

## VIEW FROM CANBERRA

March 2018

### Future Cities – Planning for our Growing Population and the value of getting there: Mobility for stronger Australian regions

The BIC has always argued the federal government has a leadership and strategic role to play and at last we are seeing all major political parties in Canberra paying attention.

The most recent report coming out of Infrastructure Australia (IA) reflects very much the research and policy paper series that BIC has been presenting to all levels of government for more than a decade. It is clear that we are reaching a point of no return where all levels of government must take action in relation to the growth of our cities (and regions) and how we *move people*.

The “Future Cities – Planning for our Growing Population” report from Infrastructure Australia once again identifies the urgent need for action and public transport and bus services are a big part of the solution. The IA Report said:

**“Cars continue to play an important role in our cities. However, across all scenarios, congestion significantly increases, and adding new roads is only part of the solution.**

The scenario analysis indicates that private vehicles continue to be used for the majority of trips within our largest cities, and the total number of trips on our roads increases significantly. Construction of new roads alone cannot accommodate this demand and alleviate congestion at the same time. Land-use planning and transport network investment will need to be complemented by other approaches, including demand management mechanisms such as road user charging, and public transport investment”.

This should sound familiar if you have been reading the BIC research and policy statements or attended a BIC Conference in the last few years.

Public Transport investment in infrastructure and services must be a cornerstone of future federal and state government decisions about transport priorities. The connectivity of our regional areas to our cities is vital. If for no other reason, the federal government must be involved in public transport in the city and the country because, as the simple mantra says - “it is the economy stupid”.

This IA Report sends a dire warning about the thought bubble that personalised autonomous modules for transport is going to address the challenges of population growth and congestion — as we look to the current debate about Mobility as a Service (Maas), future mobility and new technology.

Century 21 transport will have at its core, a spine of mass transit and feeder services that will be at the centre of city and regional transport and this model is not as some suggest, an obsolete dinosaur.

### Bus Australia Network



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The societal, environmental and economic challenges for Australia’s regions and cities will be addressed through smart investment in mass and social transit infrastructure and services. No matter where a person lives, public transport in its various new forms will be front and centre in any future land use and integrated transport plans. The bus industry will be a key player in providing new mass transit styled services, new feeder and connecting services, last mile and on demand services.

All of this is fast coming to a head. Transport change is with us. The joint BIC and BCANZ Conference from Oct 7-10 in Cairns is themed “*Moving People Century 21*” and this is all about leading the discussion with Industry, government and the public to ensure the bus industry is ahead of the game, a leader not a lagger in what will be a brave new world of service contracts, service delivery and entrepreneurial opportunities. Visit the dedicated Century 21 event website at [movingpeople.com.au](http://movingpeople.com.au).

### Bus Australia Network

