

26 February 2021

Infrastructure Victoria project team
Infrastructure Victoria
Victorian Government

SUBMISSION TO INFRASTRUCTURE VICTORIA'S DRAFT 30 YEAR INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY FOR VICTORIA

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the draft infrastructure strategy.

The Australian Retailer's Association (ARA) are Australia's largest retail industry group and represents around 7,500 independent and national members. Since 1903, the ARA has been the trusted voice for Australia's \$340 billion retail sector, which employs more than 1.2 million people.

The Australia retail sector was once booming in Victoria and retail was a mainstay for tourism in metropolitan Melbourne. The pandemic has left many retail businesses across Australia, particularly in Victoria, facing many challenges that have not yet been resolved.

The ARA supports an infrastructure strategy for Victoria that will allow an increase in foot traffic to driver consumer spending and foster growth in the Victorian economy.

A congestion levy on parking spaces does not encourage consumers to spend time in the CBD. The levy also only targets off-street parking which would therefore be ineffective in reducing the desired effect of the levy which is to reduce traffic congestion.

Pass-through traffic accounts for more than 50 per cent of traffic in the CBD however the 'congestion levy' does not apply to these road users while disincentivising consumers to visit the CBD and spend time there.

Any increases in the current congestion levy will impact consumers and their desire to visit the CBD. Given every state across Australia is trying to bring consumers and foot traffic back into the city, an increase in the levy would be counterintuitive.

ARA members have also made submissions to the infrastructure strategy and have outlined some ways in which congestion in the CBD can be reduced without disincentivising consumers while also being far more effective in reducing congestion in the CBD.

The ARA are grateful for the opportunity to make a submission into Infrastructure Victoria's Draft 30 Year Infrastructure Strategy for Victoria.

Please do not hesitate to contact [REDACTED] if we can be of assistance in any way.

Yours sincerely



Fleur Brown
Head of Industry Affairs
Australian Retailers Association (ARA)