THE NEXT SPEND

Six recommendations for a digitally-enabled and data-driven economic recovery.

Smart **Cities** Council

June 2020

Australia, more than ever, must accelerate its investment in digital infrastructure and data-driven decision making if it is to attract investment, create jobs, boost productivity and build international competitiveness.

HERE ARE OUR
6 x FUTURE FORWARD INVESTMENTS

1. Build infrastructure, build smart
2. Create a digital framework for infrastructure investment
3. Activate our Digital Twins
4. Construct a network of real-time Integrated Intelligence Hubs
5. Fund a series of Digital Benefit District upgrades
6. Enhance the digital and data literacy of SME's

BUILD SMART INFRASTRUCTURE

As infrastructure stimulus flows, so to should the opportunity to generate future value, to the community and economy.

NOT BUILDING BACK SMART, IS JUST DUMB

What?

When specifying stimulus conditions and funding criteria, smart should be the default. From construction methods, to materials. From street lighting to car parking. From housing to transportation. There are smart technology and data solutions ready for deployment now, designed and delivered by our nation's best solution providers.

Why?

This once in a generation recession is bringing a once in a generation stimulus package, and its the perfect opportunity to invest in and scale the smart urban infrastructure that has been tried and tested thorughout the nation for the past five years.

Much of this testing has been via the opportunity the Federal Government's Smart Cities and Suburbs program afforded. Funded by tax payers, this early phase test has highlighted the opportunity to use technology and data to save money, generate jobs and stimulate innovation.

Smart infrastructure is 'in stock' in Australia, is ready for deployment and is powered by an innovation ecosystem who are creating the future jobs of our nation.

CREATE A DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK

The minimum has now changed. Infrastructure investment now means physical AND digital infrastructure.

SPECIFY COMMON DATA STANDARDS

What?
Create a common data standard and set of metrics to embed in the procurement of infrastructure.

Why?
To measure and refine infrastructure investment performance - boosting system and service impact. This can spur competition and enhancement of service delivery and thus greater productivity and impact.

PROCURE DATA, NOT JUST CONCRETE

What?
Mandate procurement of information, not just physical materials.

Why?
Data is infrastructure. And when information from infrastructure is combined with analytical systems powered by artificial intelligence and machine learning, we can catalyse maintenance and management approaches that can generate significant savings, and jobs.

BENCHMARK PERFORMANCE

What?
Establish a benchmark system for the performance of infrastructure providers.

Why?
By measuring infrastructure investment performance, we create the opportunity to refine our decisions, and increase the return (outcomes) on investment. This is, after all, the purpose of infrastructure and service delivery.

ACTIVATING OUR DIGITAL TWINS

Considered the most functional data platform, the Digital Twin is becoming the next generation vehicle for directing action and investment.

FROM THE GROUND UP, INFRASTRUCTURE PRODUCTIVTY

What?

Help fund the nations Digital Twin gaps (beyond NSW, SEQ and Melbourne), and establish a new infrastructure productivity platform. Use the existing City Deals as a basis for this effort, building twins in those regions.

Why?

By fully funding a series of Digital Twins in our major urban regions, we have the opportunity to gain a global headstart on setting our nation up for investment attraction, and jobs. As world leading infrastructure projects move to an approach of procuring infrastructure, and data, this will stimulate immediate innovation and longer term productivity.

LIGHTHOUSE PROJECTS CREATING JOBS, AND SETTING THE STANDARDS

What?

Announce the Western Sydney Airport, Fishermans Bend urban renewal precinct and Gold Coast Light Rail (Stage 3A) as national Digital Twin Lighthouse Projects. These projects will help establish our national standards, skills development requirements and new procurement methods for data-driven national and state/territory infrastructure projects.

Why?

These projects to proceed with a common approach to enhancing productivity, resilience and community value through next generation information procurement and management methods through our Digital Twins.

INTEGRATED INTELLIGENCE HUBS

Digitally connecting our eyes and ears to better manage what's happening and know what's coming.

PLACE-BASED INTELLIGENCE HUBS INTEGATING DATA WITH ACTION, SHAPING INVESTMENT AND DELIVERING OUTCOMES

What?

Across the nation, construct Integrated Intelligence Hubs to provide a 'heads up' display of the economic, social and environmental performance of our major regions and metropolis'. With real-time data feeding them, the Hub's provide unprecedented city operating and maintenance efficiencies as well as hosting open data sources as an asset for innovators and investors.

Why?

If are learning anything from the COVID-19 pandemic, it was that our data insights on the local economic performance of our communities was patchy, at best. Significant gaps in real-time economic data at a level that truly mattered - at the SME level - were identified all over the nation. Best guesses on stimulus and grant programs became the norm.

Our cities and regions lack comprehensive digital and data infrastructure, and real-time insights, to build true economic resilience.

Where?

Using the existing efforts associated with the City Deals, strategically locate each Centre at the heart of major infrastructure investments:

- Lot 14, Adelaide, SA
- Elizabeth Quay, Perth, WA
- The Western Sydney Aerotropolis, NSW
- The Maroochydore CBD, South East Queensland
- Charles Darwin University City Campus, Darwin, NT
- Geelong, VIC
- Launceston, TAS

DIGITAL BENEFIT DISTRICTS

Placed-based upgrades to major activity centres, equipping them with the best connectivity and sensing capability.

SMART UPGRADES THAT BUILD RESILIENCE, CAPABILITY AND JOBS

What?

We are asking for the funding of upgrades to neighbourhood centres, urban renewal precincts, high streets and other places of community and business vibrancy with a minimum level of digital-enablement and data insight capability.

Why?

Small business were some of the hardest hit with the COVID-19 pandemic. SME's of all types shutting down. Local government not knowing which ones were being impacted, or where they were.

Local businesses scrambling to 'get online' in an effort to build a digital presence and engage with their customers, and the local community. We had some communities with no public wifi. We had SME's with no insights. The data on our neghbourhoods was almost non-existent.

And when the nation moved to work-from-home, with most suburbs and neighbourhoods alive with activity - opportunities were lost through lack of intelligence, and no digital relationship between business, local Council's and the community.

For those cities with an IoT heartbeat, they were able to track activity and respond where it was needed. Those that didnt, were left in the dark. This are not the attributes of a resilient economy, but we have a playbook to rebuild digital.

DIGITAL AND DATA LITERACY

Equipping the engine room of the Australian Economy with the future tools it needs to not only survive, but thrive.

ESSENTIAL UPGRADES TO SMALL BUSINESS, PROVIDING THEM WITH THE MINIMUM SKILLS AND TOOLS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERNET ECONOMY

What?

Delivering digital and data literacy upgrades to small and medium enterprises - positioning them to be resilient, competitive and agile in an uncertain world. It is critical now that government help fund the upgrading of the digital capacity and data literacy of SME's to keep them online and active in the internet economy.

Why?

Small business has been 'gutted'. From a lack of online presence and e-commerce capability, to minimal intelligence on their customer base. And when work from home became the norm, many businesses were left disconnected with few options and a lack of innovation to pivot quick enough.

Building a nation of resilient digitally-enabled and data-driven small and medium enterprises is key to not only keeping the lights on during disruption, but keep existing and growing new job opportunities.

THE NEXT SPEND

Building back digital

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