



July 31, 2019

## **Response to the development of South Australia's first 20-year State Infrastructure Strategy.**

Infrastructure SA is leading the development of South Australia's first 20-year State Infrastructure Strategy.

The Strategy will:

- reflect a whole of state perspective,
- encompass a broad range of economic and social infrastructure that is funded and delivered by all levels of government and the private and not-for-profit sectors, and
- Encapsulate the State's challenges and opportunities, and identify the future infrastructure needs for industries, businesses and communities to thrive.

The discussion paper articulates that the South Australian Growth Agenda is a key priority for the Government and its priorities and objectives will encompass the public sector, business and the broader community to achieve higher rates of economic growth and prosperity for the state.

South Australia's regions play an important role, driving export sales through agricultural and mining output, and by providing important drawcards for tourism and the visitor economy.

### Strong Trade and Export Performance

#### *Implications*

Page 8 provide a valuable thought point in critical infrastructure investment that is not population based must continue to occur to enable regions to survive and this will be a challenge for the current and future government. Council fully supports this notion and particularly in competitive grant funding there needs to be considerable weighting given.

Regional Development Australia Whyalla Eyre Peninsula supported by the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association endorsed the Cape Hardy Port proposal.

Energy transmission, generation and reliability is a critical component to sustaining and strengthening existing industry on the Eyre Peninsula. As is water sustainability. The Government should continue to investigate and support infrastructure that supports this.

The impact of the closure of the rail network in Port Lincoln and investment into road infrastructure to continue to sustain and grow our key agricultural sector must occur.

Mining operations and proposal throughout the Eyre Peninsula must be supported by sufficient infrastructure. This burden should not lie solely with Local Government and State Government should seek to co-invest in this local level infrastructure. The discussion paper mentioned how many regional centres have struggled to grow or event maintain population levels despite strengthening prices and increased productivity, it is this new industry in these regions that will assist in jobs growth and sustaining populations.

### Emerging Pathways to Growth

Page 9 – growing demand for premium food and agribusiness products, with trends towards quality, health, appellation, and traceability creating opportunities for local businesses

Page 9 – energy and resource projects on the Eyre Peninsula, particularly energy, water, road and port infrastructure. As previously mentioned these are emerging industries on the Eyre Peninsula and potentially within the District Council of Streaky Bay. The government must support these start up industries by contribution to essential infrastructure.

Page 9 & 16 (an endlessly compelling destination for visitors) – Tourism – considered one of Australia's top five super-growth sectors and is a vital contributor to SA's economy. Infrastructure is essential to enable access, new infrastructure to create experiences and tourism product.

The Government must continue to support and invest in the fly in market, with infrastructure improvements to Regional and Remote Aerodromes. Whilst most remote aerodromes understand the realistic implications of larger scale commercial opportunities, there is opportunities for a niche fly in market and this can be supported by facilities such as small scale airports, sealed runways and fuel storage facilities. There has been focus from the federal government on these aerodromes in regards to essential services such as retaining the Royal Flying Doctor Service and Mail, however there is opportunity for the recreational sector that will support our economic growth.

An estimated 80% of the visitation to the Eyre Peninsula is the self-drive market with the majority of these Caravan/Campers. The Eyre Peninsula provides long stretches of road with no passing lane provision. The highways additionally boast high level use from Trucks travelling east to West and for the lower Eyre Peninsula this will only set to increase with the closure of the rail system.

The Government should be seeking to investigate the provision of parking lanes to accommodate the level of mixed traffic as we see throughout the rest of the state. In addition to this the Government should look at the road side rest stops implemented throughout Western Australia. Those travelling from the West will frequently mention the quality and type of infrastructure provided to support the self-drive market. Quality rest stops will improve not only the appeal to the self-drive market but to the safety of the long distance driving, enabling drivers to take longer breaks with sufficient facilities.

Investment in tourism product and visitor experience infrastructure is critical to our long term success. We have seen much investment into Kangaroo Island, Yorke Peninsula and National Parks throughout other areas of regional South Australia. That product development particularly in the National Parks could be replicated in many areas throughout the Eyre Peninsula. There are spectacular coastlines and parks that beg investment into high quality walking trails. There is potential for multi stop over trail that encompasses the fly in fly out market, fly in Ceduna walk to Port Lincoln fly out.

The Eyre Peninsula has been touted to over promise and under deliver in its tourism experiences. The region and its Councils are committed to tourism and keen to partner in this investment. The Eye's on Eyre project delivered by the Council's and Regional Development Australia should be used as the direction for investment.

Page 9 – creative industries as one of the most rapidly growing sectors of the State's economy, Council supports the state in any aspect of developing this sector.

Page 9 – integrated infrastructure networks are required, and in considering the Eyre Peninsula a whole of regional approach needs to be taken.

Page 9 – digital connectivity to enable and facilitate growth. Mobile blackspots are slowly being addressed across South Australia's rural and regional areas. It is still true however that immediately outside of most small communities there is still no reception and this is endangering the lives and

livelihoods of those communities. Increasing telephone and internet connectivity will increase the attractiveness of living and staying in regional and remote areas as the current experience of remoteness will be decreased. Businesses will also be able to offer, work and access an online community they currently have little access to and limited understanding of.

### Population Growth Challenges

Page 10 – long term infrastructure strategies that support population growth. The implications mentioned are real and more frequently than not we see infrastructure investment that has not catered for population growth. This can also be referenced to growth in visitation and supporting infrastructure such as parking (particular car/caravans) is not sufficient causing rework and in some instances rework cannot occur. The Government could consider specific funding streams to fund studies and planning into predicted (needed) population growth and infrastructure needs assessments. These studies can then be utilised as supporting documents and evidence in infrastructure implementation funding.

### Growing Dominance of Data and Technology

Page 11 – the importance of digital infrastructure in the regions cannot be underestimated. Technology plays a key role in the liveability of a community. Technology in the regions provides access to education and training, business efficiencies, markets, marketing, social connection and procurement of goods and services to mention a few.

Whilst the installation of NBN has been of great assistance its reliability, speed and efficiency for those accessing by wireless connection can frequently be called into question. There is a limited area of access in remote communities like Streaky Bay and the agricultural sector who access via satellite report they pay high monthly fees for limited amount of data. Many report the speed and data allowance does not allow them to even consider conducting business online.

Telecommunication across the Eyre Peninsula has many blackspots. Whilst mentioning prior the Mobile Blackspot funding, this investment should be increased to enable problem areas to be corrected at a faster rate. Council has three major tourist drives that are considered our key tourism destinations and most of these routes fall within a blackspot. This makes it dangerous from a safety perspective and difficult from a marketing perspective to introduce digital marketing tools at these attractions.

### Our People

Page 12-15– ageing population and wellbeing, retention of services, aged care accommodation, whole of life infrastructure development (footpaths, parks, etc.), our people are our now and our future.

Council made a submission to the Regional Development Strategy for South Australia which provided more detail into the above.

Liveability (as per recent Regional Australia Institute research) is defined as five indicators;

- Health Services
- Education
- Cost of Living
- Amenity and Lifestyle
- Connection to Community

Each of these indicators will vary on their importance to different groups of people however they all contribute to the fabric of our community.

Particularly in regional and remote communities it is the provision of infrastructure that is “whole of life” from birth to elderly.

Those living in rural and remote communities acknowledge that we all can't have access to the same level of services as those living in metropolitan Adelaide. The key focus for our region is to sustain the services that we currently have in place and encourage additional services that can be supported on an ad-hoc basis.

Investment should continue to into the retention of the same level of provision in our Health Services and Education. However, consideration should be given to embracing and implementation of technology to provide additional services and provide access to quality education.

Council has 33% of its population aged 65+ and needs to consider future aged care accommodation in the district, it is essential that our existing care facilities be supported and new areas for growth be investigated to support our population.

#### Expanding regions. Contracting Populations

Page 13-14 – ensuring equity of infrastructure provision to regional and remote areas with smaller populations to sustain communities is essential to the survival of South Australia.

The Eyre Peninsula is ranked the fourth highest in production of GRP outside of Metro Adelaide and only 0.3% behind the top two contenders. A major contributor to this GRP is the agriculture, fishing, aquaculture sector, all of which are supported by these small regional and remote communities. However, as mentioned before we have seen limited investment in infrastructure despite this.

The majority of the Eyre Peninsula is dominated by Agricultural production and its heavy reliance on this during times of hardship and drought in recent years has only strengthened the need to diversify our economy to lessen the impact of these hardships.

The shoring up of our road network, port infrastructure, water and energy reliability will enable and facilitate new industry development.

#### First Peoples of Australia

Page 14 – Council supports initiatives to ensure planning considers first peoples of Australia and our new arrivals.

#### Whyalla and Eyre Peninsula

Page 19 – examples of supporting this region have been provided, with emphasis that smaller projects outside of the major regional centres must be supported for our survival. Focus on road infrastructure with rail “mothballing” and infrastructure projects should also include mining support and the retention of our human capital. Digital Connectivity, Energy reliability and water sustainability should be highly regarded.