

MEDIA RELEASE

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The case for an independent Infrastructure Victoria A Committee for Melbourne discussion paper

Today, the Committee for Melbourne launches *The case for an independent Infrastructure Victoria*, a discussion paper that outlines best practice principles for establishing an independent, accountable and transparent infrastructure prioritisation entity.

Committee for Melbourne CEO Kate Roffey says that while the report acknowledges Melbourne's good track record of delivering infrastructure and the role it has played in shaping the successful city Melbourne is today, it highlights the fact that our rate of build has not kept pace with our rapidly growing population.

As Ms Roffey points out, "looking forward, various demographic, financial, economic and social forces will create an even more challenging context thereby highlighting the inadequacy of our current arrangements for prioritising infrastructure".

"Independent prioritisation of infrastructure projects may be a politically contentious issue, but it is a necessity to ensure the long-term growth and development of our city and it is a path down which we must proceed" says Ms Roffey.

Around the world, examples have proven that when there is a pressing need to deliver, party politics can be put aside for the benefit of the greater good. Sir John Armit, the UK expert responsible for the independent review of long-term infrastructure planning in the UK, noted that:

"London 2012 proved we are capable of planning and delivering complex and innovative infrastructure projects with local and national cross-party support. We did it right for the Games and now we need to apply the lessons we've learned to other areas and services we need to improve to cope with the challenges ahead."

Cross-party agreement can be achieved, however at some point it requires a coalition of the willing to agree to come together to make better long-term decisions. "We can make significant headway to close the infrastructure divide, but to do so we must move to a system where a long-term pipeline of priority projects has bipartisan agreement so that we have clarity and certainty moving forward", says Ms Roffey

Ms Roffey also notes that "a reliable funding base and best practice project delivery will be critical factors in delivering infrastructure projects that give you the best returns".

As CEO Kate Roffey says "Great cities do not happen by chance – they grow and develop through visionary thinking and long-term planning. As such, it is critical that we get the process of infrastructure prioritisation right".

‘Ten Principles for infrastructure Prioritisation’

1. **Independence** – to transcend political cycles
2. **Transparency** – in presenting recommendations
3. **Appropriate powers** – to ensure independence is adhered to
4. **Accountability** – which clearly defines roles and responsibilities including their limitations
5. **Evidence-based analysis** – that underpins project prioritisation
6. **Cross-sector holistic approach** – to maximise state-wide network benefits
7. **Alignment** – with the broader state-wide socioeconomic vision
8. **Quality appointments** – to ensure credibility with government and the public at large
9. **Stakeholder engagement** – to ensure the appropriate stakeholders are engaged at the right time so projects are supported and committed to
10. **Flexibility** – to allow for appropriate changes to be made on projects over time if good reasoning dictates

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About Committee for Melbourne

Strategic leadership think tank, the Committee for Melbourne is an apolitical, not-for-profit, member-based organisation that brings together over 130 organisations from Greater Melbourne’s business, academic and community sectors, who share a common vision to make Melbourne a better place to live, work and do business.

As an independent organisation we represent no single interest group or political position, but seek to challenge conventional thinking and to develop innovative ideas to continue to enhance our position as an economically prosperous and highly liveable global city.

Further information

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