

# Implications of high speed rail for Canberra and the Capital Region



Fastrack  
Australia

High speed rail will accelerate the growth and development of  
Canberra and the capital region

Planning should start now to facilitate urban and economic  
growth while maintaining the best qualities of the region

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# Maximising the benefits of high speed rail to Canberra

Opening a high speed rail line will stimulate growth and economic development in Canberra and the Capital Region

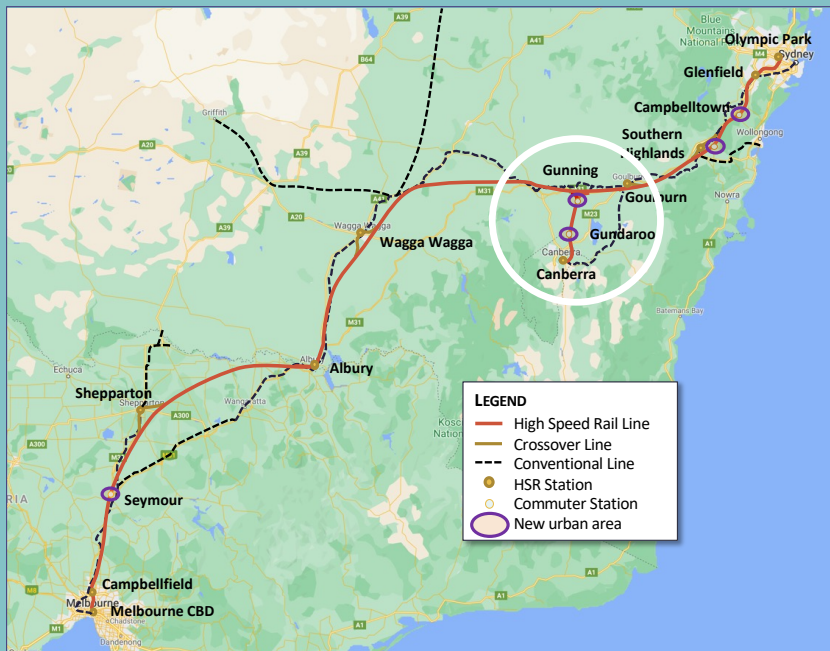
But growth is not guaranteed simply by implementing a high speed line

Three factors will increase success:

1. Proactive leadership by **local stakeholders** to maximise the benefits
2. **Urban development** that enhances the city and caters for population growth
3. **Stimulation of economic sectors** through development near high speed rail stations



## HIGH SPEED RAIL WILL STIMULATE GROWTH IN CANBERRA

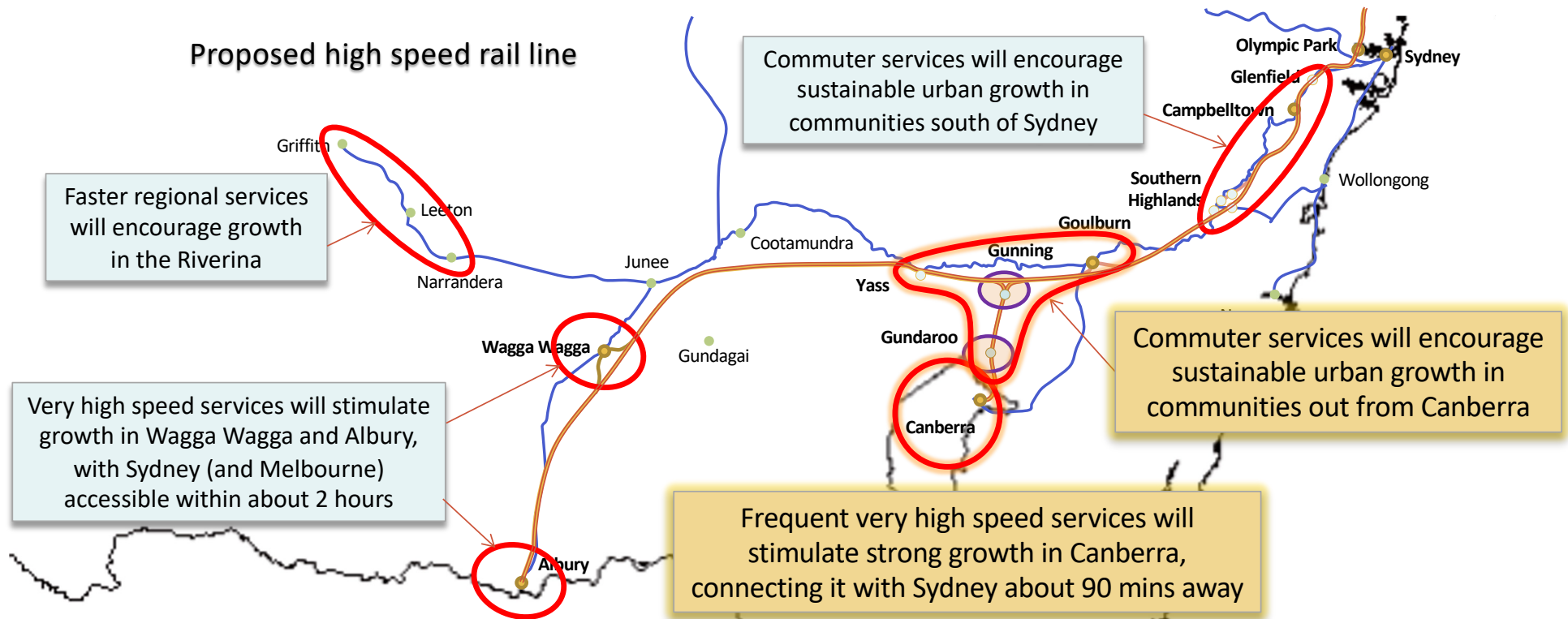


Regional growth will make the Canberra spur a project worth doing in its own right

1. Travel to Canberra will increase
2. Canberra region will grow as a series of connected towns
3. Canberra and the region will be better off

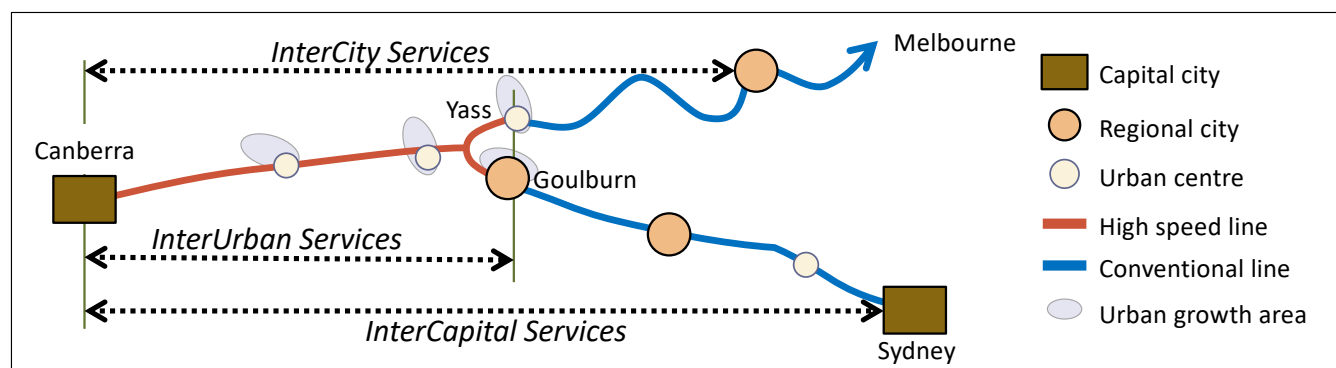
# High speed rail will accelerate growth in regional Australia

NSW regional cities will grow when connected in under 2 hours to Sydney



## The Canberra spur is a viable project in its own right

New commuter services and urban growth in the Canberra corridor make the investment in rail worth doing as a microcosm of regional development



- A spur line of high speed rail incurs the least capital cost to connect Canberra to the main Sydney-Melbourne line
- New InterCity services will generate ridership from Sydney and Melbourne, encouraging growth in Canberra
- New InterUrban services will encourage growth to spread into existing and new urban areas on the line
- Urban growth in regional centres will increase ridership and utilisation of the spur line
- Land value capture at new urban areas will help to defray the capital cost of the spur line
- Eventually new InterCapital services will increase ridership by connecting Sydney-Canberra-Melbourne as an economic region

# Implication #1. Travel to Canberra will increase

High speed rail generates new traffic as well as diverting existing traffic from cars, buses and planes

## InterCity / InterCapital Services

New long-distance trains will provide regular passenger services between Canberra to both Sydney and Melbourne

Rolling Stock	When	Can-Syd Services		Can-Mel Services	
		Daily	Hrs	Daily	Hrs
XPT	Now	6	4.2	0	10.5
InterCity	Canberra spur complete	16	3.0	4	7.0
InterCapital	Full HSR line completed	24	1.5	10	3.0



Talgo 250 Dual has both diesel and electric power, tilting capability and a top speed of 250km/h



Alstom's Avelia high speed trains can operate at speeds ranging between 200km/h and 350km/h

## InterUrban Services

New regional trains will provide frequent commuter services into Canberra

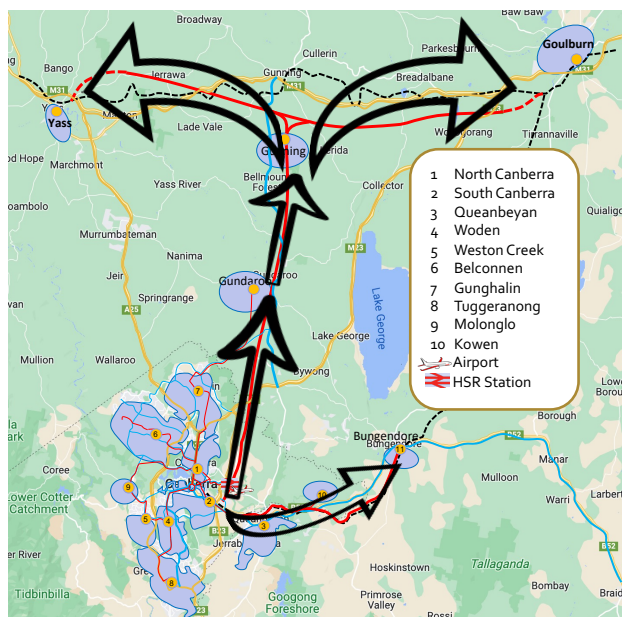
When	Services (Daily)
Now	0
Canberra spur complete	6
Full HSR line completed	20



Alstom Coradia iLint hydrogen powered commuter train carries 150 seated passengers up to 1,000km at up to 140km/h

## Implication #2. Canberra will grow and spread along the corridor

Rail lines attract people to live near stations for better access to jobs in large employment centres along the line



New rail services will expand accessibility to Canberra, encouraging growth in regional centres to the north and east



1 hour commute is considered to be a common job pool (or market)  
The Canberra job market is expected to grow rapidly without high speed rail

Communities on both sides of the border have called for better integrated transport services

- more frequent and direct public transport across the border
- less requirement to change services or transport modes when commuting
- standard fees and charges for public transport
- better services and facilities

Improvements will also support growth in tourism

Source: Draft South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2041

## Implication #3. Canberra and the region will be better off

### Better connectivity and regional development will boost the economy of Canberra and the Capital Region

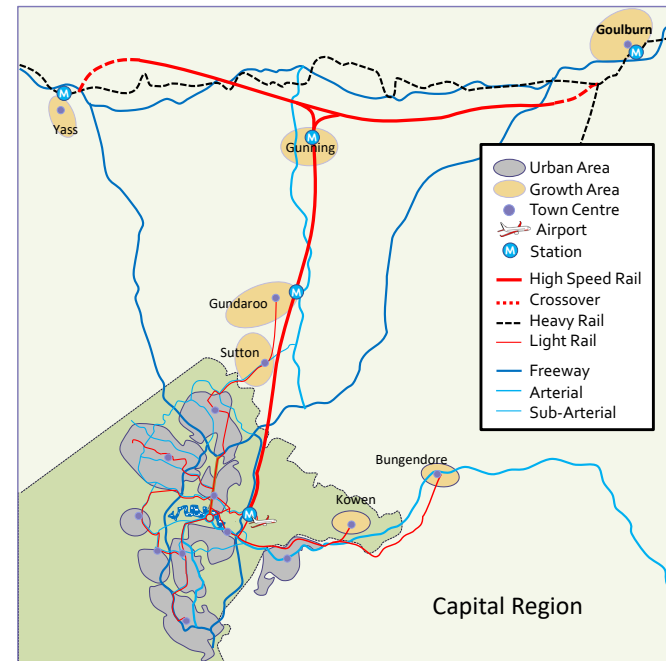
#### Benefits for Canberra and the region:

##### Better connectivity (creates traffic that pays for the line)

- New commuter services to regional urban centres out of Canberra
- New long-distance services to Sydney and Melbourne
- Faster services in the Sydney-Melbourne corridor
- Integration with light rail in Canberra

##### Regional development (stimulates economic growth)

- Station precinct development in Canberra
- Urban growth in Goulburn and Yass
- New urban development north of Canberra
- Catalyst for industry growth in Canberra and the region
- Potential for urban growth at Kowen and Bungendore served by light rail using the existing railway line





## PROACTIVE LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS WILL MAXIMISE THE BENEFITS



Regional cities are activated by the opening of high speed rail lines

An active network of local stakeholders will maximise the benefits

Local stakeholders must be proactive to get the best outcomes

A tri-partite government accord is the best guarantee for success

## Regional cities are activated by high speed rail

Opening the high speed rail will further activate Canberra by increasing travel, stimulating urban development and encouraging economic development

Opening the line will:

- Increase travel to Canberra
- Stimulate urban development around the station
- Catalyse the economic development of the city

### Observed impact of new high speed rail lines on mid-sized European regional cities



Increases travel for work, leisure, education or personal, with a transfer from cars and planes to trains



Encourages urban regeneration and development, especially near the HSR station



A catalyst for investment in financial services sector, shopping and leisure, research and technology parks, tourism and culture, and logistics

# Active local stakeholders are needed to maximise the benefits

The best outcomes are achieved when a wide network of local stakeholders is involved in the strategic and urban planning of new development



## Establish community buy-in

- May be a formal or informal group
- Must be lead by the local authority which must provide vision and leadership with regard to the city's transformation
- Supported by chambers of commerce, local universities and the regional administration (where it exists)
- Other participants include private companies, employers' associations, other municipal councils, and citizens' associations



## Leverage local expertise and experience

- Stimulate economic sectors with the chambers of commerce
- Establish new technology complexes with universities
- Address liveability and quality of life with citizen groups
- Promote cultural activities with community associations

# Local stakeholders must be proactive to get the best outcomes

Local stakeholders must navigate the relationships between the levels of government to minimise conflict and produce the best outcomes



**Mutual understanding and agreement** between local, state and national stakeholders is needed to achieve the best options for local development

**Local stakeholders must organise themselves** and create joint strategies to leverage the opportunities offered by the new high speed line

If not, it is going to be very difficult for the hoped-for effects to take place

## Fulfilling the differing priorities of national, state and local governments



### Australian Government

- Connecting state capitals
- National economic prosperity
- Primary funder for infrastructure and development



### NSW Government

- Connecting regional cities
- Relief for Sydney
- Development of regions
- Major funder for development

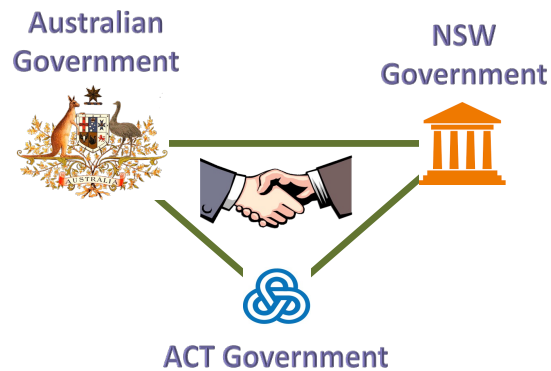


### ACT Government

- Connecting town centres
- Local economic growth
- Protection of existing amenity
- Funder of local infrastructure

# A tri-partite government accord is the best guarantee for success

The ACT, NSW and Federal Governments must agree on what investment is made and how it is delivered to achieve the best outcomes



**CITY ACCORD**  
Strategy & Master Plans  
Transport Investment  
Economic Incentives  
Urban Development  
Infrastructure  
Community Initiatives  
Funding & Finance



Investment in high speed rail is a political undertaking

- Each level of government must deliver the best outcomes for its constituents
- Federal and state governments must balance the expectations of the broader state and national community

An accord across all governments establishes agreement:

- Infrastructure, development and other initiatives to be delivered
- Responsibilities and funding arrangements for each investment
- Coordination of activities across all three governments

## PLANNING TO ENHANCE THE CITY AND MANAGE GROWTH



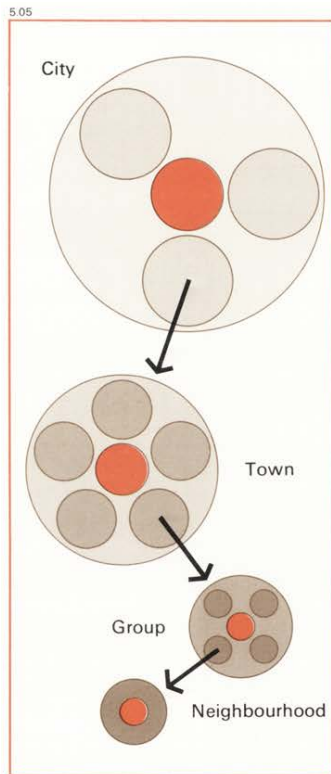
Canberra's design has evolved over 50 years using best practice principles for urban planning

Increased growth will stress the current plan that concentrates growth in the city

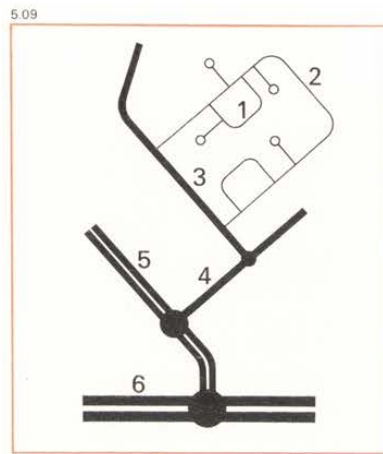
The light rail network will be the lifeblood that determines where growth occurs

That growth will need to be managed seamlessly across the territory border

# Canberra sets an example for the urban design of regional cities



As Australia's capital city, Canberra has been designed based on best practice urban planning



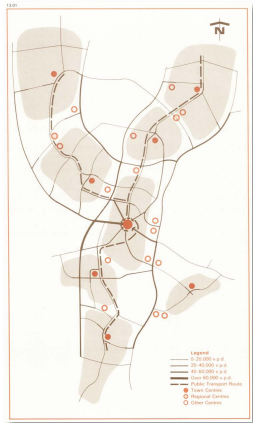
Source: The Griffin Legacy

Canberra is designed on a hierarchy of centres and connecting roads

## Key features that define Canberra

- Suburbs that coexist with nature, sitting in the natural beauty of the area
- Dispersed employment centres with offices, services, retail and education facilities
- More intense development in town centres and along public transport routes
- 20-minute neighbourhoods with walkable access to schools, shops and local amenities
- Peripheral freeways with a hierarchy of access roads
- A nascent public transport network connecting town centres to the city (as originally planned)

# Canberra's design has evolved over 50 years



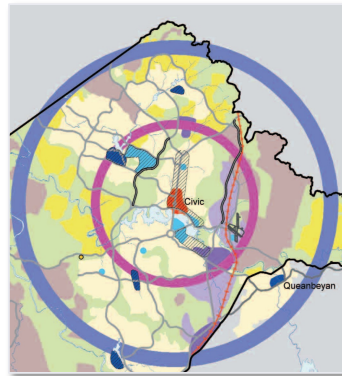
## 1969 Y Plan

Growth was planned in a series of satellite communities linked by roads



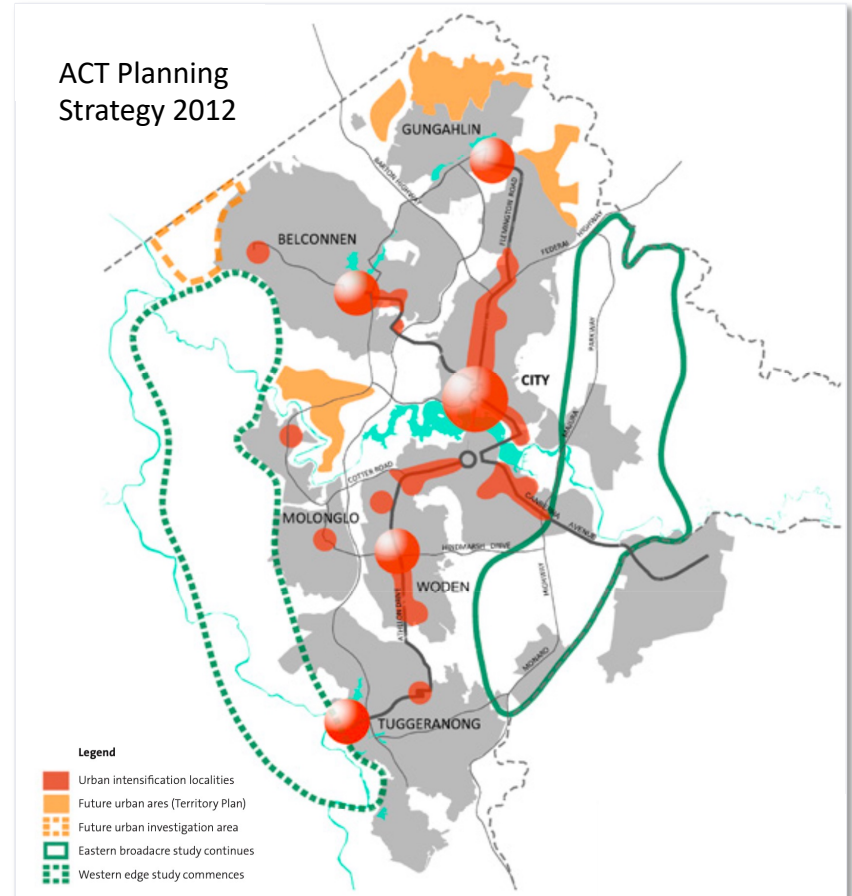
## 2004 Canberra Spatial Plan

Growth was refocused towards a more compact city



## The 2012 ACT Planning Strategy

Growth was targeted equally in existing suburbs and new greenfield estates



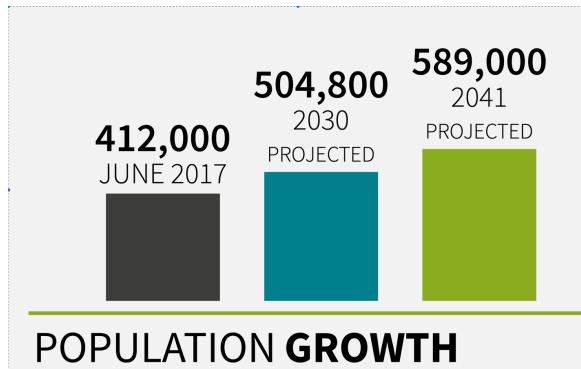
Source: Creating Sustainable Developments for Canberra, Land Development Agency 2012



# High speed rail will stimulate faster growth

Better connectivity will attract even more people to live in Canberra and the Capital Region

## Canberra is already thriving



On current predictions, about 100,000 new homes will be required in 2041

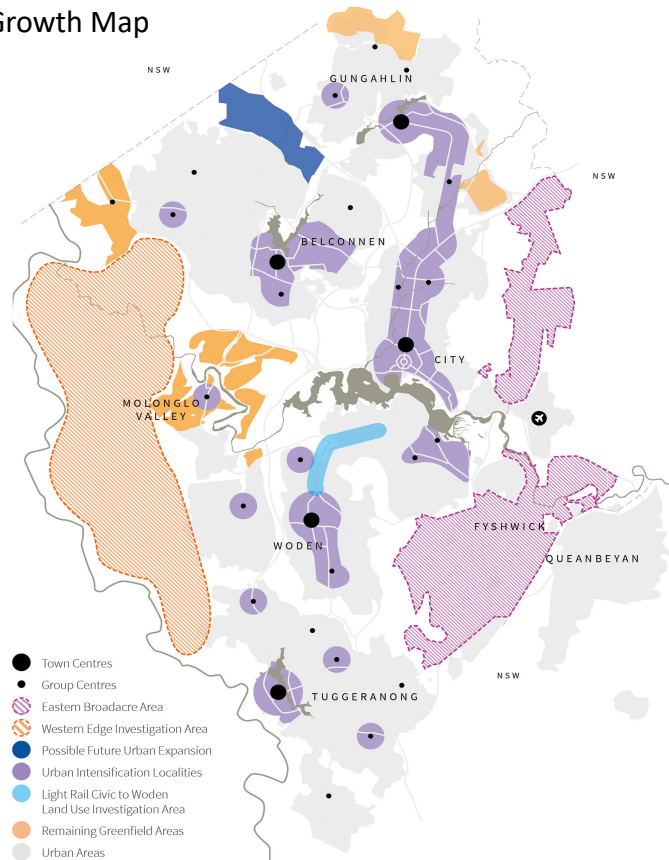
Source: ACT Planning Strategy 2018

Increasing the growth rate of Canberra will create more demand for:

- Apartments in well-connected central areas
- Homes in the inner suburban areas
- Affordable housing in new suburban areas
- Office space in well-connected centres
- Regional living and commuting

# Increased growth will stress the current plan

Growth Map



Source: ACT Planning Strategy 2018

## The 2018 ACT Planning Strategy concentrates most growth within the existing urban footprint

- Most growth is catered for through increased density
- New urban areas will be explored for future needs
- Key features that people value will be retained, including the bush setting and access to green space

### INDICATIVE BREAKDOWN OF HOUSING SUPPLY 2018-2041

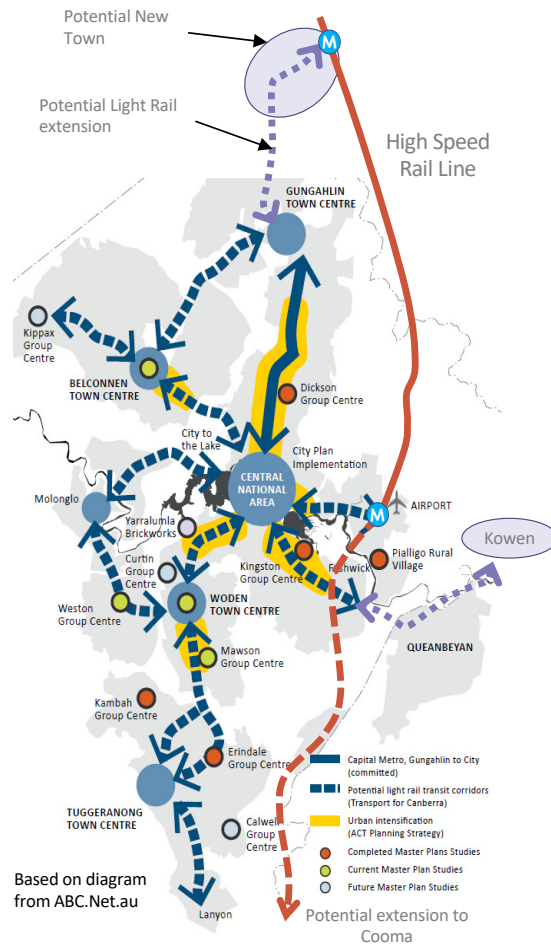


### Development will be concentrated

- ✓ Close to the city centre
- ✓ Around town and group centres
- ✓ Along key transit routes

# The light rail network will determine where growth occurs

## The light rail network will become the lifeblood allowing the expansion of Canberra



Light rail is essential for the functioning of the city's economy

- Allows workers to get to jobs in major employment centres

Local services are critical for liveability and social connection

- Extends '20-minute' neighbourhoods by providing greater access to shopping and businesses in local centres
- Increases social connectivity, especially when networks are inter-connected

Its expansion will open more options for urban growth

- Integration of new northern urban areas into the fabric of Canberra
- Repurposing the old railway line will allow growth through to Bungendore

# Growth needs to be managed seamlessly across the territory border

The ACT, NSW and Federal Governments need to agree how growth and development is managed in the capital region

New rail lines will create a new urban spatial layout which crosses the territory border

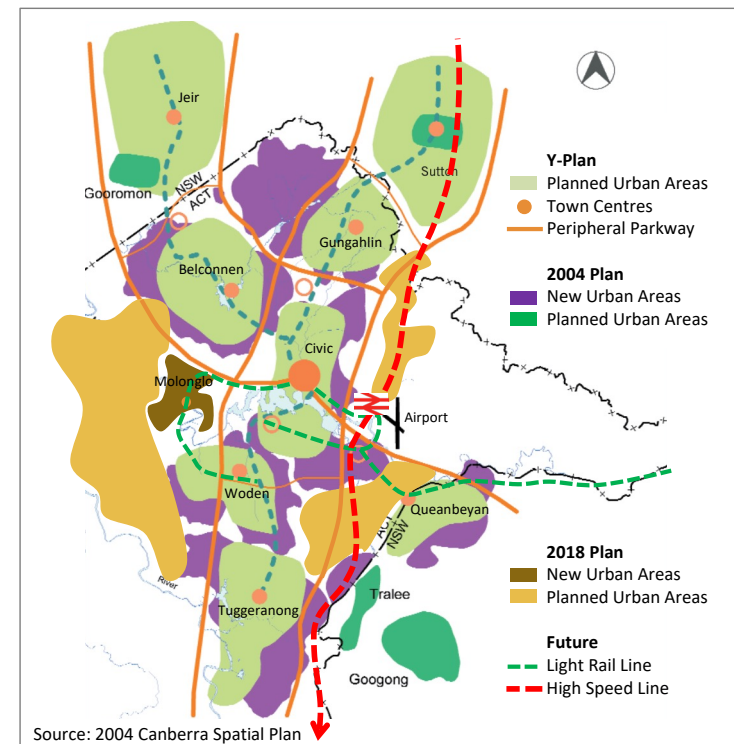
- Adopting a linear connection of 'towns' along public transport routes, similar to the 1970 Y Plan

It needs to be joint planned by both the ACT and NSW governments

- The ACT and NSW Memorandum of Understanding for Regional Collaboration (MoU) is a starting point

It must align with Federal Government investment

- Investment in the high speed line must be coordinated with associated urban and economic development across all three governments



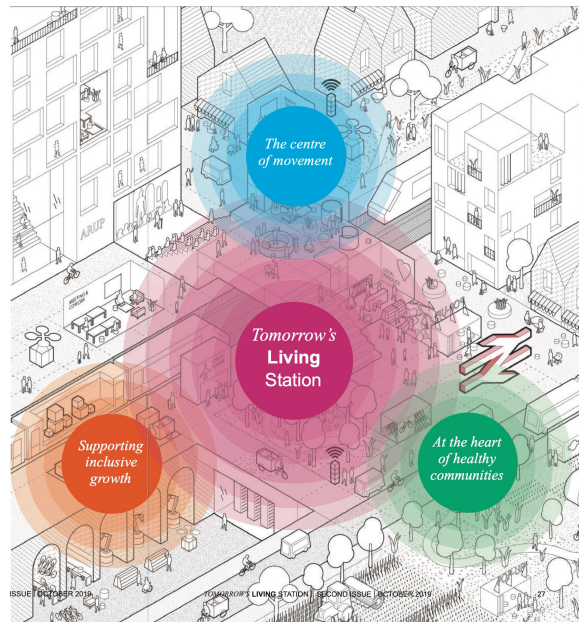
Source: 2004 Canberra Spatial Plan

Mash-up of 1970, 2004, 2018 and future spatial plans



# Urban development of the station and business precinct

Most cities use high speed rail to develop a business precinct at a new station or regenerate the precinct around its central station



## Canberra should invest in a modern multi-function station

- An architectural statement
- An open and beautiful public space
- Integration of transport modes with easy interchanges
- A meeting place with flexible workspaces
- Retail, commercial and entertainment spaces

## Canberra should establish a new business precinct

- The station will create a new economic centre for Canberra
- It should be used to attract businesses in target economic sectors e.g. high technology, defence, rail, national infrastructure
- It should support a mix of uses including higher density residential development to activate the precinct as a new 'town centre'

# Catalyst to stimulate increased activity in key economic sectors

Trade fair and conference activities, research and development, specialist education, various commercial sectors, tourism and leisure, and logistics are best for activation



## Target development to stimulate activity in each sector

Examples of development proposed to occur along with the implementation of high speed rail in European medium-sized regional cities\*

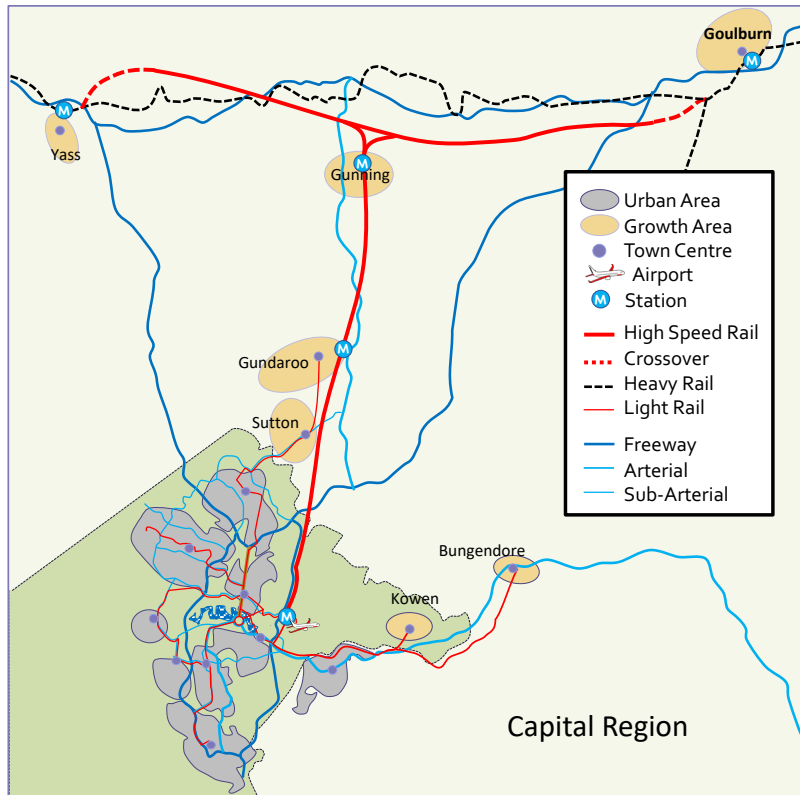
Lleida (Spain)	Avignon (France)	Novara (Italy)
<p>Congress-fair (new conference hall, directional functions, offices)</p> <p>Research (new technology park in agroindustry)</p> <p>Commercial (new pedestrian area, commercial centre)</p> <p>Urban regeneration (accessibility for cutoff areas, train barrier elimination)</p> <p>Transport (integration of nearby bus station)</p> <p>Tourism (new promotion of ski resorts)</p>	<p>Research education (new city of education, improvement of technology park in agroindustry)</p> <p>Logistics (renewed logistics area, new office development)</p> <p>Tourism (new hotels, greater tourism range, new river tourism)</p> <p>Transport (new urban highway)</p>	<p>Chemical (new technology park for chemical companies)</p> <p>Logistics (enlarged intermodal rail centre, offices)</p> <p>Urban regeneration (railyards converted to residential area, train barrier elimination)</p> <p>Tourism (recuperation/promotion of cultural heritage)</p> <p>Transport (new station in nearby urban centre)</p>

NOTE: Each city had a population between 100 to 150 thousand at the time of the implementation of high speed rail

\*Source: Jaume Feliu, High-Speed Rail in European Medium-Sized Cities: Stakeholders and Urban Development, JOURNAL OF URBAN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, DECEMBER 2012



## Set an example for other regional cities to follow



New rail infrastructure and urban growth opportunities in the capital region

Getting it right in the Capital Region will set an example for other regions to follow

The Capital Region contains all elements of regional growth associated with new high speed rail services:

- Regional cities and new urban areas that will grow as a result of better connectivity
- New and upgraded stations that will act as a catalyst for precinct and economic development
- New feeder networks that will spread urban growth into connected centres in the region

## SUMMARY



High speed rail will stimulate growth and economic development in Canberra if:

1. Local stakeholders take proactive leadership to maximise the benefits
2. Urban development is planned to enhance the city and cater for population growth
3. Growth in economic sectors is stimulated through development near stations

## RECOMMENDATIONS



Form an action group to lobby for high speed rail to Canberra

Develop a strategic plan for the capital region

- How high speed rail should be implemented
- How population growth should be managed
- How the regional economy should be stimulated

Lobby the Federal Government to fund high speed rail to Canberra