

15 September 2021

Submitted via website to:  
Mr Philip Helberg  
CEO  
Infrastructure Western Australia  
Dumas House,  
2 Havelock Street  
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Phil,

*Submission: Infrastructure WA Draft State Infrastructure Strategy  
'Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow'*

As you are aware, the Committee for Perth (the Committee) is WA's leading think tank, with more than 100 members covering over 40 sectors.

This submission has been prepared by the Committee and reviewed by members of its Reshaping Working Group to respond to the draft Infrastructure WA strategy *Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow*. The submission draws on a substantial body of research including Committee for Perth FACTBase bulletins and major projects including the *Future of Work*, *Hashtag Perth*, *Bigger and Better Beyond the Boom* and *Get a Move On!*.

The Committee for Perth would like to congratulate Infrastructure WA (IWA) for the preparation of a quality, comprehensive and future focused strategy. We believe that the implementation of the recommendations in the strategy will substantially strengthen the infrastructure foundations of the State for the future and provide the basis for a stronger more resilient economy, community, and environment.

The Committee supports the recommendations of the strategy, however our primary issue of concern is the timing of implementation. A large proportion of recommendations in the strategy seek to fill gaps in forward planning for infrastructure that have accumulated over decades, are required to respond to immediate state, regional and global challenges such as climate change, or are important to assist the State to diversify its economy for the future. These are not actions that can be delayed without risking the reputation, wellbeing, economic competitiveness, and sustainability of the State in the short to medium term.

It is therefore our strong belief that the State government should commit to fulfilling and funding the recommendations of the strategy as a priority. To reflect the urgency of some of the recommendations, the Committee proposes that time frames for the implementation of recommendations should be adjusted to reflect urgent/priority recommendations, which should be implemented within a two-year timeframe (2022-2024), short term actions (2022-2027), and medium to long term actions (2027-2032 to 2032-2042 years).

This submission provides comments and suggestions on the recommendations identified in the draft IWA strategy. Where no comments are provided on a recommendation it can be assumed that the Committee supports the recommendation as it stands.

Yours sincerely,

Marion Fulker AM  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Adjunct Senior Research Fellow UWA**

## 1 Comments on Recommendations

Recommendation Number	Committee for Perth Comments/Suggestions
<p>1. Elevate WA's focus on accelerating digital transformation and the priority given to underlying connectivity infrastructure.</p>	<p>The Committee supports this recommendation but suggests that increased emphasis is placed on the development of a quality, consistent, cross-departmental data management system for the WA government. This system will form the basis for data driven decision making, smart infrastructure, inter-departmental collaboration, and provision of open-source data for innovation in the State. It is also suggested that the recommended lead agency for data is supported by appointing a Chief Data Officer to oversee the data collation and management process along with the cyber security management.</p>
<p>2. Take a digital-first approach to all aspects of the infrastructure lifecycle, from planning through to retirement of assets.</p>	<p>Recommendation 2 is supported however it is suggested that the timeframe for Recommendation 2b is moved forward to 2022-2027 on the basis that technological advancement is moving rapidly and many cities around the world are already implementing smart infrastructure solutions. In this context setting the policy framework for the planning and development of smart infrastructure is considered a short term/immediate goal.</p>
<p>3. Set and proactively implement clear cybersecurity standards for State-owned and regulated infrastructure to manage critical risks and support digital transformation.</p>	<p>The Committee submits that a single agency supported by a leadership role such as a Chief Data Officer should be appointed to manage data collection and storage (Recommendation 1); cybersecurity (Recommendation 3); and data science capabilities within government (Recommendation 4).</p>
<p>4. Develop digital capabilities within government to ensure optimal operation and security of current and future infrastructure.</p>	<p>It is also recommended that the strategy promotes or recommends that government works directly with education providers to improve WA's human resource capabilities in data science and technology professions.</p>
<p>5. Develop and implement guidelines to embed and support early, inclusive, genuine, and culturally appropriate engagement with Traditional Owners and Custodians addressing all stages of the infrastructure lifecycle.</p>	<p>Given the importance of early and culturally appropriate engagement to develop trust and rapport with Traditional Owners and Custodians we believe that Recommendations 5a-c should be implemented in the short term (within the 2022-2027 time period).</p>

Recommendation Number	Committee for Perth Comments/Suggestions
<p>7. Improve and increase the participation and growth of Aboriginal businesses through reforms to, and greater application and compliance with, the State Government's Aboriginal Procurement Policy and practice.</p>	<p>It is the view of the Committee that cultural/unconscious bias training for all public sector workers should be implemented as an immediate/priority goal.</p>
<p>11. Implement the State Government's policy for net zero emissions by 2050.</p>	<p>Committee for Perth research has established that there is a strong desire for WA to play a leadership role in adapting to climate change and capitalising on opportunities presented by this global challenge (Committee for Perth, 2021). It is also apparent that, if WA's government and industries do not adapt to climate change and plan to achieve net zero emissions in the short term, international investors may not invest in our companies and projects and external markets may not buy our exports (Committee for Perth, 2021).</p> <p>In this context, implementing policies to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 are imperative and need to be implemented as a priority.</p> <p>If the preparation of sectoral emissions strategies are delayed until post 2027, WA will continue to lag behind other jurisdictions and risks missing opportunities for innovation and industry growth.</p> <p>Without immediate government planning and leadership, businesses will be required to adapt and plan for climate change and emission reduction on an individual, ad-hoc basis without government support or sectoral collaboration.</p>
<p>12. Strengthen and expand existing programs outlined in the Western Australian Climate Policy to develop carbon farming and sequestration markets.</p>	<p>Global pressure for industries and governments to reduce carbon emissions has heightened over the past 12 months and it has become evident that in order for businesses to attract investment and for WA to export their products overseas, industries, businesses and governments must be actively implementing strategies to reduce carbon emissions. Carbon sequestration plays an important role in shifting towards zero carbon and, to enable WA to maximise potential benefits from this shift, recommendations to expand opportunities for carbon farming should be prioritised for implementation (within 2022-27 time period).</p>

Recommendation Number	Committee for Perth Comments/Suggestions
<p>22. Prepare and implement an urban consolidation action plan which identifies the significant barriers to increasing urban consolidation and sets out a clear roadmap to address them, including intended outcomes, responsibilities, and timing.</p>	<p>Recommendation 22 is supported, however the Committee suggests that Recommendation 22a is amended as per the text below:</p> <p>a. reviewing and adjusting policy settings to support liveability and amenity improvements in infill locations. Particular focus should be given to refining development contribution settings for public open space, public realm improvements, schools and utilities <b>and public transport</b>;</p>
<p>24. Prepare a city opportunity plan that sets an agreed strategic framework for transformation of the Perth CBD and immediate surrounds (including locations adjacent to Perth Water such as Burswood and South Perth).</p>	<p>Recommendation 24 is supported, however the Committee suggests that Recommendation 24b is amended as per the text below:</p> <p>Identification of major precincts, other significant redevelopments and infrastructure that will contribute to <b>city growth, activation and development as the State's primary knowledge and innovation hub</b>, including desired outcomes for initiatives and the synergies between them; interface opportunities and issues; staging; and implementation requirements and responsibilities</p>
<p>31. Develop and implement a single, agreed set of common planning assumptions.</p>	<p>The Committee strongly supports this recommendation and advocates for the recommendation to be implemented as a short-term priority.</p>
<p>38. Review the potential for private sector funding for the delivery of infrastructure.</p>	<p>Given limited public funds, it is our view that the establishing alternative funding sources, and potentially innovative financing mechanisms, should be a short-term priority.</p>
<p>41. Evolve the Whole of System Plan and ensure implementation actions are transparent.</p>	<p>This recommendation is strongly supported. We believe that it is critical that the Whole of System Plan modelling is robust and incorporates appropriate inputs and assumptions in regard to policy change, technological advancement, and climate adaptation.</p>
<p>42. Prepare a North West Interconnected System energy futures report to provide a long-term view on energy generation, demand, and network infrastructure requirements.</p>	<p>The Committee agrees with the sentiment outlined in the strategy that WA's mid and north-west coasts have some of the most significant solar radiance resources in the world. Wind speeds across the coast and inland areas are well above thresholds required for commercial scale renewable developments. WA also has a key advantage in our vast available land.</p> <p>Given the importance of climate change adaptation for WA's economy, exports, and reputation, along</p>

Recommendation Number	Committee for Perth Comments/Suggestions
	<p>with the desire for WA to provide a leadership role in adjusting to climate change, it is our view that recommendations to progress the development of renewable energy infrastructure in the mid and north-west should be prioritised for implementation within the 2022-2027 timeframe. This includes Recommendation 42c.</p>
<p>45. Update the State's hydrogen work program.</p>	<p>It is recommended that Recommendation 45a and Recommendation 45c are undertaken within the 2022-2027 time period. The reason for this is that the hydrogen industry is moving quickly, and investigations are already being undertaken into the establishment of large-scale hydrogen facilities overseas. Identifying appropriate locations and providing an appropriate legislative framework to support development as a priority, will maximise opportunities to place WA at the forefront of the hydrogen industry.</p>
<p>55. Address the future loss of fuel excise revenue.</p>	<p>Burdensome and outdated regulation has been identified as a core problem that is hindering WA's ability to adapt to new technology, including technology that would assist WA to adapt to global challenges such as climate change, as well as manage demand for infrastructure such as roads (Committee for Perth, 2021). In this regard, as specified in the strategy, fuel excise revenue has been identified as a barrier to the implementation of electric vehicles in WA, and electric vehicles are a proven technology that is already playing a central role in reducing transport emissions around the globe.</p> <p>Committee for Perth research has identified strong support for WA to reduce barriers to the adoption of innovative technology. There is also significant sentiment among the community and businesses that WA should be embracing new technology, particularly technology that is available to address climate change such as reducing carbon emissions (Committee for Perth, 2021). In this context, we believe that recommendations to address the future loss of fuel excise should be implemented as a priority, within the 2022-2027 time period.</p>
<p>56. Develop and implement an action plan to increase public transport patronage and reduce road congestion through non-build measures.</p>	<p>The Committee supports the implementation of non-build measures to increase public transport use, particularly in Greater Perth. Part of this process should be the use of digital technologies, which are already available and advanced in managing</p>

Recommendation Number	Committee for Perth Comments/Suggestions
	<p>transport demand. Implementation of digital technology and developing a technologically advanced transport system is also considered important to ensure that the State can take advantage of technological innovations in transport demand management as they arise. As such, it is recommended that the timeframe for implementing Recommendation 56b is moved forward to the 2022-2027 timeframe.</p>
<p>59. Undertake planning of light rail and/or bus rapid transit for the next stage of major public transport priority investment in Perth, particularly in the CBD and inner-middle ring suburbs. This includes completing a full business case options assessment comparing the Knowledge Arc light rail corridor against a more extensive bus rapid transit system for Perth.</p>	<p>Proposals for light rail or bus rapid transit in Greater Perth have been discussed for decades and there is a large evidence base highlighting the potential benefits of the development of rapid transit within the central city and middle ring suburbs of Greater Perth. This includes maximising the accessibility of the region’s major knowledge, education and entertainment employment hubs, and highest density urban locations (Committee for Perth, 2016). People who live and work in these areas have the highest rate and propensity for public and active transport use (Committee for Perth, 2016). City centre, inner and middle suburbs also have significant potential and have been the most common locations for infill development (Committee for Perth, 2016). In this context, the development of a rapid transport network within the inner and middle areas of Greater Perth is strongly supported and will assist in managing demand for transport and urban infrastructure in the future. There have already been substantial delays in the planning for and development of light rail and rapid bus in Greater Perth and this could be reflected in inadequate achievement of infill development targets, traffic congestion problems and the decline of Perth city centre. In this context the Committee strongly supports Recommendation 59 and would support the recommendation to be implemented in the short term (within the 2022-2017 time period).</p>
<p>61. Implement further measures to support the State Electric Vehicle Strategy for Western Australia to achieve a higher uptake rate of low and zero emissions vehicles.</p>	<p>As previously outlined, enabling and planning for existing and innovative technologies like electric vehicles that have the capacity to assist WA, businesses, and individuals to address major challenges like climate change is strongly supported by the community and businesses in WA. The Committee also has concern that, failing to implement electric vehicles, will further position WA has lagging in climate adaptation and innovation. In this context it is advised that Recommendations 61b,c and d are implemented in the short term</p>

Recommendation Number	Committee for Perth Comments/Suggestions
	(2022-2027) to enable the adoption of electric vehicles in the short to medium term future.
76. Subject to business cases, prioritise and fund digital technology initiatives identified in the WA Health Digital Strategy 2020-2030 to leverage advances in health technology and enable health system reforms.	Technology is advancing rapidly and as outlined in the draft strategy, implementing the WA Health Digital Strategy 2020-2030 is imperative to enable health system reform, improve performance and future-proof operations of the WA health system. The Health Digital Strategy is already in place and health is not only a critical service, but a growth industry in WA. In this context, action to implement the WA Health Digital Strategy 2020-2030, as proposed in Recommendation 76 should be upgraded to a short-term recommendation (2022-2027).
83. Increase investment in existing and new arts, culture, sport, and recreation infrastructure state-wide to ensure they are fit for purpose.	The Committee for Perth supports Recommendation 83, particularly Recommendation 83a, which has been identified as a priority in a number of Committee for Perth major projects. It is the view of the Committee that the development of a flagship Western Australian Aboriginal Cultural Centre of national and international significance in Perth has the potential to enhance WA and Greater Perth's national and global profile as a place to live, work, visit and invest (Committee for Perth, 2020). It will also provide 'one big thing' that Perth and WA are known for and would be a positive investment in progressing the reconciliation process. In this context, advancing the development of the centre is considered a priority and it is suggested that the implementation of Recommendation 83a is brought forward to the 2022-2027 time period.



## 2 References:

Committee for Perth, 2021, *The Future of Work: Equipping WA and its people to lead the Nation in the future world of work*. Perth: Committee for Perth.

Committee for Perth, 2020, *Boorloo Kworp 'Perth is good'*. Perth: Committee for Perth.

Committee for Perth, 2016, *Get and Move On!*. Perth: Committee for Perth.