

# We truly have a lot to look forward to

**Bernadette  
UZELAC**



BY 2050, Geelong will be a city with a population of around 500,000. It will be renowned internationally as a vibrant and attractive Australian city, boasting a diverse and prosperous business community.

Geelong's reputation has been built over the past century as the epicentre for manufacturing in Victoria thanks to globally renowned companies such as Ford, Alcoa, Shell and International Harvester.

We are still a manufacturing city — but as the 21st century progresses we'll become renowned for "making" new things. This is helping position Geelong as one of Australia's leading cities at the forefront of innovation and creativity.

We're already a hub for health with three major hospitals. The potential to expand Geelong as the biggest player in the health industry is untapped.

Deakin University and The Gordon will play vital roles in ensuring Geelong's education sector becomes the No.1 choice for students wishing to finish secondary school or seeking to further their studies and expand their career opportunities within the new and emerging economy of the future.

As Geelong continues to evolve into a creative hub, Deakin's role as a research and development centre will be vital in luring new entrepreneurs and investors to the city.

Creative industries currently generate around 8000 jobs in the Geelong region and this sector will undoubtedly grow from strength to strength in the future as technology evolves.

Creative Geelong has been very proactive in tapping into this market at the ground floor as it envisages how these new industries — which are blurring the lines between science, technology and art — will become

major drivers of the economy over the next three decades.

According to a 2013 McKinsey and Company report, by 2030 60 per cent of the world's population will be living in cities.

With an airport on our doorstep at Avalon — that will be an international terminal by 2050, flying to key economies in Asia, North America and Europe — major highways flowing into our city and a dedicated train service into Victoria's capital, Geelong will become an attractive relocation destination for many major organisations.

The Transport Accident Commission, National Disability Insurance Agency, Viva Energy and Epworth Hospital have all identified the potential this region has for growth. You don't need to be based in Melbourne, Sydney, San Francisco, Hong Kong or Beijing to be a successful player on the world stage.

Fostering a climate of economic growth and prosperity also addresses many of the major issues facing our region such as entrenched

disadvantage, intergenerational unemployment, low educational attainment levels and protection of our unique natural environment.

A climate of entrepreneurialism underpins opportunity and provides the base from which to build a fairer and more equitable society that encourages creativity, builds wealth, provides jobs and recognises our city's comparative and competitive advantages.

The Geelong Chamber of Commerce is one of this city's oldest organisations and we're proud of our role in advocating on behalf of the city's business community for more than 160 years.

We've been able to accomplish a lot — but there's a lot more we can all achieve by working together.

**This column is part of a weekly Geelong Advertiser series produced as part of the Our Future project to develop a long-term community vision for Geelong.**

**Bernadette Uzelac is chief executive officer of the Geelong Chamber of Commerce. Follow the Chamber on Twitter @GeelongChamber**

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