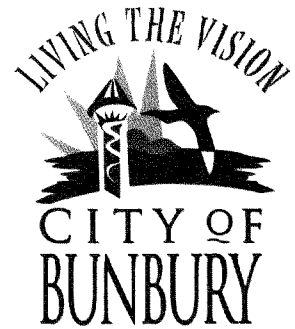
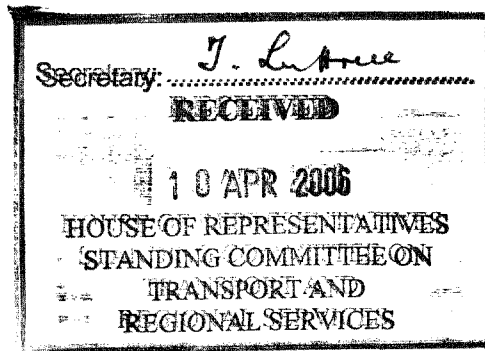


Our Ref:
Your Ref:
Enquiries: (08) 9780 8272
E-Mail: tonyb@bunbury.wa.gov.au



Monday 27th February 2006

SUBMISSION NO. 162

Secretary of the Committee
House Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

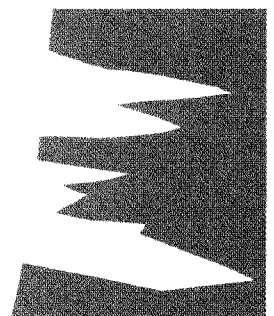
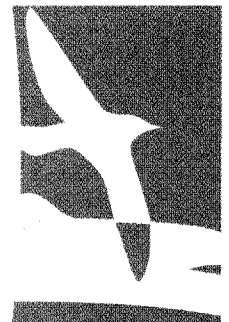
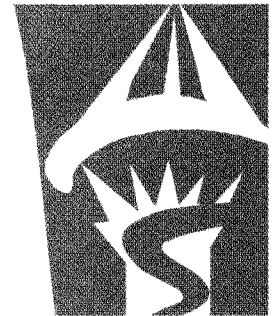
CITY OF BUNBURY - SUBMISSION INQUIRY INTO THE INTEGRATION OF REGIONAL RAIL AND ROAD NETWORKS AND THEIR INTERFACE WITH PORTS

Thank you for allowing the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Greg Trevaskis and myself to present directly to the above inquiry hearing in Bunbury on the 7th March 2006. Please find attached the submission from the City of Bunbury.

Should you have any queries please contact me on the above number.

Yours faithfully

Tony Brun
EXECUTIVE MANAGER CITY DEVELOPMENT

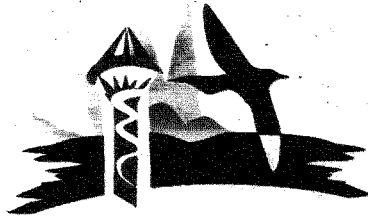


4 Stephen Street
PO Box 21 Bunbury WA 6231
Telephone: (08) 9780 8222
TTY: (08) 9780 8216
Facsimile: (08) 9721 7509
www.bunbury.wa.gov.au

OUR VISION: Bunbury will be the most progressive and innovative Regional City in Australia, enhancing the quality of life of its community and promoting its heritage, including its maritime heritage, and forever seeking ways of improving its capacity to meet the expectations of the region in respect of its Regional City status.

Secretary: *J. Lubbock*
RECEIVED
10 APR 2006
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORT AND
REGIONAL SERVICES

SUBMISSION NO. 162



CITY OF BUNBURY

Submission to the House Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services

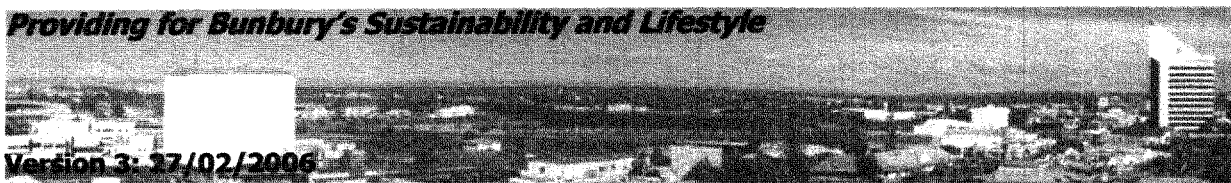
*Inquiry into the integration of regional rail and
road networks and their interface with ports*



March 2006

Providing for Bunbury's Sustainability and Lifestyle

Version 3: 27/02/2006



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Executive Summary & Key Recommendations

Executive Summary

Bunbury is one of Australia's fastest growing cities. In 2004 to 2005 it recorded a significant growth of 5.0% to 56,180 and has maintained an annual growth of 3.1% per annum for the previous 5 years¹. Bunbury is a vibrant, dynamic and rapidly evolving city performing the role as the capital of the South West region of Western Australia.

The South West is recognised as one of Australia's most diverse and economic strong regions boasting an annual Gross Regional Product (GRP) in excess of \$6.4 billion². The focal point for the strong economy is the Port of Bunbury. Whilst planning to date has facilitated the growth and development, there is a clear list of key priorities to fully develop Bunbury Port and its surrounding city and region to become a major player in the national network.

The recommendations provided below by the City of Bunbury are presented, not as a wish list, but rather a well planned sequential strategic national investment programme and strategy which will see the realisation of the true economic and social potential of Bunbury and the South West region of Western Australia.

Key Recommendations

The City recommends the following: -

Immediate (Short Term 0 – 5 year) Priorities

- i. Recognise the role of Bunbury as a major and alternate centre to Perth;
- ii. Complete the construction of the Kwinana Freeway extension and Peel Deviation;
- iii. Fund and construct the Bunbury Port Access Road Stage 1;
- iv. Fund and construct a grade separated interchange intersection at Eelup Rotary;
- v. Fund and construct passing loops/lines on the existing Perth to Bunbury rail line between Pinjarra and Bunbury;
- vi. Fund and construct the Bunbury Port Expansion (Stage 1) incorporating additional berths and deepening to 18m for the channel and 3 berths and balance to 15 m;
- vii. Facilitate the integration and promotion of the Kwinana Freeway/Peel Deviation through the Roe Highway as a link between the metropolitan industry precincts of Perth Airport, Welshpool and Forrestfield through to Bunbury Port and the City; and
- viii. Initiate a container-based berth at Bunbury Port to cater for product originating from the South West and to operate as an alternate logistics and freight centre to Fremantle/Cockburn.

¹ ABS 3218.0 2004/5 Regional Population Growth Australia

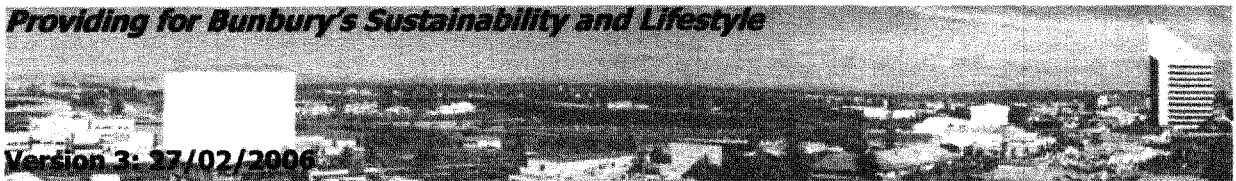
² South West Development Commission 2006

Medium Term (5 – 10 years) Priorities

- ix. Construct the Bunbury Outer Ring Road;
- x. Install a duplicate narrow gauge rail line between Midland and Bunbury;
- xi. Fund and construct the Bunbury Port Expansion (Stage 2) incorporating all additional berths;
- xii. Install a standard gauge rail line between Midland and Bunbury as a dual standard line (in conjunction with vi); and
- xiii. Upgrade and expand the container berths and operations.

Long Term (10+ years) Opportunities and Priorities

- xiv. Reinststate a rail line connection, as a dual narrow and standard gauge line, from Bunbury (Collie) to the Wheatbelt (Narrogin) and onto Merredin to increase access to Bunbury Port and to provide an alternate direct link to the national east-west rail network.
- xv. Extend the Perth to Mandurah narrow gauge (electrified) passenger rail network from Baldivis through to Bunbury along the Perth to Bunbury Highway.
- xvi. Reinststate the Bunbury to Busselton narrow gauge passenger rail line.



Bunbury a Context of WA's Second City

Background

The role of Bunbury has long been misrepresented and misunderstood by the State Government and the Western Australian community. There has been little recognition and differentiation between "Bunbury" (the continuous and total urban area between Australind and Stratham) and the "City of Bunbury" which represents the local government, which administers under the provisions of the Local Government Act (1995) a 64km² component of this greater urban area.

Bunbury has a population of 56,180; the City of Bunbury local government area has approximately 31,000 of that amount. Failing to recognise the difference is akin to saying Perth is a capital city of under 10,000 people; clearly a false statement and such distinction must also apply when considering Bunbury.

Failings in Population Data

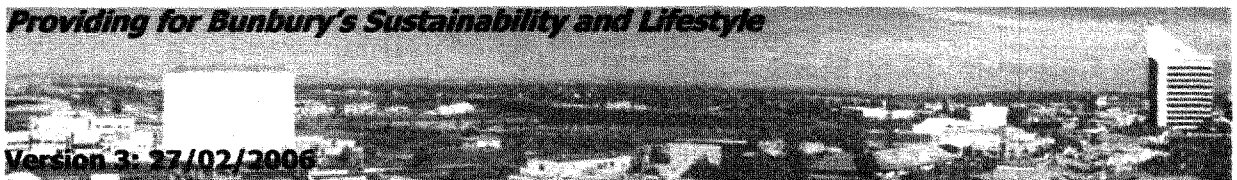
The State Government through the Department for Planning and Infrastructure and the Western Australian Planning Commission releases the population reports "Western Tomorrow". Unfortunately these reports continue to focus on the local government areas, which do not reflect communities of interest or discrete urban centres. It is acknowledged that this report is not being utilised for the purposes intended by the authors; however there is no guide or policy associated with its release and as such misuse is inevitable.

There is the need for the State Government to adopt the planning model of the ABS, which views urban centres (known as statistical subdivisions SSD) rather than local government areas. The State applies models to the Perth Metropolitan area differently to the rest of the state. The modelling for the Metropolitan area included allocating 60,000 people to the proposed Amarillo development, even though this proposal is unlikely ever to get environmental or community support given the area's significant status. This allocation of population growth was one example of unsustainable or achievable development and population growth allocated to the Metropolitan area at the expense of regional areas and communities. Such modelling work clearly places significant regional centres such as Bunbury, Geraldton and Albany at a disadvantage.

It is recommended the State Government prioritises a strategic review of State Population models; and that, rather than using a historical baseline to guide the future, models focused on predictive and guided scenario development are entertained. For example current modelling dictates the majority of population growth will focus on Perth; their planning dictates the majority of infrastructure investment is directed to Perth resulting in a stimulated economy and population growth – "a self fulfilling prophecy" is created. Regional centres such as Bunbury and the South West would argue the State Government should have in place a scenario based State development Strategy/Policy that allows for predictive infrastructure investment, which would provide for realistic population distribution in the State.

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Bunbury's Future – Western Australia Second City

Bunbury as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Statistical Subdivision (SSD) is the contiguous urban area based on the City of Bunbury and parts of the Shires of Capel, Dardanup and Harvey. The population of this area is 56,180 and is recognised as the third (2nd) fastest growing city in Australia. The city is forecast to grow to 113,000 by 2031³.

The growth currently being recorded and predicted in future estimates is a clear reflection of the role of Bunbury as the capital of the South West region. The South West region is recognised as a major resource sector hub on the back of alumina, mineral sand, coal and other minerals; however it is also one of Australia's most diverse economic regions with a gross regional product of \$6.4 billion per annum.

The above factors reinforce the need to enable Bunbury to grow and function as a truly significant national scale city. Given its primary location along the coast, any restrictions or impediments will be detrimental to future planning and opportunities. Such restrictions and impediments would not and should never be entertained for Perth; neither should such prescriptive and restrictive encumbrances be entertained for Western Australia's second city.

Alternate Models to Perth First

The State government and its agencies would appear to have continued the tradition of the "Perth First" policy. There are anecdotal historical references that following the Second World War, the Government of the day was fearful that the State lacked a major "anchor" or focal urban centre to sustain the State. At the time, in the 1950's, the State population was in the order of 500,000 comprising 250,000 in Perth and 250,000 in regional areas. To address their concerns, it is believed that a deliberate strategy/policy was implemented which sought to direct the State resources to creating a major city focusing on Perth. It would appear this policy has worked well with Perth now representing almost 73% and potential rising to 78% (in excess of 2 million people) of the State population by 2031. Whilst not an official policy of the State, it currently would appear that the government and bureaucracy has remained wedded to the principles of the "Perth First" policy.

It is time now for the State Government to adopt policies which proactively seek to diversify the population centres of Western Australia and reduce the dependence on a single City State mentality. Clearly given our current (and predicted continuing) resources driven growth and boom there are opportunities to enhance and develop key regional centres offering alternates to Perth. In any such planning it would be clear that the abundant natural resources and lifestyle opportunities of Bunbury and the South West Region make it a prime candidate for pre-emptive and strategic infrastructure investment leading to a sustainable and significant population growth.

³ Data Analysis Australia "Bunbury City Vision – Bunbury Population Report" 2006



Bunbury City Vision

The City of Bunbury in partnership with the State Government (Department for Planning and Infrastructure and South West Development Commission) and the Australian Government (through the South West Area Consultative Committee and the Department of Transport and Regional Services) has been developing a framework for the future growth for the Bunbury.

The City proposes the formation of a Greater Bunbury Redevelopment Authority. Such an authority would focus on the development of the following major initiatives:-

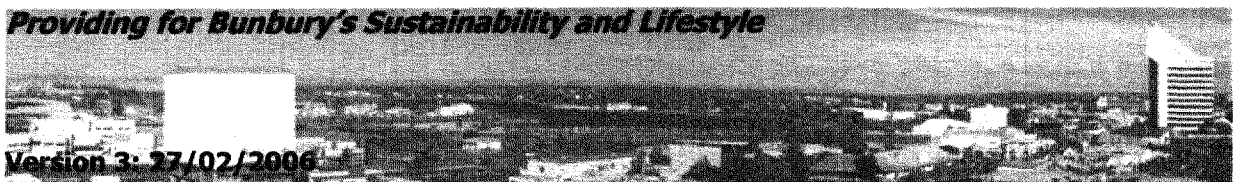
- i. Bunbury Port Authority expansion (including the Port Access Road and the Preston Industry Precinct);
- ii. College Grove Super Campus (100ha of vacant State Government land incorporating the Regional Hospital, Edith Cowan University and the South West College of TAFE) to achieve a development of an integrated health, education and residential community; and
- iii. The finalisation and development of the Kemerton Industrial Park.

A copy of the Bunbury City Vision Framework has been **attached** for reference purposes.

The Bunbury City Vision clearly demonstrates that a community when presented with a holistic process for planning a city, can determine a diverse and balanced framework which is clearly in conflict with simply applying an ad-hoc and un-scientific whole of state policy.

Providing for Bunbury's Sustainability and Lifestyle

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Transport

Vision

To provide an improved quality of life to the people of the City of Bunbury through a balanced transport system built on sustainable transport and land use options.

In realising the transport vision we will build an integrated and balanced transport system reflecting regional needs and future growth to provide:

- 1. Improved connectivity between local and regional destinations;*
- 2. Accessible and liveable communities;*
- 3. A range of transport options that promote an improved quality of life;*
- 4. Safe and convenient public transport for the whole community;*
- 5. Solutions that promote commercial prosperity and maximise the region's natural resources; and*
- 6. Creation of urban villages centred at key transport nodes, based on public transport and walkable catchments.*

Background

The City's extensive community based planning has identified key projects, which are required to sustain the viability of Bunbury as a centre for economic growth and development and as a place with a quality lifestyle.

The City undertook the landmark Bunbury Integrated Land Use and Transport Vision 2030 project. Council signed off the project, commenced in April 2001, in December 2003 following an exhaustive process of complex modelling and community consultation. The Vision sets the framework for the sustainable development of Bunbury. It also identifies a significant level of transport infrastructure works required to meet this growth.

The City's strategic planning frameworks have enabled it to gain a higher view of opportunities and key priorities to achieve effective and efficient regional transport. The opportunity to provide input through submissions and inquiries such as this one enable the explanation of these opportunities to the State and Australian Governments, hopefully with the potential to raise priorities and secure investment.

Auslink

The City, whilst pleased that the Auslink Network identified the Perth to Bunbury corridor; was disappointed that no definition of projects was provided for the Bunbury end of the corridor. The City understands that MRWA did not provide any detail to the Australian Government (DoTARS) in the negotiation and development phase of the document. The City, in the apparent absence of information being provided to the Australian Government by the State, notes that it did provide a request, along with supporting plans, to the [then] Minister for Roads, the Hon Senator Ian

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Campbell, the Minister for Roads, the Hon Jim Lloyd and the Member for Forrest the Hon Geoff Prosser for the following projects: -

- Bunbury Outer Ring Road from the Perth-Bunbury Highway at Eaton through to the Bussell Hwy at Stratham;
- The Bunbury Port Access Road from the Bunbury Outer Ring Road through to the Bunbury Port
- Upgrading of the Perth to Bunbury Rail Line

These projects and initiatives, which are explained in further detail below, form a critical blockage and restriction to the efficient and effective transport of goods, freight and movement of general passenger vehicles. As is the case in any economic region, an ineffective transport system will always act as a handbrake to allowing the full potential economic growth and stimulus. The Committee is requested to review these initiatives and recommend that the Auslink Framework be expanded and amended to include these by way of specific reference and preferably recognition in the form of commitment as part of the second round/stage of Auslink for years 6 - 10 of the programme.

Initiatives

The City has identified a series of projects that are crucial to the future of Bunbury and the South West region and accordingly require a commitment from the State Government to be fully funded or committed to within the next term of Government.

Inner Harbour

\$700M

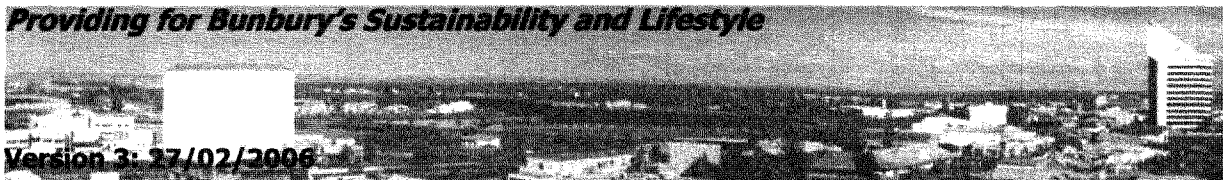
The Inner Harbour expansion and development represents the evolution of the Bunbury Port as a major player in the national transport scene.

The full development of the Inner Harbour, including Preston River realignment, rail and road realignment and berth development, would allow for Outer Harbour development, containerisation and alleviate the need for Government investment in the expansion of Fremantle Port and the proposed Cockburn Harbour.

A cursory review of the Bunbury Port identifies the following key points:-

- i. Bunbury Port is one of the few ports in Australia to be fully separated from the surrounding urban community;
- ii. Through minor upgrades of transport infrastructure such as the Bunbury Port Access Road (\$21M committed in the 2006/7 budget) it will have a high level of efficiency and access;
- iii. The Port is located where 25 to 30% of the State's container traffic originates;
- iv. The requirement to export through a single port (Fremantle) in the State's primary urban centre creates an inefficient monopoly situation;

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- v. The development of a significant port in the South West would reflect the strong natural resources available and strengthen the already diverse economy;
- vi. With the planned construction of the Peel Deviation (2007 – 2009) and the almost completed Roe Hwy – Bunbury Port is now effectively connected to the Welshpool/Forrestfield precincts and the Perth Airport via freeway conditions.

The above factors provide substantial justification to pursue the development of Bunbury as a major alternative to Fremantle and would provide a genuine competitive force in driving the State export logistics needs.

Bunbury Port and the associated road and rail links to Perth have been recognised by the Australian Government through their Auslink Framework. This is a justifiable recognition by the Australian Government that Bunbury Port and the South West Region play in the national economy. It is essential that the State Government now match this national recognition and priorities the strategic enhancement and development of Bunbury Port:

There are additional factors identified separately in this submission that would assist in further strengthening Bunbury Port to a nationally significant level; these include:-

- i. Upgrade of the rail line to Perth (Forrestfield) to national gauge standard;
- ii. Reconnecting one of the three disconnected lines to the Wheatbelt thereby providing alternate access for wheat, kaolin and iron ore to port facilities;
- iii. Full completion of the Peel Deviation and Kwinana Freeway extension (already committed by the State Government); and
- iv. Full development of the Bunbury Outer Ring Road and Bunbury Port Access Road.

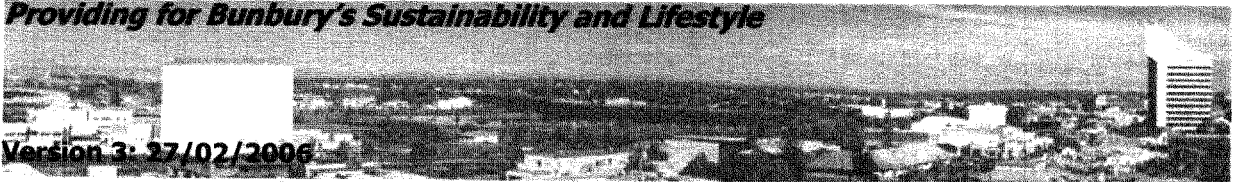
There have been various commitments made previously in relation to making Bunbury Western Australia's second container port. However, these commitments have rarely reached more than lip service without genuine drive from the Government. The City believes that the State Government's current focus on Fremantle port and the extravagance of developing the new Cockburn port (along with all its environmental impacts), defies sound planning and management principles. The development of the Bunbury port can be delivered at a cost considerably less than the unaffordable extravagance of the proposed Fremantle Port Outer Harbour Development at Cockburn, which will cost in the order of \$2 Billion.

Bunbury Outer Ring Road

\$110M

The Bunbury Outer Ring Road has been identified by MRWA since the early 1980's as an essential infrastructure project to relieve traffic problems through the Bunbury urban area and to facilitate safe and effective transport linkages to the south west subregions of Vasse and Warren-Blackwood.

The project has been regularly identified in MRWA's Ten Year Highway Programme in the outer years, specifically set for construction in 2008/09 to 2010/11. However, the project has for various reasons not been formally committed to and subsequently funded.



The City requests that this project be committed to and fully funded in the Auslink Round 2 (years 5 – 10) and reflected in both the Australian and State Government financial year budgets and forward estimates.

Perth – Bunbury Rail Line

\$300M

As identified above, the City strongly supports the development of Bunbury Port as a major State significant export oriented logistics hub. To achieve this there is a need to progress with the development of national standard gauge connection to Perth (Forrestfield). It is expected that such infrastructure would cost in the order of \$200M. Such an investment would connect the South West economy firmly to the national economy via the strategic linkage of rail.

Bunbury – Merredin Rail

\$200M

A further priority is to undo the failures of planning which occurred in the 1980's and 1990's resulting in the closure of all three rails lines connecting Bunbury to the Wheatbelt. These three linkages were via Narrogin, Wagin and Kojonup. The preferred option is to reconnect the Narrogin line via Collie through to Merredin; which would provide a strategic south-west to north-east alignment connecting the Wheatbelt and western Goldfields and ultimately another direct link to the east-west national gauge rail infrastructure.

This line would open access for grains, kaolin and iron ore to the Bunbury Port at an estimated cost of \$200M. This cost is based on the reconstruction of the section between Collie and Narrogin and the upgrade of existing infrastructure and the construction of the dual gauge (to allow national standard gauge rail).

Bunbury Port Access Road

\$70M

The Bunbury Port is Australia's 12th largest by volume and has the potential to grow to become the 5th largest. The Port sustains the South West economy, which was estimated by the South West Development Commission to have a GDP in excess of \$6.4 billion in 2006.

The Bunbury Port Access Road and Infrastructure Corridor has long been identified by the Western Australian Planning Commission, Main Roads Western Australia, South West Development Commission and the Bunbury Port Authority as a key project needing to be undertaken as a matter of priority.

The City recommends the State Government commits to, and fully funds, the delivery of this significant and vital infrastructure project over the following periods, which were in MRWA's previous Ten Year Highway Programme:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Stage I | additional \$8 (in the 2006/07 budget) in recognition that the allocated \$17M is insufficient to adequately complete the project |
| Stage II- | \$45M (from 2008/09 – 2010/11 budgets) |

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Passenger Rail

\$700M

There is an opportunity to utilise the Perth to Mandurah electrified urban rail passenger network (currently under construction) to provide a future (15+ year horizon) high-speed connection between Perth and Bunbury.

The current development runs along the Kwinana Freeway down to the section between Anketell Rd and Thomas Rd freeway interchanges. There is an opportunity to extend a new line along the Kwinana Freeway, Peel Deviation and the Perth-Bunbury Highway.

A new passenger rail line would not only have the benefit of directly connecting the capital with the state's second city (and the associated South West Urban system – one of Australia's fastest growing regional corridors) for reliable high speed rail it also then would allow the existing South West rail corridor to be solely dedicated to freight and transport logistics related to the resource sector. This would remove substantial conflict and improve the effectiveness of industry in the South West.

Bunbury Regional Airport

\$25M

The City has jointly undertaken an extensive review of the Bunbury Regional Airport with the Department for Planning and Infrastructure. The study has identified that the airport's current location meets the current and anticipated future demand for Bunbury's growth and demand from local and regional users.

The Council has endorsed the findings of the Study and is now seeking implementation which includes the following:-

- i. The confirmation of the current location;
- ii. The redevelopment of the existing sites to appropriate standards;
- iii. The future extension of the runway to 1,750 m; and
- iv. The provision of an 800m cross-runway for light aircraft (recognising the difficult and potentially dangerous conditions experienced at times for light aircraft).

It is noted that to achieve the runway extension a relocation of the South West Highway (North Boyanup Road) will be required. This is the result of environmental decisions by the EPA impacting on MRWA planning which previously sought to redirect the highway to the west of the airport. The proposed relocation can occur easily and effectively at a future time when MRWA carries out its planned duplication of the highway out to the Bunbury Outer Ring Road.

The City is seeking State Government commitments in its forward estimates to appropriate funding in the Regional Airport Development Scheme (RADS) programme to improve hangar and taxiway layout and to bring utilities such as power and water to required standards. Based on the jointly funded independent study it has been identified there is a need for State Government funding of \$4M.

Eelup Roundabout

\$15M

The Eelup Roundabout is acknowledged as regional Western Australia's highest rating blackspot with over 300 accidents in a five-year period. As an important transport link for Bunbury and the

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South West this poor performance is clearly unacceptable and needs to be remedied. The intersection is a safety hazard and also detracts as an important entry into the Bunbury city centre.

The Australind Bypass bridge over the Preston River is also currently a major impediment to flood waters passing through. This causes a greater flood risk for both East Bunbury and Moorlands.

There is a solution available, which can combine these two significant issues permanently and have positive benefits in terms of safety and flood management. It would be proposed that an overpass be constructed (in favour of Australind Bypass & Sandridge Road – the busier through road) which incorporates a new significantly higher and wider bridge over the Preston River. Robertson Drive needs to be raised approximately one metre over a section adjacent to Eelup Roundabout for flood prevention purposes. This option would considerably address the road safety issue through the grade separation of the intersection, resolve considerable flood impacts and also free up land for the passage of the rail to facilitate the new rail terminal at Eelup as proposed in the Bunbury Integrated Land Use and Transport Vision 2030. The City requests that given the substantial nature of the project in terms of the issues resolved that the State and Federal Governments jointly fund this valuable and effective solution.

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