



Cabinet

CAB Min (10) 11/7

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34

Minute of Decision

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Report of the Cabinet Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee: Period Ended 26 March 2010

On 29 March 2010, Cabinet made the following decisions on the work of the Cabinet Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee for the period ended 26 March 2010.

EGI Min (10) 5/1	Increasing Tourism's Performance Through Marketing Portfolio: Tourism	CONFIRMED
EGI Min (10) 5/2	Medium-Term Economic Agenda: Progress Report Portfolio: Finance	CONFIRMED
EGI Min (10) 5/3	Attracting International Conventions and Exhibitions to New Zealand Portfolio: Economic Development	CONFIRMED
EGI Min (10) 5/4	Disestablishment of the Board of Inquiry Appointed to Consider a Proposed National Policy Statement on Flood Risk Management Portfolio: Environment	CONFIRMED
EGI Min (10) 5/5	Resource Management Act 1991: Proposed Discount Regulations Portfolio: Environment	CONFIRMED
EGI Min (10) 5/6	Local Government and Treaty Settlements Portfolios: Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations / Local Government	CONFIRMED [Deferred until 31 March 2010]
EGI Min (10) 5/7	Joint Border Management System: Consultation on Cost Recovery Portfolios: Biosecurity / Customs	CONFIRMED

EGI Min (10) 5/8 Interoperability of Proposed Border Management
Computer Systems: Overview
Portfolios: Immigration / Customs

CONFIRMED

EGI Min (10) 5/9 A Repair Scheme for Leaky Homes
Portfolio: Building and Construction

Separate minute: see
CAB Min (10) 11/13

Rebecca Kitteridge
Secretary of the Cabinet

Reference: CAB (10) 124

Distribution:

Cabinet Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee

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Director PAG, DPMC

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Secretary, EGI





Cabinet Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee

EGI Min (10) 5/3

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Minute of Decision

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Attracting International Conventions and Exhibitions to New Zealand

Portfolio: Economic Development

On 24 March 2010, the Cabinet Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee (EGI):

- 1 noted that on 17 December 2009, in the context of the government's Medium-Term Economic Growth Agenda, Cabinet agreed in principle to an overall cross-cutting and sectoral action plan, and noted that work had commenced on progressing the case for an international convention centre and possible expansion of other centres, and the elements of business events strategy [CAB Min (09) 45/8];
- 2 noted that, to date, work on the New Zealand international convention centre project has been focused chiefly on infrastructure, and is following a track that contemplates a new international convention and exhibition centre being built in Auckland;
- 3 agreed that to fulfil the government's objectives for attracting more, and more targeted, conventions to New Zealand, a well co-ordinated and nationwide approach to attracting and holding business events needs to be taken;
- 4 noted that New Zealand lacks an international-standard convention centre (ie that will allow for conventions of up to 5,000 persons), and that such a centre needs to be built and become a key part of an enhanced New Zealand network of convention centres;
- 5 agreed that the Crown should reserve to itself, through trademarking, the rights to use the term 'New Zealand Convention and Exhibition Centre' (and related terms);
- 6 directed the Ministry of Economic Development to develop, by 31 March 2010, a request for high-level expressions of interest that could be publicised and sent to relevant territorial authorities and private sector organisations, seeking creative and innovative ideas about the construction and funding of an international-standard convention centre, and the development of an enhanced national network of convention centres (of which a new large international-standard convention centre would be a part);
- 7 agreed that the Minister for Economic Development commence a series of meetings with key convention centre owners and managers, to set expectations for the expressions of interest exercise, and to promote a public-private sector partnership approach to enhancing the promotion of New Zealand's potential as a business events/conferences destination;

- 8 agreed that the current arrangement with the Auckland City Council to fund business and establishment plans for a national convention centre in central Auckland be revoked;
- 9 confirmed the decision referred to in paragraph 1 above that the Ministry of Economic Development progress the case for an international convention centre and possible expansion of other centres, and the elements of a business events strategy;
- 10 directed the Ministry of Economic Development to report back to EGI on this work, by 30 June 2010.

Janine Harvey

Janine Harvey
Committee Secretary

Reference: EGI (10) 49

Present:

Hon Bill English (Chair)
Hon Gerry Brownlee
Hon Simon Power
Hon Dr Nick Smith
Hon Anne Tolley
Hon Steven Joyce
Hon Kate Wilkinson
Hon Maurice Williamson
Hon Nathan Guy
Hon Peter Dunne

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Officials Committee for EGI

Distribution:

Cabinet Economic Growth and Infrastructure Committee
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Chief Executive, MED
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Paul Stocks, MAF
Associate Minister of Tourism
Minister of Local Government
Secretary for Internal Affairs (Local Government)
Chief Executive, Te Puni Kōkiri



OFFICE OF THE MINISTER
FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Chair
CABINET ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

ATTRACTING INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND EXHIBITIONS TO NEW ZEALAND

PROPOSAL

- 1 This paper proposes ways in which, in partnership with the private sector, the Government can enhance New Zealand's reputation as a destination for business events, conventions/conferences and business exhibitions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 Creating the capacity to host large scale business events and conferences has the potential to deliver considerable economic benefits to New Zealand.
- 3 Through its leadership, the government can ensure that New Zealand not only emerges from this process with an international-standard facility but also with a much strengthened network of conventions centres across the whole country.
- 4 Three initiatives are proposed: reserving for the Crown the rights to use the name 'New Zealand Convention and Exhibition Centre' and associated terms in order to enable that intellectual property to be shared; actively seeking creative and innovative ideas about how the New Zealand convention centres network might be enhanced and a international-standard convention centre built and funded; and, developing a New Zealand business events strategy in partnership with private sector stakeholders.

BACKGROUND

- 5 A joint group of MED, Ministry of Tourism and Auckland City Council officials have been looking at the feasibility of building a new, large (27,000m²; up to 5000 seating capacity, and with significant breakout facilities) international-standard convention centre in Auckland. To date the work on the project has been focussed chiefly on infrastructure and is following a track that would see a new international-standard convention and exhibition centre built in Auckland
- 6 Work on a proposal is proceeding, with a proposition likely to be presented to the government around the end of March.
- 7 In my view that process needs to be broadened. We need to see what other possibilities there might be. We need to decide how best to promote New Zealand as a business events/conference destination – selling the advantages of not only building of a new, international-standard convention and exhibition

centre but also of enhancing the way we tell the world about all the business events centres and venues available throughout New Zealand.

COMMENT

Benefits of an international-standard Convention and Exhibition Centre

- 8 The International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA) estimates that there are approximately 15,000 non-governmental international association conferences organised in the world on a regular basis, with 7,475 held in 2008. This includes only meetings attended by at least 50 participants, which are organised on a regular basis and move between at least three different countries. Conferences typically include an associated exhibition or trade show.
- 9 New Zealand hosted only 38 such events in 2008. This is, in part, due to the fact that we do not have the facilities to attract conferences in the strongest growing international market segment, i.e. meetings of 1000-1999 delegates¹. It is also due to the fact that we do not promote New Zealand well enough as a business events destination.
- 10 The immediate benefits of having an international-standard convention and exhibition centre will be the additional expenditure by conference delegates, and their accompanying persons, at and around the events. In addition New Zealand will benefit from pre- and post-event expenditure in the city where the event is held, and nationally. This is estimated to be around 38% of total spend by conference visitors during their stay.
- 11 Thus, for example, in Australia 46% of international delegates toured in other parts of the country and 28% brought an accompanying person. According to the Conference Assistance Programme Annual Report 2008, conference delegates spend up to five times more than the average visitor. These additions contribute to employment growth and to increasing GST and other taxation.
- 12 Convention and exhibition centres also create jobs during their construction and, subsequently, through the management and supplying of the centre
- 13 Other non-quantifiable, spill-over benefits include:
 - Contribution to the promotion and delivery of the government's wider economic, social, cultural and environmental agenda (in New Zealand's case, contributing to the "maximising the economic contribution tourism can make to the New Zealand economy" objective of the Economic Growth Agenda)

¹ This was highlighted by the 2006 International Bar Association Conference in Auckland, one of the largest conferences ever held in New Zealand. The conference was generally regarded as a success, but the event faced logistical issues because of the need to use multiple venues. The organising committee has since rewritten the event guidelines to preclude the conference being held in another venue where multiple buildings are required.

- Increased visitor numbers (possibly during shoulder periods) and decisions by delegates to return on private visits in order to see more of New Zealand
- Being able to attract larger events (if a international-standard convention facility is available) can also raise awareness and use of existing and smaller convention centres when event organisers see that New Zealand has a wide range of good quality convention facilities available, as well as being an attractive destination.
- Increased knowledge transfer (enabling face-to-face contacts with world experts which is the most effective medium for exchange of innovative ideas and new knowledge)
- Increased inwards business investment (from opportunities seen while visiting New Zealand)
- Increased international trade (through enabling and fostering links with visiting overseas customers and using events to showcase products and services)
- Contribution to the reputation of the country (i.e. New Zealand's growing reputation as a safe and efficient place to stage events).

Maximising those Benefits in New Zealand.

- 14 Although large convention centres can be operated at a profit, international studies show that they rarely produce sufficient returns on the cost of the capital needed for their construction. Moreover their owners are often unable to capture adequate returns from any significant investments in marketing the centres due to the ability of non-contributors to 'free-ride' on that investment (especially as business event marketing tends to require larger investment and a more sophisticated approach than general destination marketing).
- 15 This market failure means that, left to the industry alone, the level of investment in marketing and promotion of a centre or of an enhanced network of New Zealand convention centres is unlikely to be sufficient to generate the maximum gains. This is the reason why government leadership, in partnership with the private sector, will be critical to the success of an international-standard convention centre and to engendering a collaborative spirit across the national network of convention centres. The government's role is to develop a message that encourages all players to understand that they can benefit from contributing to a significant campaign to promote New Zealand as a business events destination and that they should consider taking a share in funding it.
- 16 The benefit of greater collaboration between conferences centres is that business events owners can be directed to smaller centres if their facilities will best fit the needs of the event (or the needs of one of the satellite meetings that are often linked to such events). In that way New Zealand can be sure that it does not miss out on opportunities to attract business events, with their

associated high value attendees and their opportunities to foster international investment linkages, just because the first venue of choice was not available.

- 17 The market failure argument can be applied to justify also government funding of research around the market for business events (in some other countries large convention centres have their own research capability), funding bids to attract events, and supporting subventions (support packages to encourage organisers to select a particular conference destination).
- 18 Finally, the government needs to take a leadership role because many of the key factors that support a successful national convention centre and national business events strategy (e.g. international air connections, good transportation to sites, fast broadband, and suitable accommodation) touch matters that are core business for central and local government. Moreover central government is well-positioned either to lead or to play a significant facilitative role in the development of a national approach to attracting business events and business tourism more generally, because it can be seen as able to transcend regional interests.

Three-Pronged Approach for Government Leadership

- 19 Therefore I propose a three-pronged approach by the government.

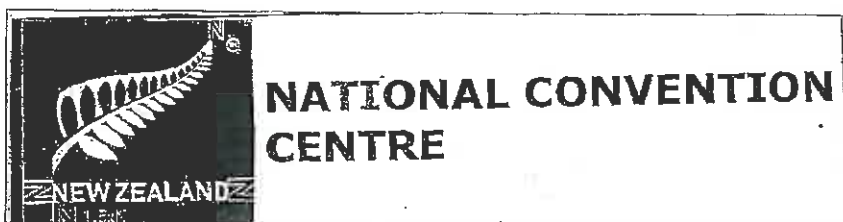
- (1) Reserve Naming Rights to the Crown

- 20 First we should reserve to the Crown, through trademarking, the use of the terminology listed below. This is so the benefits of the ownership of this intellectual property can be more widely distributed amongst large and smaller players in the events sector. Amongst the terms I propose we should consider reserving are:

- New Zealand Convention and Exhibition Centre
- New Zealand Convention Centres
- New Zealand-Aotearoa Convention and Exhibition Centre
- New Zealand National Convention Centre
- New Zealand-Aotearoa National Convention Centre
- National Convention Centre of New Zealand
- National Convention Centre of New Zealand-Aotearoa
- New Zealand Convention Centres Network
- New Zealand-Aotearoa Convention Centres Network

and/or similar terms, as appropriate.

- 21 Because the first seven titles on this list are essentially descriptors, they cannot be trademarked on their own (indeed the Intellectual Property Office has just rejected an application from the Auckland Aotea Centre Board to trademark "New Zealand Convention Centre"). However if the words are used in conjunction with a logo the words and the logo can be trademarked. For example we could combine it with the New Zealand Way fern as below:



And, provided that NZ Way Ltd agree, that could form our trademark.

- 22 Similarly we should reserve the following internet domain names – all with .govt, .org., .co and .com extensions:

- NewZealandConventionCentre
- NewZealandConventionCentres
- New ZealandAotearoaConventionCentre
- New ZealandNationalConventionCentre
- New ZealandAotearoanationalConventionCentre
- NationalConventionCentreofNewZealand
- NationalConventionCentreofNewZealandAotearoa
- NewZealandConventionCentresNetwork
- NewZealandAotearoaConventionCentresNetwork
- ConventionsCentresofNewZealand

- 23 The only ones of these that are currently reserved are:

- National Convention Centre .com and National Convention Centre.co.nz
- New Zealand Convention Centre.co.nz

The .com is owned by a Riding Centre in Dublin and the .co.nz ones were reserved by VBase who manage the Christchurch Convention Centre. I believe VBase may be persuaded to release those domain names if my second proposition is agreed by the Committee.

(2) Engendering support for a National Network of Convention Centres and a new international-standard convention centre

- 24 It is important, before decisions are made on the location of a new international-standard convention centre, to let those people with ideas on the subject, or alternative proposals, have an opportunity to let us know about those ideas.
- 25 Although the current feasibility study concluded that Auckland is the only city in which an international-standard centre should be built (see Annex 1), I believe that an important next step in this process is to test that assumption.
- 26 The work undertaken on a New Zealand international-standard Convention and Exhibition Centre to date has delivered clarity around the infrastructural specifications for a successful centre. It also touched on the need for a business events strategy and additional destination marketing. What I propose is that we direct Ministry of Economic Development officials to develop an expression of interest process. MED would invite any interested party to advise the government of the results of work they had done in around the notion of establishing a large international-standard convention centre, what creative and innovative ideas they may have explored (or have thought about) for funding the development of the centre (including those that propose a formal public-private sector partnership approach), and how they envisage such a centre could enhance, and might fit into, a national network of convention centres.
- 27 The call for high-level expressions of interest would be advertised publicly and circulated to local authorities and private companies with existing interests in managing convention centres (e.g. VBase in Christchurch) and existing sector networks (like Conferences and Incentives New Zealand and the various convention bureaux).
- 28 Applicants will be asked to describe the proposed location and potential costs (capital and operating) of the venue and to assess the capacity of their existing and planned destination infrastructure (e.g. hotel beds, parking, transport generally) to cope with up to 5000 delegates at one time. Fresh ideas about how to fund such a project will be encouraged also. To assist them in preparing their proposals (and if Auckland City Council agrees) I would distribute the feasibility study for an Auckland Centre which also contains information of use to other regions also.
- 29 Following approval by the Minister for Economic Development, the call for expressions of interest would be ready to be published immediately after Easter with a closing date for high-level responses of 14 May 2010.
- 30 Once the ideas were received MED, with the help of some private sector advisors, would make a judgement about which expressions of interest were worth following-up and developing further. The government may need to assist with the costs of developing the best ideas.

- 31 One of the dangers of an open-ended process of this kind is that unreasonable expectations may be raised. Therefore at the same time I propose to start a dialogue with New Zealand's major convention centre owners and operators. This will focus on how, as a nation, we can best work together to promote New Zealand as an international business events/conventions/exhibitions destination and how a new, international-standard convention centre might creatively add lustre to our offerings.
- 32 Through this dialogue I hope to convey a genuine commitment by the government to working more effectively with convention centre owners, and with the existing sector networks and processes, to more effectively promote our entire convention and business events infrastructure (including a new international-standard convention centre) as part of an enhanced public-private partnership in this area. I would hope too that these conversations would temper the expectations of those expressing interest in constructing a new international-standard convention centre, and also become the foundation for the development of an agreed New Zealand business events strategy.
- 33 For this process to be transparent, the government must end its current arrangement with the Auckland City Council, namely, to follow-up the jointly funded feasibility study for a international-standard convention centre in central Auckland by developing a business and establishment plan for the new centre (the Minister of Tourism had set aside \$250,000 for the feasibility study and the business and establishment plan). Under my proposal Auckland City will be able to submit a high-level proposal of its own and to contribute to discussions around the development of a national convention centres network. If we end the current agreement, Auckland City Council will be able to contribute to the dialogue without there being any question of a conflict of interest arising from their current arrangements with the Crown.

(3) Develop a New Zealand Business Events Strategy

- 34 We need a New Zealand Business Events Strategy to guide the government and the events sector, and to ensure that we get the best returns from investments in a network of conference centres (including an international-standard centre). Such a Strategy would need to cover not only infrastructure but also promote industry and government understandings and agreements around developing the key factors underpinning successful business events such as:
- linking the objectives of a business events strategy to wider government strategies (such as the Economic Growth Agenda)
 - the effectiveness of existing conference assistance programmes
 - international air connections, domestic transport and accommodation
 - the roles, and capability to host events, of central and local government agencies, New Zealand branches of international associations, academic and research business organisations, centre operators, professional conference organisers, and suppliers

- availability of incentives ('subventions') to attract major international conferences
- an international marketing plan for a New Zealand international-standard conference and exhibition centre, and other business event facilities.

35 Therefore, I propose that we confirm our decision of 17 December 2009 [CAB Min (09) 45/8 refers] that, in the context of the Medium-Term Economic Growth Agenda, the Ministry of Economic Development progress the case for an international convention centre and possible expansion of other centres, and the elements of a business events strategy, and report back to Cabinet by 30 June 2010. In developing that strategy I expect the Ministry will consult widely with those engaged in business event and tourism promotion, the delivery of business and other events, infrastructure owners and providers of services that support the delivering of international business events, as well as relevant government agencies.

CONSULTATION

36 The Ministry of Tourism has been consulted in writing this paper and the Treasury has been informed of its contents.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

37 There are no fiscal implications as all the recommendations in this paper can be met within baselines.

HUMAN RIGHTS

38 There are no human rights implications in these proposals.

LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

39 There are no legislative or other regulatory implications arising from this paper.

PUBLICITY

40 My office will handle all publicity surrounding the issues set out in this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS

41 It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1 **Note** that to date work on the New Zealand international convention centre project has been focussed chiefly on infrastructure and is following a track that contemplates a new international convention and exhibition centre being built in Auckland.
- 2 **Agree** that to fulfil the government's objectives for attracting more, and more targeted, conventions to New Zealand, a well co-ordinated and nationwide approach to attracting and holding business events needs to be taken.

- 3 **Agree** that New Zealand lacks an international-standard convention centre – i.e. that will allow for conventions of up to 5000 persons – and that such a centre needs to be built and become a key part of an enhanced New Zealand network of convention centres.
- 4 **Agree** that the Crown should reserve to itself, through trademarking, the rights to use the term New Zealand Convention and Exhibition Centre (and related terms).
- 5 **Direct** the Ministry of Economic Development to develop, by 31 March 2010, a request for high-level expressions of interest, that could be publicised and sent to relevant territorial authorities and private sector organisations, seeking creative and innovative ideas about the construction and funding of an international-standard convention centre and the development of an enhanced national network of convention centres (of which a new large international-standard convention centre would be a part).
- 6 **Agree** that the Minister for Economic Development should commence a series of meetings with key convention centre owners and managers to set expectations for the expressions of interest exercise and to promote a public-private sector partnership approach to enhancing the promotion of New Zealand's potential as a business events/conferences destination.
- 7 **Agree** that the current arrangement with the Auckland City Council to fund business and establishment plans for a national convention centre in central Auckland be revoked.
- 8 **Confirm** the decision of 17 December 2009 [CAB Min. (09) 45/8 refers] that, in the context of the Medium-Term Economic Growth Agenda, the Ministry of Economic Development progress the case for an international convention centre and possible expansion of other centres, and the elements of a business events strategy, and report back to Cabinet by 30 June 2010.

Hon Gerry Brownlee

Minister for Economic Development

Date signed: _____

BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

- 1 To host international events, a New Zealand convention and exhibition centre should meet current international expectations regarding structure, layout and technical facilities. Minimum requirements relate to the space in the main auditorium and breakout rooms, exhibition areas, and centre operating requirements such as disabled access.
- 2 The centre's design needs to be flexible enough to meet the requirements of different types of events, such as: plenary and breakout meetings for conventions; exhibitions; banquets; and private functions. Building design should make it easy to upgrade services and infrastructure and consider the space requirements of back-of-house operations, e.g. catering, laundry and staff facilities.
- 3 A larger centre of around 27,000m² Gross Floor Area, that is capable of accommodating up to 5000 delegates in a plenary session, and that has significant breakout facilities in addition to the main auditorium, would be the minimum necessary to provide greater incremental capability than any existing or planned conference facilities in New Zealand (including centres in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch). It would also be more competitive with the capacities and capabilities of the Australian and Asian venues, and provide a necessary degree of 'future proofing'.
- 4 Consistent with international best practice, location considerations for a centre need to include:
 - adequate destination infrastructure
 - budget to five star hotel accommodation available on site, within walking distance, or within a short taxi or bus ride
 - parking facilities on site or within close proximity
 - transport available from the nearest airport
 - tourist and leisure attractions within the immediate locale and
 - support services available within the region, including transport companies, conference organisers, exhibition stand contractors and other meeting-related services.
- 5 Ownership of the centre's buildings and surrounding precincts can range from completely public to completely private, with the land typically being publicly owned. Convention and exhibition centres generally do not generate a commercial return on capital investment (i.e. land and construction costs) but they can generate an operating surplus. Therefore it is possible to retain

public ownership of the land and give private sector partners opportunities to develop, operate and sell for private gain commercial properties surrounding the centre such as retail, office, residential and hotels.

Estimated Costs and Benefits of a Convention and Exhibition Centre in Auckland

- 6 Auckland was considered, by the Auckland City Council/MED feasibility study, to be the most suitable location for an international convention and exhibition centre because it is New Zealand's primary gateway, with good international connectivity, well-developed infrastructure and the appropriate number of hotel rooms.
 - 7 An Auckland centre could attract, on average, 35 conferences per annum – 25 of which would be international conferences. This would be additional to events at existing venues. Based on these activity levels, the centre would operate broadly on a break-even cash-flow basis. This level of cash-flow performance would be consistent with that achieved by major Australian venues, including Melbourne and Adelaide.
 - 8 When fully operational, the centre could attract almost 22,000 additional international visitors and generate more than 200,000 extra visitor days. There would be an estimated increase of \$85.4 million in tourism-related expenditure annually. Furthermore, there would be non-quantifiable benefits such as improving shoulder and off-peak tourism, fostering commercial links between international and New Zealand businesses, and supporting innovation and knowledge transfer between international delegates and New Zealanders.
 - 9 Construction costs for international-standard convention and exhibition centres overseas range from \$NZ500 million to \$NZ1 billion. The Auckland feasibility study estimates that total construction costs there could range from \$NZ250 million to \$NZ475 million depending on the precinct and whether it is a green field or expansion build. That estimate excludes GST, land purchase costs, demolition, relocation, and site enhancements. Additional investment would also be required in amenities and city infrastructure.
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