

Western Australia's 20-year State Infrastructure Strategy

August 2022

On Wednesday 3 August 2022, the McGowan Government tabled in parliament WA's first 20-year State Infrastructure Strategy, '*Foundations for a stronger tomorrow*'.

Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow is a comprehensive report on the state's infrastructure needs over the next two decades. The Strategy outlines 93 recommendations to improve the foundations of WA's infrastructure system and guide planning and investment decisions to 2042. It is to be implemented over three time frames: 0–5 years, 5–10 years and 10–20 years.

The Strategy focuses on current challenges including climate change and the transition to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, digital connectivity and improving Aboriginal empowerment and wellbeing.

The objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Maximise regional strengths to unlock strategic opportunities for Western Australia
- Support access to social services and improve Aboriginal wellbeing
- Enable environmental sustainability and resilience, and address climate change
- Maximise wellbeing, liveability and cultural strategic opportunities for our community
- Enhance cross-government coordination and planning
- Support population growth and change
- Embrace technology, data and digital connectivity
- Enhance infrastructure delivery and develop skills for the future
- Get the most from our infrastructure and improve maintenance.

The State Government is not bound to deliver the recommendations of the Strategy by Infrastructure WA, however it will now develop a formal response outlining the extent to which each recommendation is supported by the Government, which is due within the next six months.

A list of some of the key recommendations of the report can be found on the next page. Most of the recommendations are targeted to non-build initiatives that aim to lower demand and maximise the usability of existing assets.

The full Infrastructure Strategy, *Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow*, can be downloaded [here](#). Go to page 318 for a complete list of recommendations and sub-recommendations.

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Recommendations include:

Digital connectivity and technology

- Elevate WA's focus on accelerating digital transformation and connectivity infrastructure
- Improve cybersecurity practices for state-owned and regulated infrastructure owners and operators

Aboriginal cultural heritage, wellbeing and enterprise

- Embed and support engagement with Traditional Owners and Custodians
- Strengthen application of the Aboriginal Procurement Policy
- Improve the quality and resilience of infrastructure and services provided in remote Aboriginal communities and town-based reserves

Climate change and sustainability

- Implement the WA Government's policy for net zero emissions by 2050
- Strengthen and expand WA Climate Policy programs to develop carbon farming and sequestration markets
- Implement a statewide approach to climate change adaptation for existing infrastructure
- Develop and implement a shared environmental and heritage information system for priority locations
- Replace the current system of acquiring environmental offsets separately for major projects with a coordinated bioregional approach

Regional development

- Implement a regional development strategic framework that identifies state and regional priorities and guides whole of government action and investment
- Develop regional social services and infrastructure models that are more responsive to the changing needs of communities across regional WA

Planning and coordination

- Review the effectiveness of existing and proposed infrastructure facilitation and coordination models within 5 years of operation
- Establish a single digital government approvals system
- Prepare and implement an urban consolidation action program
- Progressively prepare, in order of priority, 20-year integrated regional plans
- Facilitate and coordinate investment in industrial and technological precincts

Infrastructure delivery

- Strengthen project assurance processes, governance and public sector skills for the delivery of major projects
- Make incremental improvements to procurement policies and practices
- Review the potential to use private sector finance and funding sources

Asset management

- Improve asset management practices across the public sector

Energy

- Accelerate a dedicated program of energy storage, micro-grids, virtual power plants and standalone power systems
- Support the development of the state's hydrogen industry

Water

- Modernise legislative, regulatory and planning frameworks for water resources and water services
- Plan and deliver climate-independent infrastructure that provides fit for purpose and sustainable water services
- Undertake an integrated strategic review of water and land-use values in the Jandakot and Gnarup groundwater protection areas

Waste

- Accelerate implementation of the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030
- Prioritise finalisation of a state waste infrastructure plan

Transport

- Deliver improved transport system outcomes
- Address the future loss of fuel excise revenue (fuel excise alternative scheme for low and zero emissions vehicles)
- Progress targeted expansion and improvement of the road network
- Plan and invest in the future development of new heavy rail infrastructure
- Develop a business case for light rail and/or bus rapid transit as the next stage of major public transport priority investment in Perth
- Provide enhanced cycling and walking infrastructure
- Plan for the long-term potential needs of a new civil aviation and general aviation airport for Perth

Housing

- Improve planning and inform investment for social and affordable housing
- Prioritise further investment in social and affordable housing
- Enable and diversify social and affordable housing providers and housing choice
- Improve Aboriginal housing outcomes and enable options for housing infrastructure

Health

- Address gaps in the health system service and infrastructure planning
- Increase investment in community-based services
- Establish health facilities tailored to Aboriginal needs

Education and training

- Improve school infrastructure planning and delivery
 - considering offsite and modular construction

Arts, culture, sport and recreation

- Develop and publish a 10+ year state arts and culture strategy
- Increase investment in existing and new infrastructure
- Develop and publish a 10+ year state tourism strategy

Justice and public safety

- Improve infrastructure planning with a focus on the interdependencies of police, courts and correctional facilities
- Invest in fit for purpose and contemporary infrastructure