

GEELONG ON THE RISE: A CLEVER AND CREATIVE INTERNATIONAL CITY

GREATER GEELONG ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2024-2034



We Acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We Acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.



View of the You Yangs from Lake Connewarre, Leopold



CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Mayor's Message	6
CEO's Message	7
Strategic Context	8
Our Past, Present and Future	10
Our Past	10
Our Present	11
Our Future	13
Our Advantages and Challenges	14
Our Competitive Advantages	14
Our Challenges and Barriers	18
Our Future Growth Opportunities	20
Our Bold Plan	24
Positioning Geelong	25
Collaboration and Support	28
Talent Attraction and Development	30
Planning and Advocacy	32
Monitoring Progress	34
References	34



WorkSafe Victoria Head Office, Geelong

INTRODUCTION

Geelong on the Rise is a contemporary and very local story, one focused on innovation and creativity. Geelong has always been a clever and creative place. It has always been a place of business and industry.

For thousands of years, Wadawurrung People lived on this land and knew it as a land of plentiful resources and valuable trading materials.

The story of modern Geelong was born of the wool trade, as European settlers came to the area to access its plentiful resources and attractive grazing lands for sheep. These events represent the first significant economic evolution of Geelong, as it was established as the export terminal for wool. Geelong's second great economic evolution arrived in 1868 as Victoria's first woollen mill was built in Geelong, ushering in a period of industrialisation. Geelong's commitment to celebrating the arts came in the late 1800's with the establishment of Geelong Gallery in 1896. The Gallery is now one of Australia's leading and oldest regional art galleries.

Geelong's industry prowess accelerated in the 1920s to include multiple woollen mills, fertiliser plants, a cement factory and the first automotive assembly plant in Australia (Ford's Geelong Factory). Before World War II, the first (and largest) International Harvester Factory in Australia and the Shell Refinery were established, bringing more innovation, investment and jobs to Geelong. Geelong boomed in the post war period, with the population surging and more industry and jobs as Alcoa established its Geelong Smelter.

The 1970s and 1980s saw further economic evolution as the woollen mills closed when Government policy and macro-economic factors shifted. The International Harvester Factory also closed. This period saw Deakin University establish in Geelong as well as the Geelong Arts Centre open, representing a new wave of education, innovation and creativity.

The 21st century became another disruptive period. Geelong's City Centre began to evolve and change through various investments. The office headquarters of the Transport Accident Commission, National Disability Insurance Agency and WorkSafe relocated to Geelong, demonstrating the City's ability to support a large, corporate business. This period also witnessed the closure of Ford's Geelong Factory and the Alcoa Smelter. In the wake of these closures, new advanced manufacturing operations were established focused on carbon fibre, leveraging the innovation and specialist expertise of Deakin University. Most recently, COVID-19 disrupted the City and Barwon Health established the first regional public health unit in Victoria.

Geelong has emerged from COVID in a strong growth position, with the population again surging and more industry announcements. Hanwha is establishing a large defence manufacturing operation located at the Avalon Industrial Precinct and The Spirit of Tasmania relocated to the GeelongPort. Geelong's refinery, now owned by Viva Energy, announced plans to upgrade the facility with a \$300m Ultra-Low Sulphur Gas (ULSG) plant, that will see it producing the cleanest petrol it has ever made.

This story is one of innovation and creativity, about adaption and evolution. It's Geelong's story and a story of a city on the rise. Geelong has a significant population of more than 280,000 (set to reach 400,000 by 2041) and is Victoria's second capital city, it has a major international airport, a refinery, and major port, it has a large CBD and waterfront precinct that can support significant growth. Geelong has strong education and training organisations and an attractive and growing lifestyle offer. The City has all the ingredients required to be a significant economic player nationally and internationally. *Geelong on the Rise* is about a sustained elevation and evolution of the Geelong economy over the next 20 years.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

It is a great pleasure to unveil our strategic 10-year Economic Development Plan for Greater Geelong.

This plan represents a significant step towards realising our long-term vision of becoming a prosperous, sustainable, innovative, and creative city-region.

Geelong is growing at a rapid rate and is now home to more than 280,000 people. This growth has been fuelled by an attractive lifestyle, diversifying economy, and a diverse and welcoming community.

This has transformed our economic landscape, creating new job opportunities across a range of sectors.

As Australia's only UNESCO Creative City of Design, we have a strong culture of innovation.

We are pioneering innovation and fostering technological advancements across cutting-edge industries, particularly in advanced manufacturing.

We now have a significant opportunity to align our Clever and Creative vision with a sharpened focus on growth industries that will help drive our future economy.

Alongside advanced manufacturing there is defence, transport and logistics and the visitor economy,

as well as creative industries, digital technology, the clean economy, major public and private healthcare services, professional business services, and established industries that are crucial to keeping Australia moving. and professional business services.

Our strategic location, natural environment, air and sea ports, transport hubs, defence capabilities, refinery, innovative businesses and research facilities all provide us with competitive advantages.

With these assets – and a skilled workforce – Geelong is poised for growth and success on a global scale.

Our 10-year plan, *Geelong on the Rise*, is the culmination of extensive collaboration with regional businesses, industry leaders, government agencies, and community organisations.

It embodies our collective vision for Greater Geelong and will forge the path for future work.

Together with our valued stakeholders and partners, we are committed to bringing this vision to life, ensuring a prosperous and vibrant future for Greater Geelong.



CR TRENT SULLIVAN
Mayor

CEO'S MESSAGE

Over the past decade, Greater Geelong has undergone remarkable growth. Geelong is outpacing every other region in Australia, boasting the fastest population growth in Victoria and second fastest in Australia, the largest regional economy in the state, and the fastest jobs growth of all Australian regional cities.

Cementing Geelong's current population and economic growth is a strong \$13.2 billion investment pipeline.

Leveraging our current economic growth, major infrastructure assets and UNESCO City of Design designation, Geelong will increasingly feature on the global stage alongside prominent international cities committed to developing thriving and sustainable cities and communities.

Our 10-year plan, *Geelong on the Rise*, will stand as a blueprint for future work, guiding our actions to create an environment conducive to economic growth and investment, and focus on our key strengths, strategic priorities and milestones.

It will drive a more sustainable and diversified economy that is resilient and adaptive, even to sudden changes, and will shape an innovative and future focused

economy that defines new trends and opportunities.

This plan will guide our work towards positioning Geelong as a global business centre that attracts international investment.

It will help us focus on fostering collaboration that proactively supports local business growth, the development of industry clusters, strategies for talent attraction and future workforce skills and strategic projects that underpin future business and industry growth.

Our community vision to be internationally recognised as a clever and creative city-region that is forward focused, enterprising, and adaptive and cares for its people and environment is central to our future growth.

The City is proud to be playing a key role in bringing the community vision to life, however it's essential that we facilitate collaborative and supportive environment that works across business, industry, government and the community.

Together, we have incredible opportunities in front of us and all the ingredients to realise a highly innovative, sustainable, and successful future for Greater Geelong.



ALI WASTIE
Chief Executive Officer

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

We recognise this plan is part of a broader, comprehensive Community Plan to support a proud, safe and healthy community. This plan also recognises important work that has been done previously to support specific industries and we have aligned the plan to this broader strategic context.

Our Community Plan 2021-25 is Council's plan to deliver on the desired future of the community.

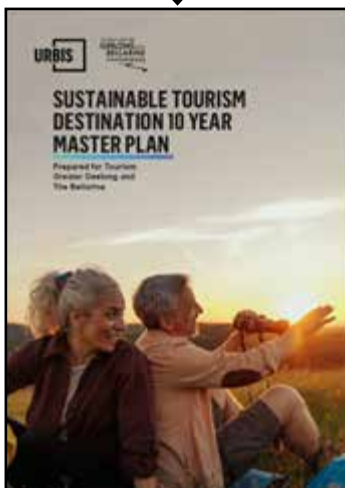
Strategic Direction 3: Strong Local Economy provides direction for the Economic Development Plan.

The Economic Development Plan provides specific actions and initiatives to deliver on *Our Community Plan 2021-25* and also establishes the direction for the next significant evolution in the local economy, to become an international clever and creative city.

The Economic Development Plan supports other existing strategies and plans that can assist in delivering an international clever and creative city.



Other key complementary documents include the *Smart Cities Strategy*, *Advocacy Framework* and *International Engagement Strategy*.



ROLE OF COUNCIL IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local government plays a key role in the promotion of the local economy and employment growth. Economic development creates employment, provides essential goods and services and establishes communities as attractive places to live, work, learn, visit and invest.

According to the Victorian Auditor-General's Office, local governments play a key role in facilitating economic development by attracting businesses and residents to municipalities. Local governments are well placed to drive economic outcomes, as they are the closest level of government to business and the community.

The role of local government in economic development can be expressed across a number of spheres where local government has a direct responsibility or area of influence:

- **Influencing** Geelong's economic growth
- **Advocating** for new infrastructure and services needed by existing and future industries
- **Partnering** with others to leverage our competitive strengths
- **Facilitating** small business support, workforce development, investment attraction and events
- **Marketing and positioning** Geelong's competitive strengths
- **Leading** tourism, creative and innovative industries.

Overall, through these spheres of influence, local government is seeking to create an environment that is conducive to future economic growth and vibrancy.



OUR PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

OUR PAST

For tens of thousands of years, the Aboriginal people of the Wadawurrung were the first residents living in the region. They lived in close connection to the land, water and seasons, caring for country.

The Wadawurrung People were Geelong's first residents. They originally called the Central Geelong area 'Djilang' and the surrounding land and waters 'Corayo'.

Geelong's population in 1838 is 450	
1838	The first wool store and general store are built.
1840	First shipment of wool is exported to London.
	First edition of the Geelong Advertiser is published.
1840s-50s	Industries included flour mills, lime kilns, soapworks, tanneries and a ropeworks.
1852	Geelong Hospital opens.
	First shipping channel established in Corio Bay.
Geelong's population in 1854 is 20,000	
1857	Geelong to Melbourne railway line opens.
1868	Victoria's first woollen mill is built in Geelong ushering in a period of industrialisation.
1887	Gordon Technical College opens.
1896	Geelong Art Gallery is established.
Geelong's population in 1907 is 28,000	
1920s	Industry accelerates including the development of multiple woollen mills, fertilizer plants and cement factory.
1925	Ford Motor Company opens the first automotive assembly plant in Australia in Geelong.
1926	What is now Target Australia opens its first store in Geelong.
1940	International Harvester begins manufacturing agricultural equipment.
1952	Avalon Airport founded.
Geelong's population in 1954 is 73,000	
1954	Shell Refinery opens at Corio.
	Mid-1950s Geelong is an industrial powerhouse with manufacturing employment peaking at 46 per cent.
1963	Alcoa aluminium smelter opens at Point Henry.
1970s-80s	Wool manufacturing begins to decline, woollen mills and International Harvester close. A new wave of education, innovation and creativity gets underway.
1974	Deakin University formally establishes (opens to

	on-campus students in Waurm Ponds in 1977).
Geelong's population in 1981 is 141,300	
1981	Geelong Performing Arts Centre (now Geelong Arts Centre) opens.
1991	The first Cotton On store opens in Geelong.
1995	First passenger flights out of Avalon Airport.
1996	Deakin University's Waterfront campus opens.
2001	Redevelopment of Geelong's Waterfront is completed.
Geelong's population in 2006 is 197,500	
2007	Carbon Revolution is founded commercialising carbon fibre wheel technology.
2009	TAC headquarters moves to Geelong.
2010	Geelong Ring Road is completed.
2014	Alcoa closes Point Henry operations.
	NDIA headquarters opens in Geelong (moving into a new building in 2019).
2016	Ford ceases manufacturing in Geelong.
	Geelong Future Economy Precinct is set up at Deakin University – accelerating research in advanced manufacturing.
2017	Geelong designated a UNESCO Creative City of Design.
	ManuFutures establishes at Deakin University.
2018	WorkSafe's new Geelong headquarters opens.
	An international terminal opens at Avalon Airport.
2019	Pivot City Innovation District celebrates 1,000 onsite employees, surpassing the number originally employed at Federal Woollen Mill and automotive glass factory.
2022	Spirit of Tasmania launches from its new terminal at the Port of Geelong.
	Government announces \$500+ million to construct the new Barwon Women's and Children's at University Hospital Geelong.
Geelong's population in 2023 is 276,500	
2023	Redeveloped Geelong Arts Centre opens, becoming the largest regional arts centre in Australia.
	Construction commences on the Hanwha Armored Vehicle Centre of Excellence at Avalon Airport.
	Work on Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre gets underway.

OUR PRESENT



Geelong is Victoria's second Capital City and one of the state's fastest growing areas.

Population: 276,116 (2022)

Growth of 5,340 over last year

Growth of 29,873 over last five years

Source: ABS (2023)



Geelong is the largest economy in regional Victoria, third largest in the state.

GRP (2021-22): \$17.6 billion

1 year growth: 10.3%

5 year average annual growth: 5.4%

Source: Economy ID (2023)



Geelong is booming

\$13.2 billion in major projects

Recently completed \$2.1b

Commenced \$3.6b

Approved \$2.3b

Proposed \$5.2b



Recently Completed Projects

Geelong Quarter (incl. Holiday Inn and Suites Geelong) (\$200 million)

Geelong Arts Centre redevelopment (\$140 million)

Spirit of Tasmania Terminal (\$135 million)

Charles Brownlow Retirement Village (\$100 million)

TOP INDUSTRIES



Contribution to Economy (\$b)

Healthcare \$2.2 (15%)

Construction \$2.1 (14%)

Manufacturing \$1.2 (9%)

Education and training \$1.2 (8%)

Retail trade \$1.1 (7%)



Top Exporting Industries (\$m)

Manufacturing \$2,171

Healthcare \$875

Wholesale trade \$745

Education \$569

Finance and insurance \$521



Contribution to Jobs (No.)

Healthcare 26,347 (19%)

Construction 15,515 (11%)

Retail trade 14,974 (11%)

Education and training 13,127 (10%)

Manufacturing 9,326 (7%)

Source: Economy ID (2023)



Important Exporters

Viva Energy

Herd Group

Golden Farms

Godfrey Hirst

Incitec Pivot

University Hospital Geelong

Deakin University

Source: Economy ID

VISITOR ECONOMY AND EVENTS



Geelong and the Bellarine Visitation

Visitors (YE September 2023): 6.3 million

Visitor nights (YE September 2023): 4.6 million

Visitor expenditure (2021-22): \$1.8 billion

Source: Tourism Research Australia (2023)

Major Events (2022-23)

Number of events: 18

Event visitors: 757,500

Economic impact: \$77.5 million



Economic Contribution of Visitor Economy and Events on the Geelong Economy

Direct contribution to GRP: \$265 million (1.8% of total)

Direct contribution to employment: 4,987 jobs (3.7% of total)

Source: Economy ID (2023)

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES



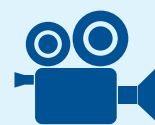
Geelong is Australia's first (and only) City of Design and a member of the UNESCO Creative City Network.

The Creative Industries are an evolving mix of sectors spanning arts, culture, screen, design, publishing, advertising and a range of professional services.

Direct contribution to GRP: \$691 million (4.7% of total)

Direct contribution to employment: 7,660 jobs (5.7% of total)

Source: Lucid Economics (2023)



Geelong has world-leading innovative talent across a variety of creative pursuits, from fashion and the arts to engineering and production.



GeelongPort, North Geelong

Geelong is a city on the rise. Unlike most parts of the world, Geelong’s economy did not decline during COVID and it has emerged from the pandemic stronger amidst a significant growth phase. This situation is not a function of luck or good fortune, but is based on a strong economic foundation, based on innovation, diversity and major infrastructure assets.

The perception of Geelong may be based on its blue-collar, manufacturing history, but the modern Geelong is very different. While manufacturing remains significant to the Geelong economy, it has been eclipsed by healthcare and construction, in terms of its contribution to the economy. In terms of jobs, four other industries employ more people than manufacturing. This economic diversity will continue to support the evolution and diversification of the Geelong economy.

Manufacturing remains Geelong’s largest export sector, but its diversity has increased dramatically from a traditional reliance on the automotive sector or textiles. Geelong produces significant exports in food and beverage, petroleum, textiles, defence, automotive parts, clean economy products, and a wide variety of other advanced manufactured goods. In today’s modern Geelong, there are also significant exports in healthcare, education and

tourism. Geelong’s innovative and creative people and businesses have been responsible for driving this evolution.

Additionally, Geelong has a number of emerging sectors, including tourism and events as well as the creative industries. These industries make an important contribution to the economy but also help to further build the creative and innovative capacity of Geelong. These industries will not only add jobs and value to the economy but will also contribute to the city’s liveability and attractiveness for future innovative and creative residents. Many of these future residents will bring their business to Geelong as well, while others will fill important roles in local businesses and contribute to a growing talent pool of clever and skilled people.

Beyond Geelong’s population and economic growth, the current economic boom is underwritten by a strong investment pipeline. \$2.1 billion of recently completed investment into Geelong and the future pipeline includes \$11.1 billion, of which \$3.6 billion of projects have already commenced.

Geelong’s current economic evolution will cement its position as Victoria’s second capital city and extend its position as a clever and creative city on the international stage.

OUR KEY ASSETS/INFRASTRUCTURE						
Avalon Airport	GeelongPort	Viva Energy Refinery	Geelong CBD	Deakin/ The Gordon TAFE	Princes Freeway	V/Line Geelong-Melbourne
Annual Passengers	Annual Throughput	Employs 1000 workers	Investment	Student Enrolments:	1 hour to Melbourne	1 hour to Southern Cross Station
Pre-COVID: 1 million+	2022-23: 11.6 million tonne	Processes 19m litres per day	Recently Completed: \$410 million	25,000+		
Future: 5 million	2048: 32 million tonne		Future: \$2.6 billion			

OUR FUTURE

Geelong's future is bright. The City has already forged a strong economy based on innovation and diversity. As Geelong continues to rise, the economy will become more advanced, more innovative and more creative. New residents and businesses will be attracted to the area, some coming for jobs, others coming for lifestyle, some will be attracted to the clever and creative environment that Geelong offers (and will offer increasingly into the future).

In addition to welcoming new and emerging industries to our region, we will see the scaling up of existing businesses at 5-19 or 20-199 employees and the maturing of those with 1-4 employees. This will ensure sustainable growth of supplementary or new industries that may become the future backbone of the local economy.

As Geelong continues to evolve as a clever and creative city, its reputation on the national and international level will grow. Our local businesses will export more products around Australia and the world. We will attract additional national and international businesses as well as highly skilled talent from around the country and the world.

Population (No.)	Jobs (No.)	Gross Regional Product (\$m)
2022: 276,116	2022: 135,561	2022: \$17,584
2041: 395,491	2041: 190,602	2041: \$27,319

Geelong is a city on the rise and by 2041 we will attract an additional:

- 120,000 people
- 55,000 new jobs
- \$9.7 billion in Gross Regional Product

Geelong on the Rise will deliver:

- A more sustainable economy that is based on circular economy principles
- An innovative economy where knowledge and talent are the most significant assets
- A diversified economy that is resilient and adaptive, even to sudden changes
- A future-focused economy that defines new trends (as opposed to reacting to them)

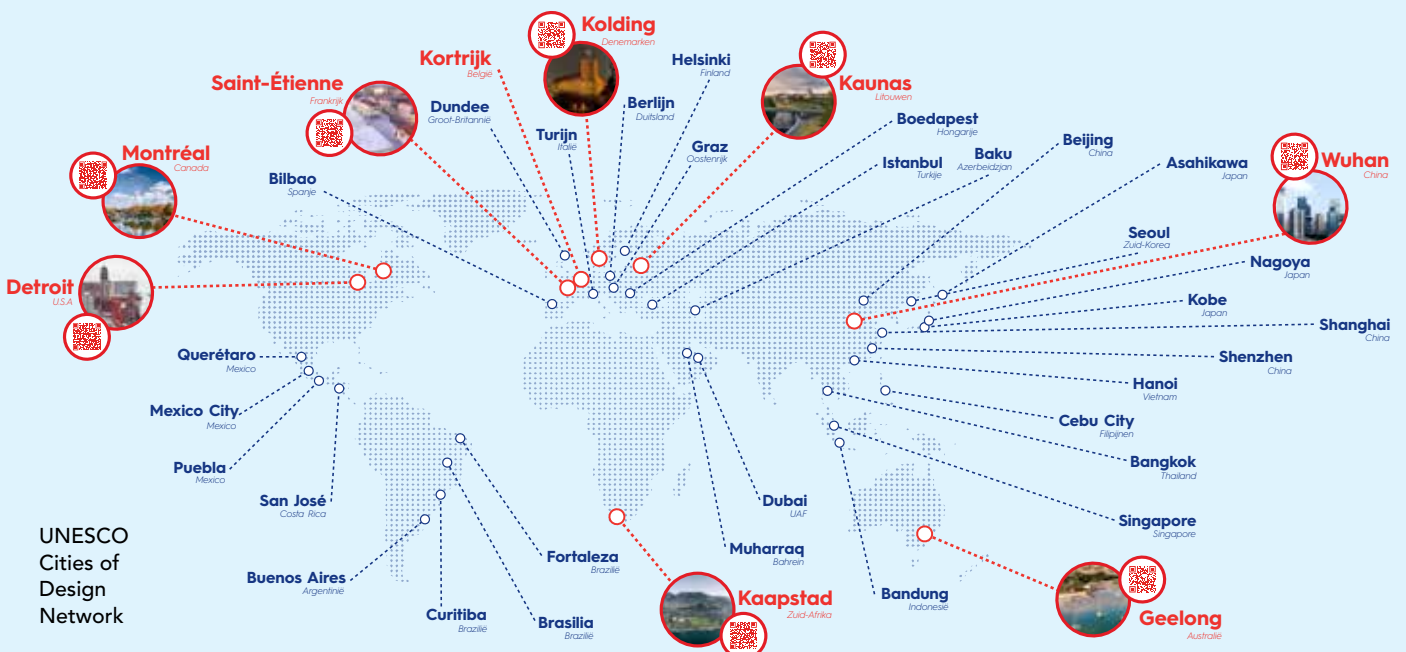
GEELONG UNESCO CITY OF DESIGN

Geelong has a long and proud history as a creative city and a leader in design. In October 2017 Geelong was designated a member of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN).

The City of Design designation is about using creativity and innovation to build more sustainable, resilient and inclusive communities. It fits perfectly with our 30-year, community-led vision to be internationally recognised as a clever and creative city-region.

Geelong is one of 43 Cities of Design in the UCCN. Our designation opens opportunities to showcase and celebrate our achievements on an international stage. We'll learn from and share knowledge to improve our industrial and commercial activities, our urban form and our liveability.

The designation will also support future investment attraction and our on-going economic development into a clever and creative international city.



UNESCO
Cities of
Design
Network

OUR ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

We engaged with well over 100 stakeholders regarding our future economy and we appreciate everyone's contribution. Input from these stakeholders has guided our desired future and allowed us to identify our competitive advantages, opportunities, barriers and challenges.

This plan is guided by our local businesses and stakeholders, which makes it realistic and fit for purpose.

OUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

Geelong is fortunate to have a number of competitive advantages:





Attractive lifestyle: Geelong residents enjoy an enviable lifestyle that includes a big city feel without the congestion, a stunning coastline, diverse night life and food culture, vibrant arts and cultural scene, redeveloped waterfront, growing skyline, strong sporting culture and a wide variety of recreation and residential living options.



Fast growing region: Geelong is one of Victoria's fastest growing regions and has a future investment pipeline of \$11.1 billion. This fast pace of growth provides investors with confidence and ensures a rapidly growing workforce and population.



Significant transport assets: Geelong has the Avalon Airport, Port of Geelong and easy access to main road and rail transport corridors. Our advanced logistics capability provides business with strong accessibility to move people and products.



Strong industry: Geelong has always had a strong manufacturing sector which continues today with industrial strengths in advanced manufacturing, carbon fibre, agriculture and primary production, energy and resources, textiles, automotive parts, defence, construction, transport and materials handling. Geelong's diverse commercial landscape now boasts business, professional and public administration services, health and social assistance, tourism, events and hospitality.'



Diverse and skilled workforce: Geelong is well known for its diverse workforce, covering executive/professional and highly skilled, trade based workers and those of lower skill levels (or skillsets for manufacturing, care and the visitor economy). Geelong's educational ecosystem allows for continual educational attainment and skills development for life-long learning to ensure a future-fit workforce.



Strong leadership and collaboration: Geelong has a long and proud history of strong industry leadership and collaboration across industries and amongst businesses. This environment leads to strong advocacy capability and infrastructure provision as well as new ideas, knowledge, and innovation. Geelong's transition from a significant reliance on major strongholds in textiles, alumina and automotive to disperse sectors, a knowledge-based economy and an appetite plus hubs that allow for innovation incubation is a testament to the local economy's collaborative and enterprising spirit.



Cost competitive: Geelong is very cost competitive relative to Melbourne and various capital cities across Australia in terms of land and facility costs, housing, cost of living and other factors.



Research, education and innovation assets: Geelong's Deakin University Campuses together with the Gordon TAFE provide a wide range of education and learning options for residents as well as a variety of bespoke research and innovation assets for business and industry focused research. Areas of specialised capability include advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, carbon fibres, circular economy, battery research, digital futures and other bespoke areas, such as the Geelong Tech School (the Gordon TAFE's Centre for Design Excellence). This infrastructure provides businesses with access to cutting-edge, internationally competitive innovation and creativity.



Economic diversity: Geelong's economy is very diverse, which allows it to better manage future economic shocks but also provides businesses and future workers with a variety of options and opportunities.



GEELONG FUTURE ECONOMY PRECINCT

Deakin University's Geelong Future Economy Precinct is a world-leading innovation precinct generating high-value knowledge economy jobs for the region.

The 325 hectare precinct epitomises the innovative and collaborative spirit that drives the Geelong economy. Over the last six years, the precinct has generated 2,000 jobs and is home to a number of high technology organisations, such as Carbon Revolution (carbon fibre wheel manufacturer), Carbon Nexus (a purpose built, open-access carbon fibre/composite research facility), FLAIM (the world's first multi-sensory

immersive learning solution for firefighters) and a number of key research institutes (Institute for Frontier Materials, Institute for Intelligent Systems Research and Innovation, ManuFutures, Recycling and Clean Energy Commercialisation Hub, Battery Research and Innovation Hub, Deakin Energy, Renewable Energy Microgrid, and the Circular Economy Factory).

The precinct has capacity to host future businesses that can leverage Deakin's research capability and collaboration to support future business expansion, investment and job growth.

A SUPPORTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT

As Geelong's economy has evolved, it has become more sophisticated, which includes having numerous industry organisations that contribute to and support our future economic development. These groups play an important role and work collaboratively together as partners and with stakeholders to support the growth and diversification of various industries and clusters.



OUR CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

Our future economic development is not without its challenges and barriers:



Lack of available and affordable housing: like all parts of Australia, Geelong is suffering from a lack of housing as well as a lack of affordable housing. Insufficient stock of housing as well as a lack of variety of housing stock can stifle future growth. Additionally, a lack of affordable housing can make it difficult for some workers to move or stay in Geelong, impeding future workforce growth.



Traffic, congestion and a lack of public transport: stakeholders identified that due to strong recent growth, traffic and congestion are emerging as issues for businesses. Additionally, a lack of public transport was cited as a growing concern. As the region continues to grow in population, ensuring that residents can access employment centres will be important and public transport can provide a solution that can also reduce traffic, congestion and greenhouse gas emissions.



Rapidly changing environment: as demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic and overseas conflicts, all businesses live in a rapidly changing environment, which requires constant attention and a nimble approach to business. The rapidly changing environment would also include new technology development and application as well as the changing energy environment.



Pockets of high socio-economic disadvantage: Geelong has some of the most disadvantaged post codes in Australia. Future economic development must consider how growth can be accessible and equitable for all residents.



Climate change and sustainability: climate change and sustainability are on-going challenges for everyone. As Geelong continues to grow, efforts need to be made to embrace circular economy principles, the transition to renewable energy and sustainable practices.



Lack of serviced industrial land: stakeholders identified that there is a severe shortage of serviced industrial land. While zoned industrial land may exist in abundance, a lack of serviced land can severely hinder future economic growth.



Changing skills base and shortages within the workforce: With the workforce needs of our region's key employers and future skills Geelong requires there will be a shortage of workers with the right mix of skills. To ensure we have the right skills in place to adapt to shifts in the economy and its workforce, we will continue to retrain currently skilled workers to meet short-term needs, we will prioritise education attainment, skills enhancement and life-long learning so that our workforce is equipped with the long-term entrepreneurship, leadership and digital skills to keep pace with Geelong's transforming landscape. In addition to building and boosting the skills of our people, we will present Geelong as a destination to live and work to those outside the region.



LIMITED EXHIBITION SPACE - GEELONG GALLERY

Currently Geelong Gallery is challenged by a lack of space to display our nationally important collection (less than 2 per cent on display) and to attract and present major exhibitions of local, national and international content. Our diverse, clever, creative and rapidly expanding population needs cultural assets and infrastructure to match the changing needs of our people and support future growth.

The barrier of limited exhibition space can impede our collective creativity and innovation into the future.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCLUSIVENESS

We want to have vibrant communities and a local economy that everyone can benefit from. Beyond residents that may be suffering from high level of socio-economic disadvantage, we want our economy to tap into the culturally and linguistically diverse community, be inclusive for First Nations people, people living with a disability and social enterprises.

Through ensuring all residents have future job prospects and supporting workforce development pathways, we can assist all residents to attain gainful employment. Additionally, we can encourage businesses to tap into the local First Nations and disability workforce. We can also seek to promote and encourage First Nations, disability owned businesses and social enterprises.

Through pursuing inclusive economic development, we can ensure that future growth benefits all parts of our community.

OUR FUTURE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Building on our competitive advantages and understanding current trends, while acknowledging current challenges and barriers, the following future growth opportunities have been identified.

- **Advanced Manufacturing:** Geelong has a long history in advanced manufacturing and has constantly been a leader in Australia for various industries. Geelong has always leveraged innovation and creativity to move to the next evolution of advanced manufacturing and has opportunities across a range of areas*:
 - › Food production
 - › Beverage production
 - › Fibre and textiles
 - › Chemicals and refining low carbon fuels
 - › Automotive parts
 - › Metal and machinery
 - › Clean economy
 - › Various niche opportunities.

*These opportunities do not preclude other avenues being pursued but provide focus for targeted action to deliver on our future potential.
- **Agribusiness and food manufacturing:** Agribusiness includes agriculture, supplies and machinery; farming, forestry and aquaculture; manufacturing dairy and goat products; wineries and food production; wholesale of any of these products; and agri-tourism. The Geelong region is experiencing significant growth in population and expansion of residential housing into previous farming land. This change in land use has seen a reduction in large-scale farming properties, and an increase in smaller farming and “lifestyle” properties. However, Geelong is a major distribution point for the regional agribusiness sector, which contributes \$1.5 billion annually to Gross Regional Product and employs over 10,000 people. Agribusiness is the region’s second largest exporter (at \$1.4 billion) accounting for 17 per cent of total exports.

- **Clean Economy:** The clean economy encompasses initiatives, practices and products which address climate change mitigation and adaptation; accelerate the development of renewable energy generation; storage and transmission; and enable the transition to a circular economy. Expanding the clean economy is paramount for Geelong to reach its full potential. Clean economy opportunities include investments into innovations, advanced manufacturing, and clean energy generation to decarbonise the economy (such as solar, wind, green hydrogen, and turning plastics into low carbon fuels).
- **Creative Industries and Digital Technology:** Creative industry opportunities in Geelong include an evolving mix of sectors spanning arts, culture, screen, design, publishing and advertising. They cover a wide diverse range of disciplines including game development and graphic design, fashion and filmmaking, performing arts and publishing, architecture and advertising, media and music, comedy and craft, as well as a variety of specialised consulting. These opportunities would generally include activities that are commercially-driven and export oriented.
- **Defence:** Geelong already has an emerging defence cluster with location of Hanwha Defense Australia’s Avalon manufacturing precinct as well as several local businesses that supply the defence industry. The Australian Government has identified over \$200 billion in defence spending over the next five years, which will continue to drive strong growth in this industry in Australia.
- **Healthcare:** Geelong has worldclass healthcare. Healthcare and social assistance employs more people in Geelong than any other sector (followed by construction and retail trade). Healthcare contributes \$2.2 billion (15 per cent) to the Geelong economy. The sector includes public and private hospitals, aged care, immunisation services, maternal and child health services, and social insurance (e.g. NDIS). The City of Greater Geelong is focused on improving the health and quality of life of all residents of Greater Geelong. We support the implementation of key regional strategies that build and sustain collaboration to address the public health challenges we face.

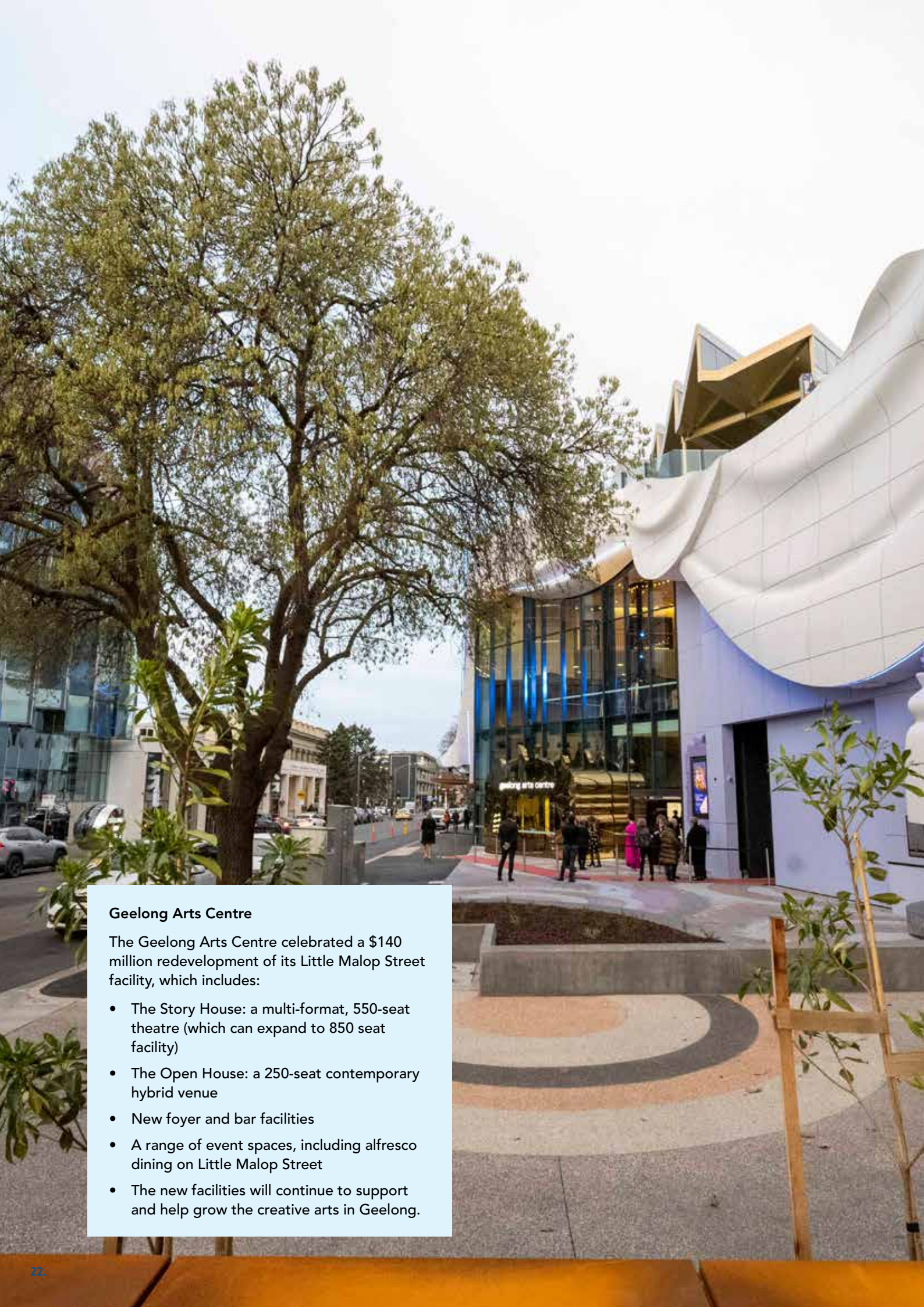
- **Professional Business Services:** Professional business services include a range of business services from accounting, financial, legal, consulting, engineering, insurance and more. Geelong has demonstrated that it can attract and sustain these types of businesses that generally offer 'white collar' employment opportunities, as evidenced by TAC, KPMG, GHD, WorkSafe, NDIA, URBIS and others. These businesses benefit from Geelong's strategic location, affordability and attractiveness for professionals wishing to move from a metropolitan environment.
- **Transport, logistics and fulfilment:** Logistics is the fastest growing part of the industrial market in Australia due to ever increasing demand for imports based on increasing population and transitioning nature of industry in Australia. Geelong has considerable potential to support the transport and logistics industry into the future through its existing infrastructure at the Avalon Airport as well as the GeelongPort and access to major road and rail freight corridors.
- **Visitor Economy and Events:** While relatively small, the visitor economy will provide an important input into Geelong's rise over the next two decades and will be strengthened through such major developments as the Geelong Convention and Events Centre. The visitor economy and events provide a \$1.6 billion injection into Geelong and the Bellarine, representing an important export. Additionally, increasing tourism infrastructure and experiences not only creates more economic opportunity but further augments the region's liveability and will aid in attracting top talent into the future. Major events not only attract a significant number of visitors to the area but help to market and promote the destination. Business events can attract prospective future investors into the region.

Visitor Economy Priorities

The *Sustainable Destination Master Plan* identified the top ten demand driving projects for Geelong and the Bellarine:

- Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Cultural Experiences
- 5 star Hotel in Central Geelong
- Development of Mineral Spa Facility
- Adventure Tourism Experiences
- Distinct Maker and Grower Experience
- Visitor Experience at You Yangs Regional Park
- Redevelopment of the Geelong Gallery
- Queenscliff Harbour Eco-Tourism
- Cruise Ship Infrastructure
- Experiential and Diverse Accommodation Options.





Geelong Arts Centre

The Geelong Arts Centre celebrated a \$140 million redevelopment of its Little Malop Street facility, which includes:

- The Story House: a multi-format, 550-seat theatre (which can expand to 850 seat facility)
- The Open House: a 250-seat contemporary hybrid venue
- New foyer and bar facilities
- A range of event spaces, including alfresco dining on Little Malop Street
- The new facilities will continue to support and help grow the creative arts in Geelong.

Geelong Gallery Expansion

As the expanded Geelong Library and Heritage Centre and evolving Geelong Arts Centre continue to transform our cultural offering, Geelong Gallery's expansion will ensure the completion of a 21st century arts and cultural precinct for our UNESCO City of Design.

Geelong Gallery is working closely alongside the City of Greater Geelong to ensure our Gallery keeps pace as a regional facility of state significance to provide a vibrant cultural, learning and social space that connects to the unique heritage of our City and historic buildings. It will offer expanded exhibition space and provide numerous spaces to exhibit, embrace and enrich our clever and creative spirit.



UN Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been established to provide a road map for the world to achieve a more sustainable future for the world. This plan acknowledges the SDGs and will proactively contribute to achieving many of them. As a UNESCO City of Design, Geelong is particularly committed to SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.



OUR BOLD PLAN

It is time for Geelong to rise and take its rightful place on the national and international stage. Geelong has all of the right ingredients to be a clever and creative international city. Like all major international cities, Geelong has an international airport, port, major CBD, university, a large and diverse economy and a large and growing population base.

We want to have vibrant communities and a local economy that everyone can benefit from when working, living, studying and visiting Geelong. Through pursuing inclusive economic development,

we can ensure that future growth benefits all parts of our community.

This plan is designed to catapult Geelong onto the national and international stage and foster an entrepreneurial, innovative and growth-oriented mindset. It is focused on Geelong’s unique strengths and capabilities. It is focused on key industries where Geelong can compete and leverage to deliver an international scale clever and creative city.

Geelong on the Rise: a Clever and Creative International City

As our economy evolves, it will:		By 2041, Geelong will have:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more sustainable and circular • Be more innovative and resilient • Be future focused (City of Design) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120,000 additional people • 55,000 new jobs • A \$27 billion economy 		
Our priority industries that will get us there:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced manufacturing • Agribusiness and food manufacturers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean economy • Creative industries and digital technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defence • Healthcare • Professional business services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport, logistics and fulfilment • Visitor economy and events
Our strategies			
Positioning Geelong	Collaboration and Support	Talent Attraction and Development	Planning and Advocacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Geelong as a global centre of business and innovation district. • Attract investment from around the world. • Deliver vibrant arts and cultural experiences and world class events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively support the development of industry clusters. • Support local businesses to thrive. • Take a place-based approach to the delivery of vibrant retail precincts and City Centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote our lifestyle and liveability to attract talent. • Support workforce development, training and skills innovation. • Support programs and initiatives that seek to reduce disadvantage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan well so there is sufficient land supply. • Advocate for key enabling infrastructure. • Advocate for site activation and investment to assist in facilitating positive place-based outcomes.

POSITIONING GEELONG

Not everyone is aware of Geelong's economic prowess and for many, traditional perceptions of Geelong prevail. This must change. Geelong's story of innovation, creativity and resilience is a powerful one.

Sharing this story will increase Geelong's profile on both the national and international stage. Geelong has numerous businesses that are leaders in their field, developing technology and innovative products that are on the cutting edge. Promoting Geelong's unique capabilities will support the narrative of *Geelong on the Rise*.

Geelong is fortunate that there is no need to invent new stories to promote the region, we simply need to tell our story collectively with other local organisations to highlight our natural competitive strengths and unique capabilities.

We will promote Geelong as a global centre of business and innovation district by:

- Attract and support business investment into the region, leveraging the City's investment and professional services prospectuses to create a unique identity in the minds of government and investors.
- Support Business Events Geelong to grow and deliver as a Convention Bureau, working closely with local assets to attract major business events and conferences.
- Working collaboratively with Deakin University and key public and private sector businesses to attract investment to develop a global innovation district.
- Continuing to promote local success stories via LinkedIn, industry publications, social media and identified international channels.
- Establish a formal Geelong-based stakeholder group which will manage an investment pipeline to catalyse deal closures, and track and share learnings to increase investment.





By raising the profile of Geelong, we will be able to attract investment into the region. We will focus our efforts in areas where we have competitive advantages:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Healthcare
- Agribusiness and food manufacturers
- Visitor Economy and Events
- Creative Industries and Digital Technology
- Clean Economy
- Professional Business Services
- Transport, logistics and fulfilment.

These industries will not only create new jobs and investment but they will contribute to the rise of Geelong on the national and international stage. We will work with partners to facilitate investment into the region by supporting projects with information and data to support business cases as well as assistance with site selection and through the planning process by offering a concierge service for investors.

We will establish an international engagement program, working collaboratively with local and state partners. This program will extend the reach of our story beyond the shores of Australia. We will continue to promote and leverage our UNESCO designation as a City of Design through all of our promotional efforts as it champions our clever and creative spirit.

We will attract investment from around Australia and the world by:

- Delivering a proactive investment attraction strategy and program identifying key sectors and connecting with State and Federal Governments.
- Developing an International Engagement Strategy to identify and prioritise efforts in regards to industry and strategic relationships.
- Working with key partners that have an international presence (i.e. Deakin University and GeelongPort) to identify international growth opportunities.
- Continuing to provide a dedicated concierge service to facilitate strategic business investment.
- Continuing to promote and profile Geelong on the world stage via the UNESCO City of Design designation.



Artist impression of Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre

Our stakeholders and local businesses told us that the lifestyle offer in Geelong is a significant strength of the area. However, this can always be augmented and improved. Geelong's art and culture scene is impressive, particularly for a regional city, but through investing into arts and cultural experiences and events, we can not only support existing creative industries but further increase our lifestyle offer and attractiveness for new residents and workers.

The Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre will provide a 1000 seat venue, two large exhibition spaces, meeting rooms, conference facilities and flexible event spaces. The precinct will also be home to retail spaces for food and beverage offerings, a large public plaza and a 200-room Crown Plaza hotel. The project will transform the Geelong Waterfront and project completion is expected in 2026.

The new facility will allow Geelong to greatly augment its major events calendar through the attraction of major conventions and events. Beyond leveraging the Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Events Centre, supporting major events drives visitation to the area, providing a strong boost for local businesses. Major events can also be used to target specific areas and industries that will support Geelong's rise onto the domestic and international stage.

We will deliver vibrant arts and cultural experiences, and world class events by:

- Proactively seeking out the attraction and procurement of Major Events informed by the Geelong Major Events Strategy.
- Leveraging key infrastructure including Nyaal Banyul Geelong Convention and Event Centre, Geelong Arts Centre and Geelong Art Gallery to attract international-standard exhibitions and events.
- Curating major anchor events that seek to put Geelong on the map i.e. Geelong Design Week and immersive cultural festival.

COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT

Geelong has a very collaborative and supportive business environment, and we have a number of important industry clusters. We are fortunate to have a variety of business and industry organisations that support our key industries and provide a supportive environment for future business growth. We will continue to partner and support these business and industry organisations to grow our economy and encourage individual businesses to expand. A recent example of these efforts is the City's partnership with the Geelong Chamber of Commerce in the delivery of the Geelong Small Business Festival.

We seek to grow our collaborations and explore options in creative and digital technologies to further support various emerging industries including film, gaming, architecture, media and music. We seek to equip and educate businesses through collaborative partnerships and programs to achieve sustainable business practices and foster growth.

We will also proactively engage with and support business owners in our peri-urban area through providing information and other initiatives.

We will proactively support the development of industry clusters by:

- Continuing to work with key industry representative groups to support the expansion and development of key growth industries in the region.
- Exploring collaborative opportunities for the Creative and Digital Technology industries including film, gaming, architecture, AI, media and music.
- Proactively engaging and supporting our peri-urban business owners including provision of information and support initiatives.
- Exploring collaborative opportunities with Deakin University and others to develop an innovation district.





Our local, existing businesses are responsible for our current economic evolution and expansion. Existing businesses typically represent at least 60 per cent of new jobs and investment and we wish to support our existing industries to continue to expand and grow. We will continue to build relationships with our local business community through a dedicated business visitation program, creating a dialogue that can lead to future business expansion, investment and jobs growth.

By reducing economic leakage from the region, we can provide an economic stimulus and support our existing businesses to grow. We recognise the importance of keeping as much expenditure as possible within our local economy so will be a leader in buying local and using our own procurement of goods and services to support local businesses.

Geelong has significant infrastructure including Avalon Airport, Port of Geelong, major hospitals, major road and rail infrastructure, Deakin University, The Gordon TAFE, a refinery as well as several lifestyle and community infrastructure facilities. Increasing the capacity and utilisation of these key assets will support the future rise of the local economy.

We will work to deliver major streetscape improvements to support local businesses and develop an Integrated Place Activation Framework to support all of our business precincts. We will also develop a framework to support public art installations and maintain existing public art in an effort to support place activation and a sense of place across our diverse precincts.

We will support local businesses to thrive by:

- Delivering a range of data, information, programs, support and initiatives for our small business community.
- Continuing to build relationships with local organisations through both a dedicated business visitation program and promotion of local business incubators, start-up programs and co-working spaces.
- Promoting information and support to local businesses on major procurement and supply chain opportunities.
- Support the growth and development of businesses of all scales to drive maturity and expansion.

We will take a place-based approach to the delivery of vibrant retail precincts and City Centre that offers a diversity of retail options, and experiences:

- Delivering major streetscape improvement works.
- Developing an Integrated Place Activation Framework to establish a place hierarchy across the municipality and Council's role in each place.
- Developing a framework to support new public art installations and maintain the existing public art collection in partnership with local artists and First Nations.
- Deliver low-cost business precinct interventions, activations and incentives, partnering with the creative industries.

TALENT ATTRACTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Geelong's skilled workforce has always been a key feature of the economy that has attracted investment over many decades. The accessibility of a local skilled workforce has become a key site selection factor for key business decision makers considering investments into new locations. As technology continues to drive automation across the economy, the ability to attract and develop top talent will become increasingly important for Geelong to reach its full economic potential into the future.

We will run proactive campaigns and partner with others to promote Geelong as the ideal residential location for skilled workers that are (and will be) in high demand within both critical employment sectors and key growth industries. The promotional messaging will include not only information regarding the lifestyle and residential housing offering in Geelong, but also the key future growth industries and the opportunities that may exist in the region for these workers. We will partner and collaborate with key industry groups to ensure our efforts are targeted in the right areas.

Beyond the marketing and promotion of the area for top talent, we will also support the relocation of skilled workers to the region. We will provide

materials that highlight the local lifestyle offer and benefits of relocating to Geelong. Beyond our efforts to promote the region, these materials will be made available to local businesses actively recruiting workers to the region.

We will promote our lifestyle and liveability aspects of Greater Geelong to attract talent to the region by:

- Implementing the *Sustainable Destination Master Plan*.
- Developing and implementing a dedicated lifestyle brand campaign for Geelong.
- Advocating and planning for a variety of housing options that support our diverse workforce including Central Geelong and other precincts within proximity to key transport infrastructure.
- Develop a toolkit for new and potential residents, offering the information and resources they need to make the move.





Beyond the attraction of top talent, we will also support local workforce development efforts so we can leverage our young people to build the next generation workforce. We recognise the important role that all our education and training providers in secondary and tertiary schooling play in providing our young people with the skills they will need in the future. We will work with local businesses and our education providers to ensure that our local workforce development is providing workers that have the skills that our local businesses need.

We want our economy to be inclusive for First Nations people, our CALD community, people living with a disability and social enterprises. Through ensuring all residents have future job prospects and supporting workforce development pathways, we can assist all residents to attain gainful employment.

This plan seeks to provide more equitable and inclusive economic development to ensure the entire community benefits from future growth.

We will support residents from areas of high socio-economic disadvantage to access traineeships and apprenticeships. We will use our own procurement processes to effect change for our disadvantaged communities. We will lead by example and encourage other businesses to follow in our footsteps.

Social enterprises provide a strong platform to not only achieve economic growth but also 'for purpose' business that can have a dramatic impact for a diverse range of people in our community.

We will support workforce development, training, and skills innovation across the region by:

- Championing excellence in the Clean Economy through representation on industry-based projects, programs and groups.
- Providing information, mentoring and industry support to the region's fast-growing creative industry.
- Supporting businesses to tap into the local First Nations, CALD and disability workforce and promote social enterprises to pursue inclusive economic development.
- Partnering with Deakin University, The Gordon TAFE, Barwon Health and other training providers and major employers to promote training innovation and excellence in the region.

We will support programs and initiatives that seek to reduce disadvantage in employment and workplace training by:

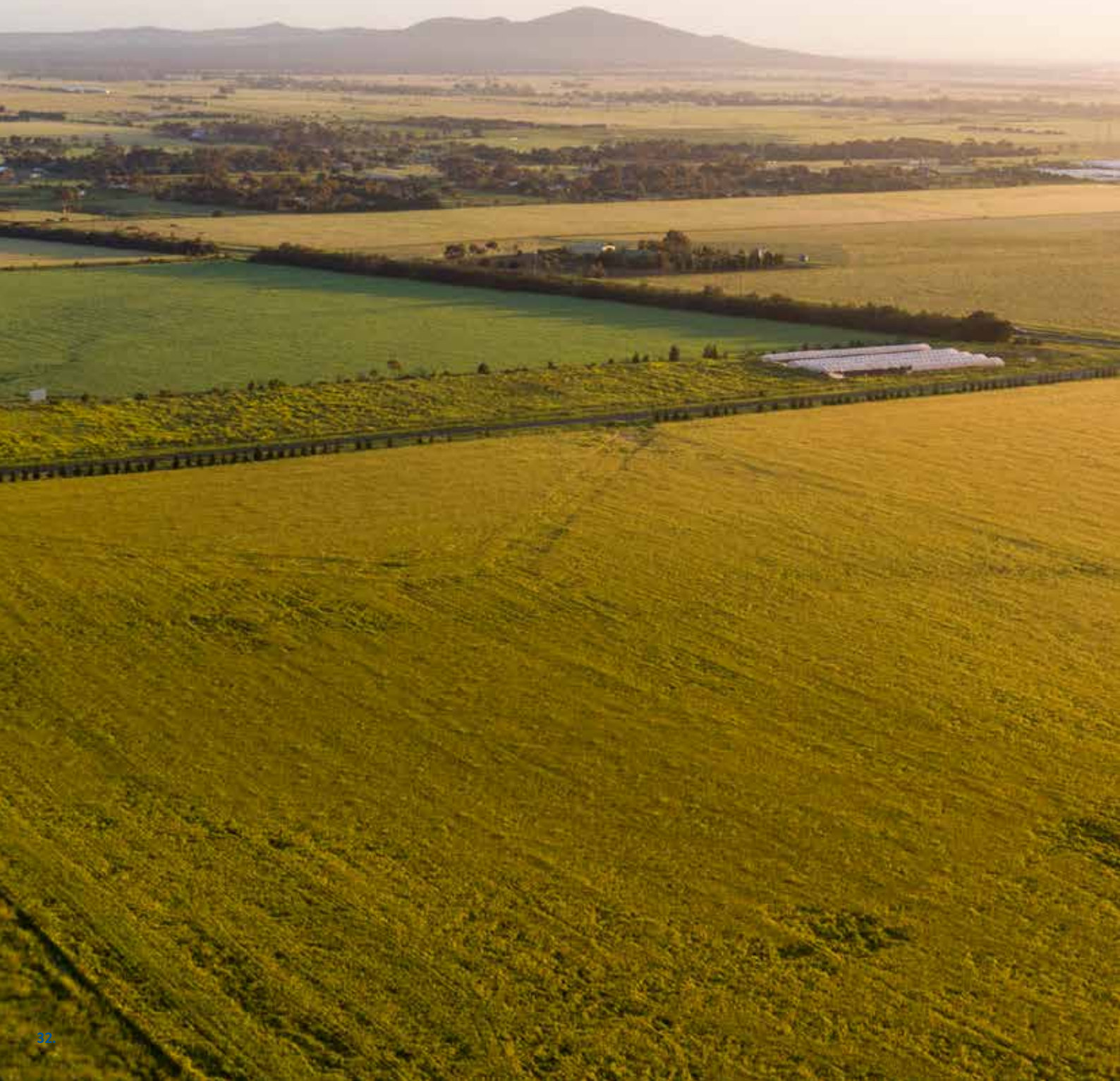
- Providing in-kind support to, and promoting the Northern Futures Construction Pathways Program.
- Developing a social procurement framework that provides traineeship and apprenticeship outcomes targeted at areas with high disadvantage.
- Promoting social enterprises operating in Geelong and supporting opportunities for business growth.

PLANNING AND ADVOCACY

Making Geelong the easiest and most logical place to do business is a priority for the City of Greater Geelong. The City has a statutory role to play in terms of planning for the local area. The provision of sufficient residential and employment land is of critical importance for the rise of the Geelong economy to be achieved. There is currently a shortage of serviced industrial land that must be addressed to ensure industrial growth is not stifled. We will support and facilitate the development of employment land in South West Geelong to meet current and future demand. We will also work with the Victorian Planning Authority to prepare a Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) for a state-significant employment precinct in Avalon.

We will plan well so there is sufficient land supply to support population growth, business expansion and attraction by:

- Continuing the planning of employment land south of the Barwon River.
- Working with the Victorian Planning Authority in the preparation of the Precinct Structure Plan for a state-significant employment precinct in Avalon.
- Continuing to progress planning for the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas including the proposed network of activity centres and employment precincts.





The planning and provision of future infrastructure will need to support the future economic growth of the region. We will proactively work with partners to ensure sufficient infrastructure is provided across the region to support the rise of our economy.

The expansion of road, rail and public transport infrastructure as well as future opportunities for the Avalon Airport and GeelongPort will be pursued. The lack of enabling infrastructure and freight routes into Port of Geelong is a significant barrier to future growth potential. We will continue our approach to Smart and Innovative Cities including the attraction of data centres to further enhance large-scale investment in the region.

We will advocate for key enabling infrastructure to support and facilitate economic growth by:

- Working closely with and identifying collaborative economic growth opportunities with both Avalon Airport and GeelongPort.
- Partnering with G21 Geelong Region Alliance, Committee for Geelong and through such forums as Future Geelong to continue to advocate for road, rail and public infrastructure.
- Continuing our approach to Smart and Innovative Cities including the attraction of data centres to further enhance large-scale investment in the region.
- Working collaboratively, support the delivery of the *Central Geelong Framework Plan* and *Central Geelong Settlement Strategy* to drive high-density infill developments within the CBD.



We will continue to invest in community infrastructure that will enhance amenity and activation.

Together with our partners, stakeholders and other businesses, we will advocate for our region, led and informed by our Advocacy Framework. We will strongly pursue important investments from the State and Federal Governments that can provide a catalyst for future growth and support our region to rise to its potential. We will pursue opportunities at a local, regional, national and international level.

In addition, we will support and deliver on the Central Geelong Framework Plan and Settlement Strategy to see the CBD grow to 10,000 people living made possible through high-density infill developments. Central Geelong sits at the heart of Victoria's second largest city and the fastest growing region in the state. It supports key services and economic activity for the whole Barwon South West region. It is strategically positioned to accommodate significant growth in population and employment over the next 30 years. This growth will need to be managed to ensure that future development supports the shared vision for Central Geelong.

We will advocate for site activation and investment to facilitate positive place-based outcomes by:

- Facilitating and brokering positive outcomes for Central Geelong as part of the *Market Square Masterplan* process.
- Seeking funding opportunities through State and Federal Government for the development of the *Waterfront Master Plan*.
- Working collaboratively with other levels of government, organisations, developers, and community to enhance amenity and activation of activity centres and catalyst sites across the municipality.

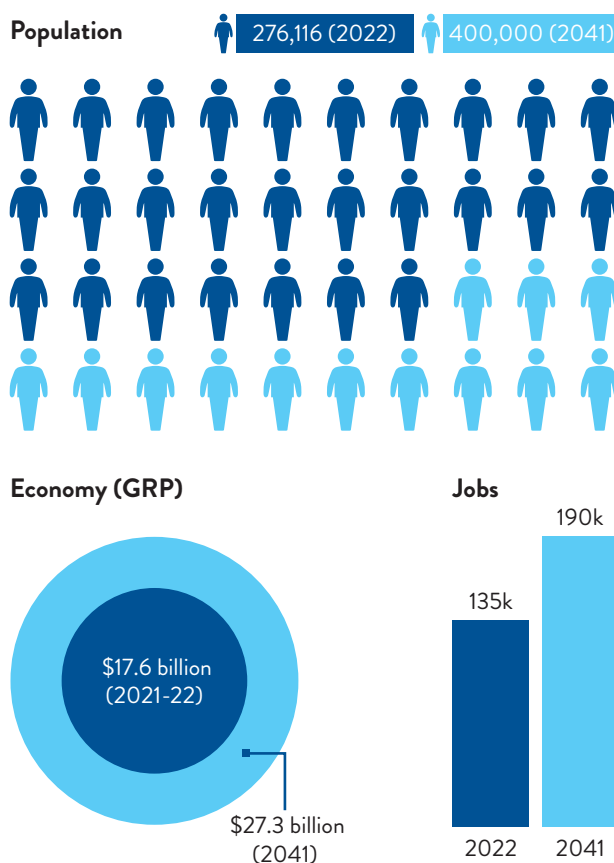
7. MONITORING PROGRESS

Geelong on the Rise is about the next economic evolution for Geelong and its emergence onto the national and international arena. We have identified future aspirational goals to help define what this future looks like. This plan seeks to support a future where by 2041 Geelong has a population of 400,000 and an economy of \$27.3 billion and over 190,000 jobs.

We will track our progress towards these aspirational goals.

Additionally, we will conduct an annual economic review that will help us understand not only how we are tracking against these identified goals, but also how our economy is continuing to evolve and change. This annual economic review will consider the structure of the economy and how it is changing as well as important and emerging trends. This review will help to guide future economic development activities and initiatives, so that this plan can constantly adapt to an ever changing environment.

Beyond tracking economic change and progress towards goals, the identified initiatives should also be evaluated to ensure their on-going effectiveness and to allow activities and initiatives to evolve over time to maximise their impact.



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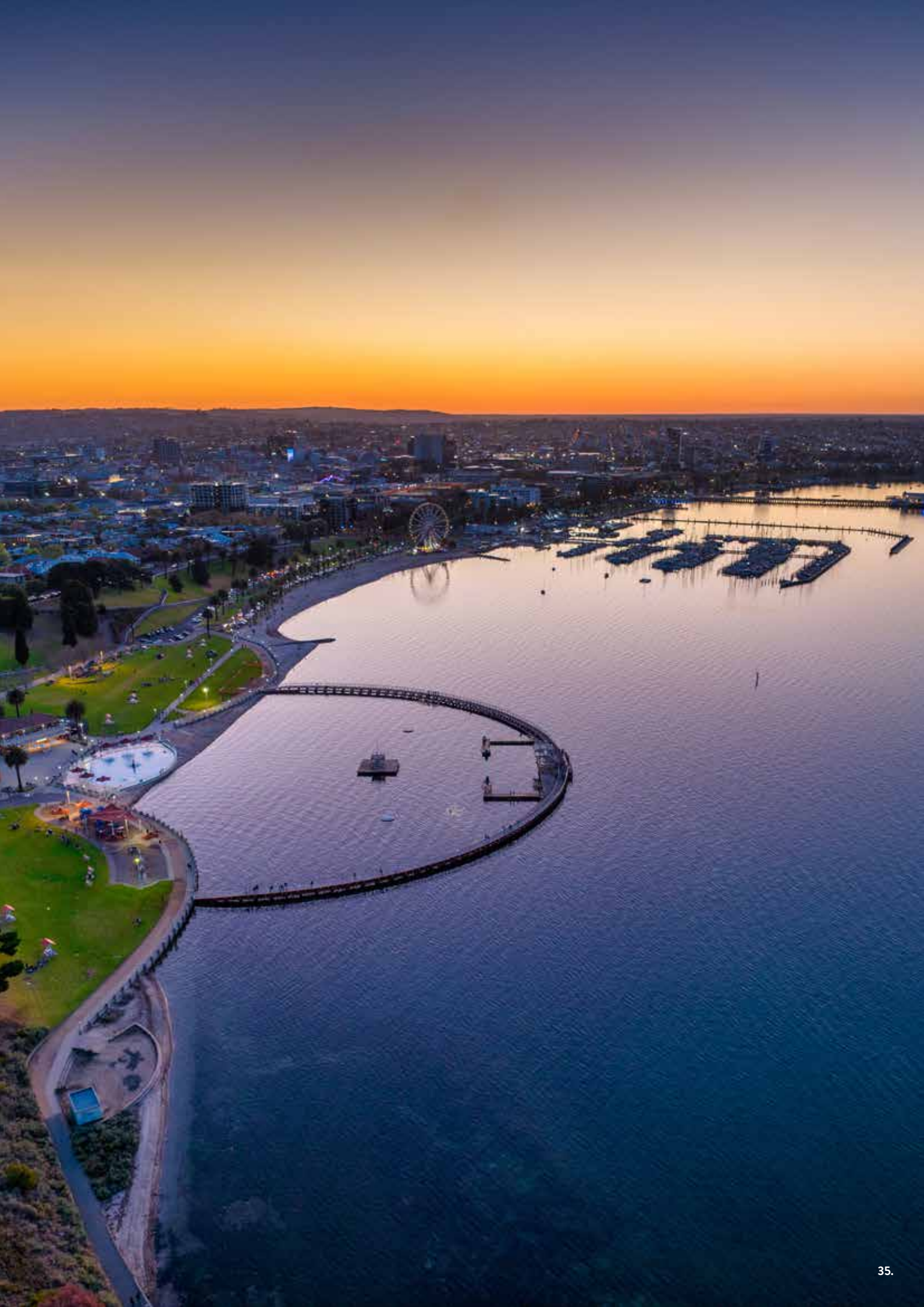
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CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Wadawurrung Country

PO Box 104

Geelong VIC 3220

P: 5272 5272

E: contactus@geelongcity.vic.gov.au


www.geelongaustralia.com.au

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