

Media release



FROM THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING, MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT

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IDEAS TO TRANSFORM GEELONG'S INNER- WEST GO ON SHOW

Ideas for transforming inner Geelong will go on show next week as the Bracks Government's Transit Cities project moves into its next phase, Acting Minister for Planning, Bob Cameron announced today.

The project received \$120,000 from the State Government in April to examine opportunities for higher density, mixed-use development close to public transport, he said.

Mr Cameron said design concepts for the region would be put forward for public consultation at a public meeting next week.

"An open studio will also be held at Geelong Railway Station so the community can share its ideas directly with the project team and see them at work," he said.

The designs were developed in partnership by the Department of Infrastructure, City of Greater Geelong and Deakin University, he said.

The area covers the Corio Bay foreshore, Geelong Railway Station and the Central Business District and is known locally as the Western Wedge, he said.

"This is an exciting opportunity to create a vibrant new inner-city quarter with easy access to public transport, education and lifestyle facilities," he said.

"The people of Geelong have enthusiastically recognised the potential of the 'wedge' to build on its successful central business district, revitalised waterfront and the forthcoming upgrade of rail and other transport services.

"Geelong Railway Station is the focal point of the project which aims to provide cosmopolitan, inner-city living in a part of town that is underutilised.

"Transit Cities represents our commitment to creating sustainable community by putting public transport in the same places as housing, jobs and services.

"By increasing modern housing around public transport hubs and reducing car dependence this program will create safer, more vibrant and accessible communities.

"Community interest in revitalising this part of Geelong has already been strong and I would encourage anyone with an interest in the project to come to the forums."

Transport Minister Peter Batchelor said a \$69 million contract was awarded this week to construct a fast-rail service between Melbourne and Geelong in a move that demonstrated the Bracks Government's commitment to growing regional communities.

"Under the Bracks Government's fast-rail project, people will be able to get to Geelong from Melbourne in just 45 minutes," he said.

"The forthcoming Metropolitan Strategy will encourage development around existing infrastructure, especially around public transport.

"If we want people to become less car dependent and use public transport we need to offer these sorts of services, close to where they live and that is why the western wedge project is so promising."

Mr Batchelor said the Bracks Government's Linking Victoria Strategy – a \$3.5 billion blueprint to revitalise the State's rail, road and ports links – recognised the importance of transport infrastructure to Victoria's economic and social future.

Mr Cameron said the final Transit Cities study would incorporate feedback from the community and be completed in August.

The Department of Infrastructure will have an "on-site studio" at Platform 1, Geelong Railway Station, 10am to 5pm, 1 – 5 July.

There will be a public information and feedback meeting, at the Council Conference and Reception Centre, Little Malop St (side of City Hall), 7pm to 8.30pm, on 4 July.
