during the 1970’s along with the Westernport Regional Planning Authority (WPRPA) and the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Authority (UYVDR). While these organisations had regional statutory and strategic planning responsibilities they were not vested with any financial development capacity. As a consequence, and beneficially however, the GRPA provided the foundational strategic planning studies demonstrating a strong policy agenda for its successor, the Geelong Regional Commission (GRC).

**Figure 2**

**Geelong Region**


**Geelong Regional Commission**

The Geelong Regional Commission Act 1977 was gazetted to establish the Geelong Regional Commission (GRC) to “encourage, co-ordinate and assist in the development of the Geelong Region” and the Commission’s geographical scope encompassed the same areas as its predecessor. The Commission's management board comprised five people appointed by the Governor-in-Council, and one Councillor appointed from each municipal council within the region. Of the former appointees, one was appointed full-time Chairman for a period of 5 years, and others served part-time for a period up to 3 years. A major
change from the GRPA was the vesting of legislative power in the GRC to invest in and develop industrial and commercial land.

While its planning objective was “to maintain a strategic and statutory framework for the beneficial economic, environmental and social development, enhancement and conservation of the region,” the GRC applied a ‘triple bottom line’ approach to land use planning.

This resulted in, during the late 1970’s and 1980’s, a strategic regional development and co-ordination approach to urban planning encapsulated in the Directions: The Geelong Region Development Strategy (1988). This Strategy possessed three elements: Urban and Township Development Strategy; Regional Economic Development; and a, Human Services Initiatives for the Region, enabling an integrated approach between economic development, urban and regional planning and the environment but also enabling the promotion and facilitation of economic development through innovation, skill development and land assembly as well as the advocation of urban containment policies and coastal and rural land protection strategies.

Explicit in the Strategy was a 10–year vision with a regional goal:

To increase the capacity of individuals within the community to exercise choice, principally through the generation of wealth in the regional economy, and the optimum development of community resources (GRC1988: 43).

Thus, the GRC prioritised the City’s desire to revitalise the Geelong Central area, in particular through the ‘City by the Bay’ project, since rebadged as ‘Vision 1’ that drove the renovation of the Geelong Foreshore as well as strategic urban design improvements and initiatives including the establishment of a campus of Deakin University on the waterfront (Keys Young in association with Urban Initiatives 1996). Thus, cross-sectoral and intergovernmental coordination and program delivery occurred that was stated as:

A strategic approach to land use on a regional basis is essential to ensure effective and efficient use of land and infrastructure and to protect or enhance the environment. A regional strategic approach provides the basis of the economic, social and environmental development of the region (GRC 1992:3).

With the need to create

A highly skilled and professional in house town planning staff with extensive experience in strategic and statutory land use management, with access to external specialists as required and supported by in-house drafting, economic development and research units (GRC 1992: 15) was assembled.

Like the GRPA and G21 today, the GRC identified and pursued 15 priorities, that were re-stated in the G21 Geelong Region Plan (2007), strategically comprise major infrastructure works including a national standard gauge railway line from Melbourne to Adelaide, upgrading of the Princes Highway, establishing a manufacturing skills centre at the Gordon Technical College (Long 1987), establishing a Geelong campus for Deakin University (Hay et al 2002), extension of the new enterprise incentive scheme in Geelong, and an environment protection program (GRC 1992:9).

Despite local angst to such centralism of power, the GRC successfully demonstrated the worth of having co-ordinated governance and strategic planning in its ability to enable regional economic development with quality urban management and environmental protection. This enabled the successful delivery of several regional strategies expressed by structure plans for various townships and the political capacity to attract significant federal and state funding to deliver its policies (eg GRC 1982, 1987).

Ironically this clearly successful entity was subsumed in an amalgamation of local councils in the region creating the City of Greater Geelong Council (CGG) with its abolition significantly destroying the success of the GRC’s activities and its ability to drive strategic growth in the region.

The Greater Geelong Council

Since creation, the CGG and the region have experienced constant overall growth albeit disproportionately distributed and not necessarily in economic returns. Thus, construction activity is experiencing “inward migration ... placing additional pressure on the local labour market and secondly, the continuing local buoyant labour market is encouraging people back into the workforce” (Geelong Council 2005:6). Further, residential activity continues to be strong but is disproportionately distributed in the region with a preference towards the coastlines characterising a spatial growth direction to coastlines and away from the neighbouring City of Wyndham volcanic plains adjacent to Melbourne.
This pattern, recognised by the GRC, attests to the need to draft planning strategies that are more proactively strategic. Peak bodies including industry, local government and community groups have come to the same view, and since 2011 this momentum has garnered into the Geelong Alliance – G21 – a regional approach to governing Geelong, a community based initiative.

The CGC expresses their vision for the region as:

Geelong: coast, country and suburbs is the best place to live through prosperous and cohesive communities in an exceptional environment (CGG 2010: 11).

Thus espousing a self-evident truth about lifestyle quality but not embodying an aspiration as to the future.

To achieve this aspiration, the CGG has identified via a systematic planning process, as depicted in Figure 2, a suite of key “Funding Priorities 2010” that lack any integration as each is largely spatially isolated from each other and few consider the larger scaffolding and implementation that is necessary to achieve these priorities in the short term. These priorities are detailed in Table 4. Further, these priorities are project driven and lack any urban design framework aspirations about the Geelong metropolitan area whether for built form or green space regeneration and invention.

**Figure 2**
City of Greater Geelong Council Systemic Planning Process diagram

The Geelong Alliance – G21
Arising from the cessation of the GRC and decades of conservative state governance that emphasised planning efficiency and competitive local governance to the detriment of regionalism and cross-council co-ordination, the G21 has sought to craft a robust political voice analogous to that achieved by the GRC. It has involved the establishment of a company limited by guarantee supported by a Constitution, a Board Charter and a Memorandum of Understanding. The Board comprises five council nominated directors, five elected directors, the option for two appointed directors and an independent chair. The G21 received initial financial support from the Commonwealth Government through the Regional Area Consultative Committee’s (RACC) program, and the State regional development program. As G21 has developed its funding base has strengthened with the commitment of financial support from the member local councils.

The aim of G21 is to “lead and support activities and projects that benefit the well being of the communities of the Barwon region” with objectives to:

- Develop, approve and communicate a Geelong Region Strategic Plan
- Ensure regional plans and projects are implemented
- Develop and communicate an annual Geelong Region Strategic Report
- Ensure the development, management and reporting of Regional Performance Indicators and
- Ensure the long -term success and sustainability of the Geelong Region Alliance (G21 2005).

Thus, G21 has successfully evolved into a major force behind the community's need to draft a new regional plan filling the vacuum left by the GRC. Such was a direct consequence of the cessation of the GRC leaving no regional planning mechanism and a lack of strong local government strategic planning; a point clearly admitted to by the Council:

"In the last few years the municipality has experienced unprecedented pressure as the result of a dramatic increase in residential and commercial development applications," Cr Saunderson said.

"While the growth is welcome the City is working to ensure that development is done in such way that it does not detract from the qualities that make Greater Geelong such an inviting place to live in the first place," he said. "Developing planning policies that foster appropriate development is one of the principal objectives of the City's planning department, the other priority is processing applications," Cr Saunderson said.

"The 2005-2006 budget helps address both these aims by providing additional resources to the planning department."The budget provides funding for additional planning staff in response to the record numbers of planning scheme amendments in the City of Greater Geelong," Cr Saunderson said (31 May 2005 www.geelong.vic.gov.au)

During 2005, the State Government provided significant financial support for the development of a Geelong Regional Strategic Plan. This Plan was formulated following a 12 month planning process by the five councils culminating in the statement of ten pillars of relevance to the region’s wellbeing - Arts, Culture and Heritage; Community, Safety and Security; Economic Development; Environment; Health and Wellbeing; Lifelong Learning; Research; Sport and Recreation; Telecommunications; and Transportation. The pillar process during 2003/4 identified four foundation projects including the development of:

- A regional growth strategy
- Regional Indicators and
- A Regional Marketing Strategy.

The regional growth strategy is very reminiscent of the strategic approach commenced by the GRC, embedded in an objective creating a regional ordinance and co-ordinated strategic framework in 1963, and has involved a multi-sectored regional approach. The result has been the release of the Geelong Region Plan – a sustainable growth strategy (2007) that articulates all of G21 activities and projects. The plan, the result of a consultative process undertaken across the region in 2006 provides the most comprehensive, up-to-date and widely supported strategic plan in regional Victoria. It looks towards 2050 and addresses the challenges and opportunities the Geelong region will face in the areas of environment, settlement, land use, community strength and the economy.

The Regional Indicators was a function that the GRC successfully performed that has since been taken on board by the Committee for Geelong; a business–funded lobby group (http://www.committeeforgeelong.com.au/home.asp). The marketing strategy also was successfully
pursued by the GRC, and is today tacitly being pursued by the G21, but without any strength and legislative and capital development capacity.

**Mistakes and Legacies**

Hidden behind these regional planning and governance machinations are a suite of historical planning problems that continue to haunt and hinder a vision being achieved in Geelong.

The first is the sale by the City Council of the ‘City Square’. A rectangular city block positioned in the centre of the Geelong central business area. This block was long the central outdoor market square for the city from the 1830s onwards before it was sold by long-term lease to a developer that erected the now unprofitable ‘Market Square’ shopping complex on the site obliterating any green or hardscape open space in the centre of the City. This un-visionary economic rationalisation was further compounded with the formal sale of the land to the developer, now preventing any opportunity to reclaim and create a ‘town centre’ or ‘town square’ as a major urban design device.

It is clear that the GRC was instrumental and successful in its ability to attract funds to underpin development but also successful in crafting strategic actions and policies to the economic advantage of the region. While the foundations of such a regional entity built upon the Authority’s initiatives, it is clear that co-ordinated governance and the vesting of a strong design and planning team together to guide and drive growth was exceedingly valuable for Geelong. It is also clear that the G21 has acquired the vacuum created and that the City Council continues to not be able to address these issues, provide a strong governance voice, and cast aside its Labor political associations and allegiances to the better good.

Planning for Corio has lost any traction. The suite of innovative city beautiful designs of the 1920s and 1930s for the large suburb, together with the social imperatives behind these visions, have long been forgotten, resulting in a typical suburbia working class enclave lacking a quality environment and a healthy positive community outlook (Wynd 1981).

For all its unique geographical topography, successive councils and regional authorities have failed to articulate nor imagine the development of a Parkland Ring encircling the city. Overall, the city has a significant north-south freeway corridor as well as a the Moorabool-Barwon riverine corridor reinforced by cliff escarpments that is today barren with weeds and feral plantings, derelict industria complexes and fencing, and a lack of vision. This corridor, that literally sweeps around and through the entire city complex, has been totally forgotten about but could serve as the major linear ‘green lungs’ similar to the Yarra River in Melbourne or Central Park in New York City.

For all the regionalist rhetoric and expenditure on major infrastructure systems to aid ease of movement around and to the city, there has been a dearth of attempts to craft a seamless and efficient internal transit system. The irony is that a network of existing and defunct rail corridors that lace within and through the city – culminating in the central Geelong Station precinct that enables direct Melbourne-Avalon-Warrnambool connections – could ably serve as an integrated transit system for the city in its own right. And, this is without mentioning that the main Melbourne-Adelaide rail passenger and freight routes all run through Geelong and thence across the Western District bypassing Ballarat meaning Geelong is pivotal in east-west passenger and freight movements across Australia; thus its geographical ‘pivotal’ location that has not been realised in economic terms (Wynd 1971).

**Visions and Challenges: Ways Forward**

The answers to the above problems lie in simple but visionary urban design actions and policies.

The issue of governance needs to be tackled to vest a GRC-style agenda and jurisdiction back into Geelong to enable, support and guide its growth including the creation of a major planning and design unit to inform and drive creative and innovative actions. The GRC demonstrated a successful model to achieve this answer. Chair of the Committee for Geelong, Michael Betts, has recently concluded that “ambitious plans and projects to take Geelong into the future ... lack ... a delivery mechanism” (Betts 2011: 24)

There is an urgent need to tackle the creation of an innovative transit system that obviates excessive car and bus use to the environmental benefit of the city. While successive state governments have focused upon the tragedy of metropolitan transit systems, regional centres in Victoria have totally been forgotten about.

The green and carbon footprint needs to be tackled as little has been done over the last 100 years to green the city, its landscapes and streetscapes, to better create a quality urban ecology. Melbourne successfully through the former Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works realised major public open space corridor creation allied to stormwater management initiatives thus creating a riverine-based park system that
Melbourne is proud of today. No such initiative occurred with and for Victoria's regional centres let alone Geelong.

There is a need to pursue a CBD renewal agenda to lessen the impact and consequence of peripheral shopping centre complexes negatively impacting upon the economic heart of the city they feed and service. Such machinations are starting to occur in attempts to foster a Vision II.

A challenge is to invest design and planning innovation, ideation and drive in a university such as Deakin building upon the tradition of universities being vehicle for intellectual and economic change in the cities they reside. This is the very vehicle that Rob Adams used to craft the practice and possibilities of the City of Melbourne' urban design directions that were first embodied in *Grids and Greenery* (1987) as formulated through a studio partnership with RMIT's architecture and landscape architecture programs. Betts', quoting Professor John Goddard of University of Newcastle (UK) has concluded that "it is quite clear that the university's role should be much more than just teaching and research ... [they] should have an active role in all aspects of the community and be seen as a serious partner" as evidenced in the major role that his University played in the design and economic regeneration of the Newcastle-Upon-Tyne region (Betts 2011: 24).

There is a need to re-visit and strengthen the City morphology through strategic economic and urban design initiatives to craft a more liveable and vibrant city ethos.

The above discussion sets much of the scene for what has historically occurred, the reasons why, and the key topics that need to be tackled.

References


Hay, R, D Lowe & D Gibb (2002), *Breaking the Mould: Deakin University, the first twenty five years*. Deakin University; Geelong.


Planning Workshop (1975) *Structure Plan* Geelong Growth Centre Planning Group Sydney NSW.


Table 4
City of Greater Geelong Funding Priorities 2011 (CGC 2011)

| Project | GEELONG CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE | YARRA STREET PIER - CRUISE SHIP DESTINATION | THE GEELONG FUTURE CITIES - GEELONG CULTURAL PRECINCT MASTER PLAN | MINERAL SPRINGS SPA | WEDGE (Formerly Transit Cities) | ACCOMMODATION | ARMSTRONG CREEK | RING ROAD EXTENSION TO THE BELLARINE | GEELONG RING ROAD EMPLOYMENT PRECINCT | NATIONAL TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS PRECINCT | COMMUNITY RENEWAL AND REGENERATION | GEELONG MARINE INDUSTRY PROJECT | COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTUR

| Overview | Geelong is an award-winning convention destination, however a lack of suitable convention space limits our ability to capitalise on the growing national conference market, which generates $17 billion annually. The proposed Convention Centre and Exhibition Centre project would include a conference venue with the capacity to cater for up to 1,200 plenary delegates. It would provide 4,000 m2 of exhibition space, along with five-star hotel accommodation, meeting rooms, a business centre and retail outlets. A five-star hotel is envisaged to complement the Convention Centre and

| The former Yarra Street Pier was a key feature of the Geelong waterfront for more than 100 years until it was destroyed by fire in 1988. This project proposes to reconstruct the Yarra Street Pier and develop further tourism opportunities in yachting and river cruises. It will provide a public facility that improves access to the water's support major events and enhances recreation, economic and tourism opportunities. The preferred location would see the Yarra Street Pier rebuilt on its original alignment along with additional works in Fisherman's Basin and an expansion of the Royal

| This will bring access to information for Yar IIong learning and cultural heritage into the 21st century. The Beneath Corio Bay is a reserve of natural mineral water. The mineral springs in Geelong were popular sources of therapeutic drinking water in the 19th Century, but were closed down in 1959. It is rare for such a resource to be available in the heart of Greater Geelong and its visitors. A key project of the proposed precinct is the replacement of the current outdated and inefficient public library and art gallery and separate cultural centre with an integrated, modern facility.

| The City is working in partnership with the State Government on an initiative aimed at creating opportunities for people to live and work in the same area, and developing sustainable transport options. This project sits within a major city, and this presents a unique opportunity to add another drawcard to the Waterfront. The City of Greater Geelong proposes to establish a modern therapeutic mineral springs spa and bath house on the Waterfront. The facility will use mineral water emanating from the coastal geology at Eastern Park and will establish Geelong as a regional mineral spa destination.

| The City of Greater Geelong is one of the region's largest employers with over 2,300 full-time, part time and casual staff. For a number of years, the City's administrative and civic functions have been spread over several locations in Central Geelong, resulting in unnecessary costs and inefficiencies. This project is examining the potential to construct a single office building on a site that the City has acquired within the Central Western Wedge area. This site is under-used with a mix of warehousing and light industry, but with great potential for high density, mixed-use development.

| This link, including a river crossing, is yet to receive commitment from the Federal and State Governments. It is currently component of land use planning on the Waterfront. This project will provide a ‘one-stop-shop’ for all customers. The City sees this project as an opportunity to lead the way in good office design. It will demonstrate that constructing a building with an outstanding environmental design principles can lead to improved productivity, and make an important contribution to the urban landscape in Central Geelong.

| An extension of the Geelong Ring Road to the Bellarine Peninsula is vital for sustainable long-term residential and commercial development, and a much sought after aspiration for our region. This link, including a river crossing, is yet to receive commitment from the Federal and State Governments. It is currently component of land use planning on the Waterfront. This project will provide a ‘one-stop-shop’ for all customers. The City sees this project as an opportunity to lead the way in good office design. It will demonstrate that constructing a building with an outstanding environmental design principles can lead to improved productivity, and make an important contribution to the urban landscape in Central Geelong.

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| The vision for Armstrong Creek is an urban development that meets the highest standards of sustainable living. This is one of the largest strategic planning projects ever undertaken by the City and will provide for more than 22,000 dwellings and a sustainable population of 55,000 people. An industrial Cultural Infrastructure Delivery Plan has been developed to guide the planning for industrial as roads and sewer assets, as well as community and social infrastructure that fosters social interaction, health and wellbeing.

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| The Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct (GREP) consists of 500 hectares of high value industrial zoned land to the north of Geelong, with access to the Geelong Ring Road. Approximately two thirds of this land is currently undeveloped. This site is ideally situated to cater for the markets of Geelong, Western Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne, and has direct access to the Port of Geelong, Avalon Airport, major rail lines, Princes Freeway and the Geelong Ring Road. This project will provide for the estate developed as a state-of-the-art industrial precinct. The servicing of a 760-hectare site has been identified as the most suitable site for construction of the

| Freight and logistics are key industries which will continue to grow in Australia and in particular the Geelong region. This project aims to develop transport links between the Geelong Ring Road Precinct, the Geelong Port, Avalon Airport, V/line's existing freight services and major roads such as the new Ring Road and the Princes Freeway. It would also support the development of a freight intermodal facility north of Lara.

| The City is currently involved in a number of ‘whole of government’ responses to addressing disadvantage in parts of the municipality through improved social, economic, educational and physical environments. Investing in regeneration programs builds on work already underway to address priority needs in specific areas – from Geelong’s northern suburbs, which are the heartlands of industry and migration, to smaller neighbourhoods such as Whittington, and coastal towns throughout the region. The City is working in partnership with local people, business and government on projects with diverse aims such as

| These projects are identified as having the largest strategic importance for our region. They include projects that are envisaged to

| The Geelong Industry Project - which has been informed by the Osborne House Marine Precinct Master Plan - aims to develop an industrial marine precinct at St Helens on Corio Bay to support the regional marine industry.

| Included in the precinct could be manufacturing, maintenance, repair, storage and slip/slip facilities - accompanied by marine based retail, clubhouse and improved facilities for

| Council provides more than 150 regional facilities including kindergartens, senior citizens centres, community centres, libraries and family and children’s services. A number of these ageing facilities are becoming increasingly less fit for purpose, with additional facilities also required to meet high levels of growth.
<table>
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<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Estimated expenditure of $56 million per year.</th>
<th>Enables more international cruise ships to visit the Geelong port.</th>
<th>Creation of 655 direct and indirect jobs during construction and 750 direct and indirect ongoing EFT</th>
<th>Generates a significant increase in visitor numbers.</th>
<th>Increased tourism in the region including improving Geelong’s appeal as a weekend destination, adding stimulus to the local economy.</th>
<th>Improved customer service and business delivery through increased internal collaboration and communication.</th>
<th>Growth is managed in a sustainable way and will provide for diversity in employment and social infrastructure.</th>
<th>Reduced east-west traffic congestion through Central Geelong.</th>
<th>Increased employment opportunities with the precinct having the potential to deliver 10,000 new jobs once fully developed.</th>
<th>Employment opportunities across all sectors of the economy within our region.</th>
<th>Increased community involvement in decision making and activities enhancing community pride.</th>
<th>Stimulate job growth in the construction sector as well as creating permanent employment opportunities in the manufacturing, boating and tourism industries.</th>
<th>Upgraded community infrastructure which meets service provision and environmental standards.</th>
<th>Greater equity across the municipality.</th>
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<td>Geelong Yacht Club marina. These works would be delivered over two stages, subject to securing $22.5 million funding. A new Yarra Street Pier will provide a much needed public facility to enable more cruise ships to visit Geelong. Two cruise ships have already booked to visit Geelong during both the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 cruise seasons and other cruise ships have also shown great interest in visiting. Having a publicly owned pier that provides unrestricted access is essential to Geelong’s future as a cruise ship destination.</td>
<td>new Central Geelong Library and Heritage Centre will serve as a community and civic anchor, surrounded by key facilities such as the Geelong Performing Arts Centre (GPAC), Geelong Gallery and Old Courthouse Building. The Master Plan also identified a major expansion of the Geelong Gallery and an upgrade of the surrounding public realm.</td>
<td>327 hectare area with roads and reticulated services will provide sites for a wide range of industries, maximising the area’s very large economic potential.</td>
<td>intermodal freight terminal. This facility will provide a more efficient distribution network to transfer goods from one mode of transport to another. The nearby Port of Geelong offers zoned land for port related activities.</td>
<td>Avalon Airport offers 1,840 hectares of land for dedicated commercial opportunities, including integrated logistics, freight handling, property development, aircraft maintenance and pilot training.</td>
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### Status

A bit detailing demand analysis, operating budget, regional benefits, design considerations, potential locations, funding models and delivery structures has been provided to Industry, Government (Federal and State) and lobby groups (G21, RDA, VECCI, Committee for Geelong).

| Reference | The City has committed $5 million to the project. | The project attracted $7.9 million in funding from the Victorian Mineral Springs Committee, which is nearing completion. | The project has been working with Tourism Victoria and the Victorian Mineral Springs Committee to prepare the project for an Expression of Interest to the market for commercial development. | The City has purchased a site for the longer term staff accommodation needs in the Geelong Central Business District. | The Anstey Creek Urban Growth Area has seven precincts; two dedicated to providing employment diversity, four residential and one for the Major Activity Centre which will provide a mix of business, retail and residential. To date Precinct Plans have been approved for the East (residential) Precinct and the North East Industrial Precinct. | An alignment for Section 4C (Angelsea Road to Surf Coast Highway) has been approved by VicRoads and a Public Acquisition Overlay was approved by the Minister for Planning in October 2010. | The City has been working closely with Avalon Airport to further develop site capacity and expand existing passenger services, and accommodat e an Aviation Academy. Tiger Airways provided a major boost for the airport and the region with the launch of its new base at Avalon Airport in November 2010. | A range of significant community renewal and building initiatives are underway in suburbs across the municipality. | The City has been working in partnership with key state government agencies to identity new opportunities for realising the Geelong Marine Industry Project. A Construction Management Plan has been developed for Osborne House, along with a business case for the project which investigates and reports on a range of issues including social, financial, economic and environmental. | Council has completed area specific social infrastructure plans in consultation with local communities for Norlane/Corio, Leopold, Drysdale/Clifton Springs, Lara and Armstrong Creek. Plans are underway for the Northern Bellarine and Eastern Suburbs, and funding is available to undertake a plan for Bell Park/North Geelong/Bell Post Hill. Future funding will look at the Southern Corridor and Central Geelong. These plans provide the City with strategic direction for the future provision of community services in each area, with an emphasis on.

| Positions. Offers a large flexible space for community use. Provides the opportunity for an architectural landmark for Central Geelong and the Waterfront. | Boost to building a lifelong learning culture for the region. Generation of significant economic benefit and economic activity for the region. | Through private development and operation. Better use of existing infrastructure including public transport. | Significant reductions in rental and utility expenditure resulting in long term cost savings. | More efficient utilisation of staff and the Cities administrative functions. | The economy will be stimulated through jobs created during construction and the increased availability of commercial space for further business investment. | Increased tourism opportunities as a result of easier accessibility. | Unlimited export potential and room to expand supply chain. | Improved environmental outcomes. | Easier access by grouping together services and working in partnership with other organisations. |
Group led by the City have been appointed, and include representatives from the local business and education community. Support for the project continues to grow with increasing understanding of the benefits generated from business events and the proposed centre. Discussions are continuing with potential partners to further explore and refine possible site locations and project delivery structure.

destination. The study highlighted significant opportunities and economic benefits to Geelong and the region. The City has partnered with Regional Development Victoria, Tourism Victoria and the Royal Geelong Yacht Club to refine the business case in support of the development of Geelong as a cruise destination. It is believed this will assist future funding submissions to other levels of government.

integrated Officers. The City of Greater Geelong has resolved to commit $32 million in future budgets to the capital cost of a new Geelong Library and Heritage Centre (GLHC), and is actively lobbying for an additional $15 million each from the State and Federal Governments to complete a tripartite funding commitment for the GLHC project.

native vegetation and fauna management requirements; statutory approval process requirements; impact of sea level rise on the developments’ siting; and investigation of market appetite and willingness to invest and/or operate a mineral springs spa complex.

In the meantime, other opportunities to provide an effective and efficient customer service ‘one-stop-shop’ are being pursued, through the consolidation of rental premises.

late 2010 within the Armstrong Creek East Precinct, while a permit for 72 industrial lots has also been approved within the North East Industrial Precinct.

future link. Land has already been nominated within the approved North East Industrial Precinct Structure Plan for this future road link. Council is working with VicRoads who are currently undertaking an alignment feasibility study east of the Barwon River (through to Portarlington Road). This work is expected to be completed by late 2011.

one works is $7.8 million, which will provide for a first release of 15.5 hectares of high value industrial land. The additional funding will be provided by land owners, including the City of Greater Geelong.

Work on a Precinct Structure Plan for the West (residential) Precinct is well advanced and expected to be on public exhibition during mid-2011. Planning will also commence during mid-2011. Planning will also commence in 2011.

The City of Greater Geelong has completed the Corio/Thorngate Community Infrastructure Planning project that identifies key priorities for the suburbs over the next 10 years. The City will continue to work with the State Government who is leading the regeneration project. A redevelopment program of existing housing stock has been undertaken, and feasibility study could lead to up to 1,000 new jobs for Geelong and an estimated $200 million injection into the local economy. The City continues to investigate potential long-term sustainable uses for Osborne House that are consistent with this vision.

Government recently announced a feasibility study into the Port of Geelong becoming the new Victorian export and import centre for motor vehicles. The Port is seen as the perfect position to take advantage of the development, providing space for expansion, strong road and rail links, close proximity to Melbourne and existing sites with infrastructure for staging areas. The feasibility study will look at up to 1,000 new jobs for Geelong and an estimated $200 million injection into the local economy. The $2.3 million redevelopment of the Whittington Link, the reopening of the Kindergarten at Apollo Place and the successful staging of three Whittington FlameFest community festivals.

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developing community and children’s services hubs. 2011–2012 will see the implementation of two priority community infrastructure projects identified through the planning process. The Ocean Grove Children and Family Centre will be the first integrated children’s centre for the region, with the recent announcement of $1 million in State Government funding. The centre, which will be built over two years, will provide a range of services, including long-day child care, a kindergarten and maternal and child health.

Construction of Stage One of the Leopold Community Hub will also commence in 2011–2012, delivering vital infrastructure for the area’s rapidly growing population. The $7.5 million stage of the project will incorporate a Sub-Regional Library and integrated children’s centre.

The City is also continuing an extensive program of works to upgrade existing facilities based on
community priorities and greatest need, with $12.6 million to be invested in community Infrastructure in 2010–2011. Works currently underway include Stage 2 projects at Portarlington and Lara Preschools, Waurn Ponds Library, and the Reynolds Road Belmont Maternal and Child Health Centre.