



Our Ref: D-19-045441
Your Ref: RARF
File Ref: GR/11/0043
Enquiries: Chris Lee

5 July 2019

Mr Chris Sharples
Project Manager
Department of Transport

via email <RARF@transport.wa.gov.au>

Dear Sir / Madam

REVITALISING AGRICULTURAL REGION FREIGHT STRATEGY - CITY OF GREATER GERALDTON RESPONSE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft *Revitalising Agricultural Region Freight Strategy* document.

The City of Greater Geraldton (the City) congratulates the multi-agency team, led by Department of Transport, on developing this important, strategic transport initiative. The draft Strategy has been reviewed and the City is in support of the approach taken in that the approach to developing the Strategy appears sound and the proposed initiatives within the Project List are generally supported.

Further to consultation with Executive and Elected Members, the City requests that the following issues are also considered for inclusion in the Strategy Project Lists where appropriate;

Wubin – Mullewa Road Upgrade

The City is strongly of the opinion that the significant omission from the Strategy Project List is the requirement to widen and upgrade the sealed section of the Morawa to Mullewa leg of the Wubin to Mullewa Road.

This section of road is unable to be utilised by grain transporters due to significant safety issues that exist noting that CBH has rationalised and reduced its receival points through this area to just Mullewa, Canna and Morawa, resulting in greater travel distances for farmers to now access the remaining receival points. Should the Morawa to Mullewa section of the road be widened and upgraded, it would become a major agricultural transport haulage route in the Mid-West including possible utilisation by mining companies seeking to develop projects in that area. This upgrade would finally complete the widening works on the Mullewa- Wubin section of the road that links to Great Northern Highway (itself subject to major upgrades).



Correspondence has previously been sent to the State requesting this upgrade with formal advice received from the Hon. Dean Nalder MLA in August 2016. Advice received is that Main Roads WA (MRWA) planning and development work had commenced to assist with the progressive upgrade of the Wubin-Mullewa Road when future funding becomes available.

Geraldton – Mt Magnet Road intersection upgrades

There are a number of roads providing access to farming properties north of the Geraldton-Mount Magnet Road during the grain harvest season. Some of these crossings are restricted to a maximum heavy vehicle length of 30m due to limited stacking distance between the road and existing rail crossings.

However, heavy vehicles >30m long are currently using these restricted routes illegally, or travelling through private property to gain access to the Geraldton-Mount Magnet Road.

The City previously investigated alternative grain haulage routes and options, including a new rail crossing and 2.5km realignment associated with Peter Road and the creation of a new access via an extension of Cream Road. Council subsequently resolved to undertake an options analysis (Stage 1) for truck transport in this district, particularly in regards to access and movement on and off the Geraldton-Mount Magnet Road.

In June 2016 the City subsequently undertook Stage 2 of the Grain Haulage Route study of the Geraldton – Mt Magnet Road between Geraldton and Mullewa. Stage 2 incorporated 11 Road Safety Audits (RSA) of intersections on the road between Eradu to Ardingley, and a review of the affected roads Restricted Access Vehicle (RAV) classifications in collaboration with MRWA.

In summary, Stage 2 of the report provided recommendations to undertake upgrades and safety improvements to six (6) intersections with Geraldton Mt Magnet Road, commencing with Peter Road as the highest priority due to relatively low costs and high utilisation.

A full copy of the Final Grain Haulage Route study is attached.

Geraldton – Mt Magnet Road Increased Truck Lengths

Geraldton – Mt Magnet Road is a key transport route providing access from the east directly to the Geraldton Port. The introduction of longer Restricted Access Vehicles and increased utilisation of the Geraldton-Mt Magnet Road is also driving the need for passing lanes to be considered for construction.

The longer vehicles are also travelling through the Mullewa town site and the Geraldton – Mt Magnet road alignment at the intersection of Gray Street and Maitland Road requires review and consideration for upgrading to address significant safety concerns. It is also noted that there are no grain receipt points between Geraldton and Mullewa, requiring all grain from west of Mullewa to be trucked to the Geraldton Port.

Millendon Junction to Geraldton Rail Line Reconstruction

The City is very supportive of the reconstruction of the Millendon Junction to Geraldton rail line and its integration with intermodal transport hubs. The City is very aware of the growing trends both interstate and overseas with the development of regional intermodal hubs that link back to capital cities and ports.



For the State to be cost competitive on an international scale it needs to have the most efficient and cost effective transport networks. These hubs coupled with greater efficiencies achieved with running longer and heavier grain trains are essential if the State's agricultural industries are to remain globally competitive.

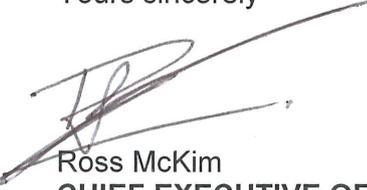
ARC Infrastructure

The City requests that the State works more closely with Arc Infrastructure. Regular reports are received from people in the Agricultural and Mining Industries that Arc Infrastructure are very difficult to work with when seeking access to the rail network for bulk transport of their products and as a result, more freight is being pushed onto the roads, going against the State Government's draft Strategy.

A case in point is the section of rail between Morawa and Perenjori which requires a major upgrade to support the raling of grain from Perenjori to Geraldton Port. It is also noted that the closure of the Tier Three railway from Perenjori to Maya means that the grain from those areas is transported north by road to Perenjori, and in some cases, directly through to Geraldton again putting pressure on the road network.

The City look forward to the State Government endorsement of the draft Strategy and trust that the above may be considered for inclusion however, please contact the undersigned should you require any further information in support of the above requests.

Yours sincerely



Ross McKim
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Att. Final Grain Haulage Route Options Study Stage 2 Report