



# **Think in Decades**

## **ACT Election 2016**

## 1.0 Who we are

We are Consult Australia and we help consulting firms shape a better world.

Every major built environment project in the ACT and the surrounding region will have involved Consult Australia members: from the dams that provide us power, to the pipes that provide us water, the roads and bridges and airports that connect us, the galleries and precincts that inspire.

Our members range from some of the world's largest companies combining local and federal work, to independent sole traders using their skills to make their area a better place.

## 2.0 What drives us?

- We believe in investment in infrastructure proven to help economies grow.
- We believe in working with government and communities because we share the same aim: to make places better.
- We believe young professionals are both future and present leaders, with an important role to play today, and that a diverse workforce is a better workforce.
- We believe in long-term because great cities require decades of foresight.
- We believe in great design, in the importance of differentiation, and sense of place.
- We choose the sustainable over the quick fix, quality over quantity, innovation over the easy option. We believe in progress.

## 3.0 Some of our work

- [Economic Benefits of Better Procurement Practices - A definitive guide to improving procurement on public infrastructure projects](#)
- [Better Buying Better Outcomes – The consulting industry's view of procurement](#)
- [Value Capture Roadmap – The role of value capture in funding public infrastructure](#)
- [Valuing Better Engagement – A framework to help project managers improve stakeholder engagement](#)

## 4.0 Our election priorities

National trading conditions for consulting firms in the built environment remain challenging as the adjustment from post-mining-investment-boom continues. Engineering construction is set to bottom out with modest growth in the non-residential construction sector in the next three to four years.

Where there is significant growth (NSW and Victoria) there is certainty through long-term infrastructure plans. Industry forecasts show modest growth in fee income over the next 3-5 years in Canberra. It is difficult to predict beyond this, which in turn makes it difficult for industry to invest locally.

Consult Australia believes that its members, with their skills in planning, designing and managing built environment projects can be both a strong contributor to the ACT and surrounding region and a source of much sought after export income.

To capture this opportunity, we recommend...

<b>1</b>	<b>Think in decades</b> Develop a 30-year infrastructure plan
<b>2</b>	<b>Respect contracts</b> Maintain all contracts signed between government & industry
<b>3</b>	<b>Redefine relationships</b> Develop new ways for industry, citizen and government to collaborate.
<b>4</b>	<b>Capital of SMART</b> Lead the development, implementation, and governance of smart city technology & related innovation.
<b>5</b>	<b>More for Less</b> Develop a positive, professional procurement culture based on open relationships, quality and value for taxpayers.

## 4.1 Election Priorities in detail

### **PRIORITY ONE: Think in decades**

*Develop a 30-year plan of necessary infrastructure to sustain a population expected to double by 2060. Seek to implement a constant pipeline of projects so as to enable consulting firms to invest locally in the development of their workforce.*

- Critical infrastructure to sustain a population expected to double by 2060 is not subject to funding or political preference - need remains regardless of what is in the purse and who holds the strings.
- A thirty-year evidence-based plan setting out infrastructure needs to accommodate population growth in Canberra and the surrounding region is critical for the following reasons:
  - **COST** - It saves tax-payer money by avoiding costly retrofitting of infrastructure.
  - **INVESTMENT & SKILLS** - Long term planning builds industry and investor confidence in a city's management of its assets. Compelling narratives about a city's long term prospects both enhance its attractiveness to businesses and workers but also enable long-term investment by firms in the development of a local skilled workforce to help mitigate against the 'pull' effect from NSW / VIC due to shortages of quality in civil / structural / transport engineers.
  - **VISION** - A long-term infrastructure plan would add further clarity to the long-term vision for Canberra and reinforce identity.
  - **INNOVATION** - More opportunity to innovate with different finance models like value capture.
  - **COLLABORATION** - Opportunity to get agreement and build coalitions across state and territory boundaries and across political parties on longer term infrastructure needs.
  - **RESILIENCE** - Builds resilience through early identification of risk and builds relationships that enhance cities' capacities to cope with change and disruption.

## **PRIORITY TWO: Respect Contracts**

*Maintain all contracts signed between government and industry.*

- Breaking contracts between government and industry decimates industry confidence; debilitates long-term planning; raises issues surrounding sovereign risk; and, costs the taxpayer. Consult Australia, does not endorse the policy of tearing up contracts.
- Consult Australia recommend better bi-partisan long-term planning or an independent local 'Infrastructure Australia' authority.

## **PRIORITY THREE: Redefine relationships**

*Develop new engagement guidelines on industry, citizen and government engagement.*

- Governments around the world are changing how they work with industry and citizens. Top down, hierarchical, government-to-industry communication is being replaced by ways in which industry and government can solve challenges and identify opportunities together.
- Consult Australia recommends the ACT Government work with industry to develop new engagement methods to ensure industry are consulted earlier in the decision-making process; develop a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead; and to utilise local skills of some of the Australia's leading thinkers on urban issues.
- Consider a new public and private sector place-focussed group.

#### **PRIORITY FOUR: Capital of SMART**

*Use relative small size / population to become leader in the development, implementation, and governance of smart city technology and related innovation.*

- Publicise existing and release more quality open data and use as a tool of engagement.
- Be clear on the rationale for smart city technology – address existing or predicted need.
- Get the governance models right – continue regulation leadership.
- Make ‘Smart’ part of broader city vision.
- Strengthen links to other cities worldwide.

#### **PRIORITY FIVE: More For Less**

Government should seek to be the ‘model’ client, seeking to develop a positive professional procurement culture based on relationships, quality and value for taxpayers.

- Government must invest in the skills of its procurement professionals and ensure the right mix of skills exists on procurement teams.
- Early engagement and collaboration with industry, so that government can understand what’s possible, and where risks lie. This includes developing better briefs and reallocating resources to the front end of a project.
- Government agencies should be prepared to explain why they are following a particular procurement practice. This allows for service providers to better understand the needs of their client, and increases empathy. It also forces clients to examine whether a particular practice is really necessary, given that it may cost them more.
- Develop and apply limited liability guidelines to provide industry with certainty.
- The government must develop an agreed suite of contracts with industry and remove onerous contract clauses.



Consult Australia represent some 48 000 consulting companies nationwide that generate \$40 billion in revenue and range from some of the world's largest and most innovative companies with global expertise, to smaller firms passionate about improving the area in which they operate. Consult Australia represent engineers, architects, surveyors, management consultants and more, but beyond professions, we represent ideas and new ways of working.

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