

**Wednesday, 15 September 2021**

Mr John Langoulant  
Chair Infrastructure Western Australia  
Dumas House, 2 Havelock St  
WEST PERTH WA 6005  
Via e-mail: [enquiries@infrastructure.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@infrastructure.wa.gov.au)

Dear John,

**RE: SUBMISSION - INFRASTRUCTURE WESTERN AUSTRALIA DRAFT STATE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**

**Background**

As you know, the South West Group is a Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (VROC) established in 1983 and comprising six member Councils in the South West Metropolitan Region including City of Cockburn, Town of East Fremantle, City of Fremantle, City of Kwinana, City of Melville and City of Rockingham.

Thank you once again for attending the South West Group Board meeting back in June 2019 to share your early thoughts on the formation of Infrastructure Western Australia (IWA) and its immediate challenges and priorities. I also refer to our letter to IWA on 21 August 2020 titled '*Submission – Infrastructure Western Australia Discussion Paper*' for additional context.

Please accept the comments below as the South West Group's submission to the IWA Draft State Infrastructure Strategy (SIS). They are intended to be constructive and supportive of IWA's mission.

**General comments**

The Group applauds IWA's efforts in producing such a comprehensive and constructive guide to delivering sustainable outcomes for Western Australia. The Draft SIS is certainly broader in scope than anticipated by South West Group members and represents an integrated and holistic approach to strategic urban and regional planning. Congratulations on the fine work.

We would also like to acknowledge the IWA CEO Phil Helberg and thank him for being so accessible and open in briefing senior executives from the South West Group member councils on development of the Draft SIS and the workings of IWA more generally.

Our submission touches on three key themes:

1. Need for better coordinated urban consolidation and transport planning.
2. Importance of holistic and strategic project assessment framework methodology.
3. Need for implementation models / governance to effect change quicker possibly via the use of 'Strategic priority areas'.

### **Need for better coordinated urban consolidation and transport planning**

The South West Group has long advocated for better coordination of urban consolidation and transport planning. The notion of marrying a sensible land intensification plan with provision of dedicated mass transit connection is a key driving principle for the Group's [Proof of Concept](#) for a transport link between Fremantle and Murdoch. A proposed project that is included in Infrastructure Australia's Priority List.

Therefore, we were particularly encouraged to see the Draft SIS identify the need to incentivise infill and recommend the following:

- 54b. Refresh state-wide strategic transport planning by Developing a new 20+ year Perth and Peel transport plan ...*
- 59. Undertake planning of light rail and/or bus rapid transit for the next stage of major public transport priority investment in Perth ...*

### **Importance of holistic and strategic project assessment framework**

IWA has a vital role in establishing a holistic and strategic project assessment framework. Too often projects are developed by State Government agencies without proper regard for broader factors and community values. Recent examples include initial proposals for the Fremantle Traffic Bridge (since changed) that did not consider community priorities, and designs for a 'duck and dive' car-oriented project for Canning Highway that delivers very poor amenity outcomes.

Major projects should be subject to an assessment framework that considers broader urban amenity and sustainability objectives. IWA is the ideal agency to develop this framework (based on IA methodology) and champion its application by all State Government agencies.

### **Need for implementation models / governance to effect change quicker possibly via the use of 'Strategic priority areas'**

There is an opportunity for IWA to provide advice on alternative governance models that deliver positive real world outcomes quicker than historical disaggregated governance arrangements. The following recommendations are welcomed by the South West Group and could be considered as a basis for determining future governance structures that accelerate positive change:

- 27. Introduce and implement State Priority Areas ...*
- 20. Develop a single digital government approvals system ...*
- 28. Facilitate and coordinate investment in industrial and technological precincts ...*
- 30. Identify and secure strategic sites ...*

Such advice (if taken) would help address inertia around development of some major activity centres in the South West Group Region. For example, the [Murdoch Specialised Activity Centre Structure Plan](#) was endorsed by State and Local Governments in 2014 but little progress has been made to complete the key actions identified. This is due to conflicting objectives of State agencies and the lack of a governance structure empowered and resourced to drive real world change.

**Final comments**

Once again, congratulations on the stellar work of IWA and thank you for being accessible. We trust this submission is helpful. If you require any further information, please contact South West Group Director, Tom Griffiths on 0406 420 854 or [director@southwestgroup.com.au](mailto:director@southwestgroup.com.au)

Kind regards,



His Worship the Mayor  
Mr Jim O'Neill

Chair of the South West Group in 2021, and representing the following Local Governments:

