

G21 REGIONAL GROWTH PLAN UPDATE – PHASE 4: FINAL REGIONAL GROWTH PLAN

Survey Themes

Excerpt from G21 Regional Growth Plan Engagement report:

1. What people liked about the draft Growth Plan

People responding to the survey were asked what they liked about the draft Growth Plan. Main themes put forward by the 59 people who responded to this question are shown below.

Note that positive statements made by the 46 people who provided 'other comments' via the survey, along with other comments made at the 6 Open Houses and via the online forum are included.

Key Theme – What respondents liked about the draft Growth Plan....	Brief Description/Main factors mentioned
Growth or management of growth is in right places (10)	Limits growth in Torquay/Jan Juc; Torquay growth area to north only; Increases growth in Colac and Winchelsea; like that Barwon Heads not designated for growth; development has been planned - discreet areas of industrial, residential areas; like that Colac and Winchelsea are recognised growth areas; Like the growth in Winchelsea; Good that Spring Ck is not included; Support redevelopment in Moriac; Lara rural living at its best leave the 5 acre blocks alone, let Lara have lifestyle options; diversity of localities is good; impressed with the designated growth areas; respects to variety of communities and settlements already in the region – unique small settlements not threatened; that Birregurra is not a major growth area; no industry between Little River and Lara
Infrastructure provision is essential for growth (10)	Transport needs, strategic investment in infrastructure, sequencing, roads, revitalisation of the port; support heavy rail; provision of better transport systems; reassuring because it is a move away from unhindered growth without good infrastructure/resources; Princes Hwy corridor – increase frequency and timing of trains; purchase Pt Wilson to expand Port activities; Avalon has so much potential for development, need to expand accommodation to support Avalon
Draft Growth Plan provides certainty for people going forward (9)	It gives an indication of where future growth is most likely to occur and therefore some certainty for people in the region; areas for future growth have been made clear; looking at the overall picture and planning for the future; vision reflects what everyone hopes for; Everyone will know where we are heading into the future – in the past it has been obvious that only a 'privy' group of business people and investors have been made aware of where we are heading, and they have been able to take advantage of this situation; good planning foresight; logical approach to long term planning

Key Theme – What respondents liked about the draft Growth Plan....	Brief Description/Main factors mentioned
Retention of rural characteristics (inc farming) and unique communities across the region (for aesthetics, livelihood & food security) (9)	Preserving the rural characteristics of regional centres between Geelong and Melbourne; Greenbelts between Torquay and Geelong and in Lara; preserving town boundaries, keeping/increasing farming land; Glad the draft plan is not just focussed on employment and growth at the expense of farming land; Like separate towns; the intention to keep farming alive and expanded
Growth Plan reflects collaboration between state & local governments and balances the interests of all sectors (8)	That the 5 councils have worked together to ensure better planning; incorporates all sectors (business, activists, government) doesn't favour one; consolidates the 5 shires into one plan enabling state government to give greater focus to the region; drawing the interests of all not just one area; glad it is not just focussed on population growth/residential
Infill is necessary (but don't replicate Melbourne) (7)	Infill development in Geelong; that it's not completely about high density – why replicate Melbourne; prefer infill rather than sprawl; build the capacity of inner and northern suburbs for economic and residential development; brownfield development is vital to N Geelong revitalisation; Need consolidation to prevent urban sprawl (very important); higher density housing; revitalise city centre especially Moorabool and Ryrie Streets
Draft Growth Plan is easy to read and understand (4)	Clear and easy to understand; all of the main points have been covered, it is easy to follow; well explained
Protection of the environment (4)	Protection of natural assets, building new linkages between them
Broad opportunities for employment across the region (2)	Business/employment precincts in Waurn Ponds; focus on jobs diversity; glad it is not focused on population growth and employment
General positive comments (7)	The economic development strategy was outstanding – the 'open for business' approach allows investors and business leaders to prick they ears up and at least consider options; agree that towns such as Moriac with low density residential lifestyle options will experience modest growth; identification of critical projects and future studies; like the 8 th principle; if we are growing this is all good; transport options on the right track; like that it covers the entire region in one plan; will help to attract investment

General comments about the Growth Plan process:

Appreciation of the opportunity to contribute and that this input is reflected in the draft plan (13)	The opportunity to have my opinion taken into consideration; the plan is very reflective of the consultation that has occurred, drawing in the interests of all not one area; wondering if there will be ongoing opportunity for community input; appreciate that the project has been so open to public input, thank you for coming to Lara; appreciate the OH - it enables people's opinions to be heard and have the plan explained; helpful to know what is planned for the region; Great to see the process is on time; Compliments to all for the degree of availability for discussion and depth of discussion on some difficult subjects. Very welcome opportunity to talk
---	--

2. What people didn't like about the draft Growth Plan

The survey asked respondents to identify ways in which the draft Growth Plan could be improved. Fifty people responded to this question; the main themes suggested for improvement are shown below.

Note that negative statements made by the 46 people who provided 'other comments' via the survey, along with other comments made at the 6 Open Houses and via the online forum are included.

Key Theme – What could be improved in the draft Growth Plan	Brief Description of concerns
Need better protection of natural assets and greenfield/buffer areas (20)	Don't use word 'development' next to 'natural assets' – protect and enhance only; greater protection of local environmental assets e.g. You Yangs, Serendip; better recognition of important environmental & tourism potential; brown and grey field development should be included to protect greenfield resources; Don't like the separation zigzag between Lara and Little River – could it be light industrial? Be clearer about what can happen here; need significant buffer between N Geelong & W Melbourne; Need an appropriate buffer between future growth to the south west of Melbourne and north Geelong but ensure planning legislation enshrines this – otherwise urban sprawl and congestion will result; Town boundaries and open space areas must be retained; higher density living is imperative to protect green belts/agricultural land; protect significant new corridors around bypass and don't let it be totally built out (Geelong Ring Road); Stop promoting region as coastal centric – provide greater recognition of other environmental and tourism assets; protect significant views, wetlands, grasslands; provide wildlife corridor between You Yangs and Serendip; Need specific guidelines for buffer zones; could include principles/guidelines for urban/rural interface; need zoning and dialogue

Key Theme – What could be improved in the draft Growth Plan	Brief Description of concerns
Improve planning for road infrastructure (12)	Anglesea roundabout – first stopping point now that the ring road goes through; better roads; better access needed from Ocean Grove towards Bellarine Hwy; more focus on future demands re road access (inc to Melb); vehicle bypassing of Geelong may need to be 3 lanes when Armstrong Creek fully developed; bypass Colac required; locations for truck stops; possible congestion on ring road/Princes Hwy; Bacchus Marsh Rd Missing; retain Ring Road vista
Need more diverse and sustainable public transport options (10)	Incorporate more emphasis on sustainable transport, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport; specifically integrating and implementing an on-road Principal Bicycle Network into the planning scheme; Preserve a corridor that would allow rail transport to Torquay; More focus on public transport demands for the future; tramway from the peninsula across to Fyansford and Lara to Torquay; Last box (pg 52) re: increase capacity of rail is ambiguous. Is this about getting people off the train at Lara and then onto buses to go elsewhere? Portarlington Safe Harbour; more frequent trips on public transport; trains not useful for those working in outer Melb suburbs; Link up of bike trails around Forrest/Birregurra/Colac and Beech trail
Essential infrastructure and services need to be planned now (10)	Make infrastructure improvements a priority; need to plan now for the infrastructure to support the planned growth; have the infrastructure in place before increasing growth eg. public transport, better roads, better facilities (water/farming/energy); more detail on the services that are going to be provided eg. shopping, child care, health etc; put infrastructure in the growth areas; need to provide infrastructure to support the growing population – trains are already standing room, the road is bottlenecked and water is unavailable in drought years; support new health services in the region (eg. Epworth hospital), need more health services for the population, need more parking around railway stations to encourage use; infrastructure provision needs to be fair and equitable across region – smaller rural settlements and those targeted for ‘modest growth’ can’t miss out; Sustainable transport options should not be a ‘bolt on’ after thoughts as it has been in our region – we must acknowledge the significant problems that currently exist and plan to address them
Improve maps (9)	Improved maps showing regions that surround the G21 and their influence; the brochure should show the identified areas in more detail – larger diagrams – too hard to read; keys not correct on some maps and confusing; better colour differentiation on maps, Bacchus Marsh Rd Missing; colours on maps makes it hard to interpret on computers; Little River needs to be shown; map is misleading the scale makes the settlement break look huge

Key Theme – What could be improved in the draft Growth Plan	Brief Description of concerns
Need better analysis and targets re sustainability, carbon emissions, climate change, water security (8)	Set some sustainability targets – currently G21 only responds to growth – there is no imperial evidence which shows whether our region can support a growing population from a community, environmental, cultural and economic perspective; No analysis on how this plan will support carbon emission reduction targets; scrap Growth Plan and take note of environmental indicators which are telling us that we are consuming the planet's resources faster than it can be sustained; no explanation as to how the growth/infrastructure will be sustainable (e.g. policies re use of materials, opportunities for sustainable businesses); no mention of climate change impacts; What about water resources?
Align growth areas with existing infrastructure (5)	New developments where there is little or no infrastructure needs to be stopped; question Bellarine Peninsula towns (eg Drysdale, Clifton Springs) being identified for growth – currently not enough infrastructure to support summer peaks; Geelong should be larger; use what is already zoned to create new employment precincts eg. don't need to rezone new areas for intermodal use area around Avalon
Plan for emerging agricultural practices (4)	Include sections where intensive agriculture might go – where future investment will identify those developments; encourage intensive agriculture in Thompson Valley; local produce is vital, farmers markets/ organic farming should be encouraged (is a growth market); need to enable more than one house on farming land to redress rural township decline, need opportunity to expand farms to increase productivity
Need commitment from state and federal decision makers (4)	Have the state government as a stakeholder and pin them down; continue to lobby the state and federal governments; Hard to get political commitment (\$) to implement, can't leave it to the market – would be just greenfield sprawl. Sceptical given government's preference for Melbourne docks over Corio Bay for on & offloading cars, and their desire to 'balance the budget'; plan needs financial commitment.
Need to see the action (4)	Concerned that things won't happen, it's all good to plan but need action; actions are light on; need the next stage of detail; the principles need to be practiced; still many unknowns
Want more emphasis on the needs of society (4)	Less on the needs of developers; move it along quicker – urban renewal needs to happen much more quickly – blight on Geelong; Plan needs to provide specific strategies relating to wellbeing and liveability; worried that Colac growth will be only from Corio overflow – how do we attract diversity of people and industries?
Need more detail re employment sources and opportunities (3)	Explain where the growth in employment in Torquay/Jan Juc area is supposed to come from (surf industry contracting not expanding); Loss of manufacturing areas (eg. Ford and Alcoa) and subsequent employment are skimmed over; show where industrial employment areas will be in the future – want to stay working in the area – what sorts of work will there be?

Key Theme – What could be improved in the draft Growth Plan	Brief Description of concerns
Need more detail about Settlement and Growth Directions (3)	Need to prioritise the Settlement & Growth directions & assign timelines; no detail as to how S&D directions will be implemented; don't understand how Colac Otway Shire can push for development of investigative areas without adequate time being given for infill development; The investigation area in North needs to extend further north; don't like that I can't sell my land;
Need more detail re industrial areas (3)	want to know what is planned for the industrial sector – Growth Plan not specific enough; light industrial should go north of Lara; not enough land for industrial use – or if there is it is not clear – need to ensure sufficient land is set aside
Consider and highlight neighbouring regional issues (2)	How the plan should respond to the peri-urban area land use issues around Melbourne; Show regions that surround the G21 and their influence
Don't assume that population growth is 'Aspirational' (2)	Many in region don't aspire to exponential population growth; There will be paradigm shift due to peak oil, economic upheaval
Address environmental impacts of changing land uses (1)	Contaminated land when industries leave (e.g. Ford, Alcoa) needs to be addressed in the planning of new areas
Need to engage people in the future (1)	Challenges section could have included and highlighted the need to develop more community governance models that meaningfully engage a greater diversity of people.
Ensure affordable Housing (1)	To have some means of ensuring that a proportion of housing is affordable both as purchase and social housing.
Encourage more connected communities (1)	Connection between communities needs to be better encouraged
Acknowledge traditional owners (1)	Need to acknowledge the traditional owners/country in the plan – leads to missing the story about the environment and cultural tourism
Avoid high density (1)	Against 20/hectare development.

General comments, including those of less strategic detail included:

Key Theme – What could be improved in the draft Growth Plan	Brief Description of concerns
General (15)	Should have done ‘backcasting’ – dream, imagine rather than forecasting; infrastructure in Lara is inadequate; should acquire Point Wilson pier to complement port activities, bypass Melbourne; Lara/Avalon area unique – interstate rail, major highway, airport, port, Pt Wilson; COGG needs to be more lenient with parking around the Geelong Hospital – more free parks and long term spaces for visitors and family; parking fines too high; want to cut my Lovely Banks 5 acre block in 2 x 2.5 acres; Areas that are prone to bushfires and flooding should not be developed; statement re role of structure planning could be strengthened to add that the desire to channel growth to the major growth areas, does not preclude consideration of modestly increasing settlement boundaries for smaller townships outside of the major population and employment growth precincts; It needs to be easy for people to develop land; the authorities need to be helpful rather than make it difficult; Food will need to be imported into the region; need more detail about assumptions re confirmed growth and its implications socially, environmentally, economically; expand Geelong Yacht Club marina; eco accommodation near airport; Lara speedway is hardly an appropriate greeting – more needs to be done to smarten up this access to Geelong and remove eye-sores.
More detail sought regarding issues around Lara (12)	Want to know what is happening with the intermodal; Updates to be supplied to Lara bodies or direct to Lara residences and businesses of the CBD development of the shopping and services; There should be an intermodal in Lara, supermarket in Lara should be in the west, shopping centre in Lara needed; don’t want the land use change imposed on in Lara ; Council needs to better inform the Lara community about local/town planning – don’t want it imposed upon us; enforcement of tonnage limits on Lara roads; enforce trucks using Bacchus Marsh Rd no to cut through Lara; Don’t like separation between Lara and Little River – is this space free for the intermodal
General comments re document style (2)	The language could be plainer with more examples for people to relate to; needs to be innovative, futuristic, incorporating successes in other areas

Comments relating to the Growth Plan process included:

Key Theme – What could be improved in the draft Growth Plan	Brief Description of concerns
Engagement opportunities were too limited (8)	More people to participate – hard to get community to engage; could have known about it earlier; very limited advertising within the community and one session – not good enough; The process has been rushed and there is no reason why – community consultation not widely communicated and I can only think it is so the community is not aware of the drastic changes with infrastructure – more detail before re: exact locations and timelines; run engagement for youth; need to employ a better tactic for next community consultation stage; present to secondary schools – what this means for them get their input