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Metropolitan Planning Audit
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Dear Sir / Madam

RE: Melbourne 2030 Audit

Maribyrnong City Council would like to thank the State Government for this opportunity to contribute to the *Melbourne 2030* audit. The audit of this strategy is timely, and we hope that the submissions received by the Audit Expert Group will provide a broad and accurate understanding of the issues facing Maribyrnong and our community in implementing Melbourne 2030, and how outcomes could be improved.

The comments and recommendations contained within our submission were contributed by a variety of professionals from a number of Council departments, all of whom have experience in implementing *Melbourne 2030* policy. It is our hope that they will provide a variety of perspectives on the performance of the strategy, and some innovative recommendations on how this performance could be improved.

If the Audit Expert Group would like to arrange a time to further discuss any of the comments or recommendations made in our submission, [REDACTED]



Submission to the Melbourne 2030 Audit

Maribyrnong City Council

2390

Topic 1: Activity Centres

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Language and definition:

The concept of activity centres as preferred locations for higher density housing development, employment opportunities and community facilities is valid, however some of the language in Melbourne 2030 related to activity centres fails to acknowledge the individual characteristics that each has. For example, during the structure planning process for Central West Major Activity Centre, it has been necessary to acknowledge that there are essentially no opportunities in the area for higher density infill residential development. While this may vary from the definition of a Major Activity Centre given in Melbourne 2030, it is the experience found within our centre. Instead of discussing higher density housing which is unlikely to exist, at least in the foreseeable future, the Structure Plan will instead focus on the strengths of the activity centre, including the employment opportunities it provides and its potential to provide important community services and a meeting place.

Whole of Government Approach:

There needs to be further commitment from the State Government to develop a "Whole of Government Approach" to Activity Centres across all relevant departments and agencies. This would include land use planning, transport planning, both road and public, public housing and other government funding, and service provision.

Cost of Strategic Planning

The cost of planning activity centres is a major burden for Councils enacting the policy directions of Melbourne 2030. Within activity centres the cost from the development of plans such as structure plans, and the associated information and advice needed to make decisions, including economic advice, social planning, urban design and integrated transport planning is significant. There needs to be commitment from the State Government to further fund such associated costs if good outcomes are to be expected.

Transport and Land use integration:

One of the strategies identified in Melbourne 2030 is the improved integration of transport and land use. Activity centres, as places for people to live, work and play, are identified as key locations for these integrated transport options, particularly public transport. One of the frustrations experienced in developing activity centres, is the slow roll out of public transport, whether that be new modes, civil works or timetabling.

There is substantial literature to support the principal of rolling out public transportation infrastructure upfront to enable people to make a considered choice in their transportation needs, demonstrating that it is much harder to break or alter transport usage patterns once established. Therefore it is imperative that the good public transport is an option for people in activity centres so private trips can be limited and activity centres are not car dominated.

Affordability and activity centres:

The issue of housing affordability has recently received significant attention in the media, and is a problem that Melbourne 2030 as a metropolitan strategy must address. Whilst there are significant issues involved that are beyond the reach of planning controls, there should be a requirement for affordable housing as part of infill development close to activity centres, particularly those providing employment opportunities and community facilities. The concept of affordable housing within activity centres specifically aimed at 'key workers' (socially essential workers who typically earn an average income, yet struggle to afford housing close to their place of work) is also worth consideration, to ensure that vital industries can retain adequate staff resources.

Improve connections between Activity Centres:

As mentioned previously, many activity centres have a niche purpose. The improvement of the public transport network between these centres, is therefore a vital step in increasing viability of these centres, and encouraging investment. At present the connections between activity centres in Maribyrnong could be improved, particularly the lack of integration between various forms of public transport, which contributes significantly to time people take to move between centres, and acts as a disincentive.

Neighbourhood Character around Activity Centres

Council has found difficulty in dealing with the issue of neighbourhood character around activity centres. On one hand there is the direction to build up housing options in the surrounding residential areas, but on the other hand this development can lead to a sense of loss of neighbourhood character for the existing residents. One of the tools to help combat this loss is through the neighbourhood character overlay, but this is extremely difficult for Councils to implement.

Recommendation:

Language and definition:

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Review the language and definition of activity centres to acknowledge that not all activity centres have the capacity to fulfil every function, and that many have individual strengths.

Whole of Government

Ensure that a "Whole of Government" approach is made when providing advice, funding and infrastructure within Activity Centres.

Cost of Strategic Planning

Review the funding allocated to Councils to fund their Activity Centre strategic planning work.

Transport and Land use integration:

Ensure public transport infrastructure is in place in activity centres and other locations designated for brownfield residential development or employment.

Affordability and activity centres:

- Require all new residential developments within or close to Principal and Major Activity Centres to include a percentage of affordable housing.
- Provide incentives for developers to include innovative approaches to making housing more affordable, for example shared equity financing.

Improve connections between Activity Centres:

- Improve the integration of different forms of public transport, to ensure that trips to, from and between activity centres are easily made without the use of a private vehicle.
- Ensure that train, tram and bus stops are located within close proximity to one another, and that adequate signage exists to facilitate easy connections between different modes of transport.

Neighbourhood Character around Activity Centres

State Government should investigate the issue of potential loss of neighbourhood character around activity centres, and develop a means of minimising such loss, beyond the neighbourhood character overlay, which is difficult to implement.

Rationale:

Language and definition:

Each activity centre is different, and while some do fit all aspects of the definition given, many have strengths and weaknesses that must be acknowledged and responded to. In addition to this, the market forces which will also determine the nature of an activity centre must not be ignored.

Whole of Government:

Key to the development of activity centres is a coordinated response, allowing for a more seamless approach for the provision of advice, infrastructure and services.

Cost of Strategic Planning:

Without appropriate funding to undertake strategic planning work, Councils will find it difficult to ensure in depth analysis and planning is complete for activity centres.

Transport and Land use integration:

Public transport usage habits will be developed from the outset, leading to higher patronage and lower use of the private car. Additionally, private investors can see the commitment of the Government to the area and are more likely to follow with investment of their own.

Affordability and activity centres:

Those in most need of affordable housing are also often those who would benefit most from living closer to public transport services, employment opportunities and community facilities, which are elements which characterise Principal and Major Activity Centres.

Improve connections between Activity Centres:

The reliance on the private vehicle to travel to, from and between activity centres has a host of negative impacts, economically, socially and environmentally. Significant areas of valuable land within activity centres are under-utilised as car parks; areas which could be developed for much higher uses if an attractive alternative to the private car was provided to those needing to move to, from and between activity centres.

Neighbourhood Character around Activity Centres

Neighbourhood Character is seen as a significant issue for communities around activity centres, and Government and Councils need to be sensitive to the community's needs when implementing activity centre policy.

Topic 2: Arts and Culture

Submission to the Melbourne 2030 Audit

Importance 3 ●●●

Comment:

Maribyrnong City Council encourages the State Government to continue to contribute to the arts and culture of the city, as a valuable part of Melbourne 2030. Arts and Culture, while providing a means of entertainment and life to a city, also encourages and fosters many other aspects of the society, such as education, innovation and design.

Maribyrnong City Council provides support for arts and cultural development through its budget process, and continues to develop and support community gathering places, where events can be undertaken within the municipality. Council's recent redevelopment of Maddern Square shows commitment to by Council to providing usable public space for arts and cultural activities.

Another example of Maribyrnong commitment to local arts has been the installed 'West Welcomes Refugees' public art project, which adds to amenity of Albert Street Bridge and explores issues related to cultural diversity.

Council and the State Government continue to work together on the creation of places for the community, and this is most evident with funding for Nicholson Street Mall redevelopment in Footscray.

Recommendation:

That the State Government:

- continues to encourage and sponsor the development and display of arts and culture within Melbourne, and that contribute to the diversity of Melbourne;
- consider ways in which developers can contribute to the arts and culture within Melbourne;
- work with, councils, community organisations, educational providers and the private sector to provide and promote spaces, both private and public, for arts and cultural activities, and support diversity;
- promote good urban design outcomes in the provision of arts and cultural facilities and places;
- provide funding for place making activities for arts and culture within activity centres.

Rationale:

Providing a variety of arts and cultural experiences in Melbourne, enables the Melbournians to participate in activities, fostering a sense of community and engagement.

It enables Melbourne to maintain its vibrant atmosphere, contributing to Melbourne being a more livable city.

Having a wide variety of arts and cultural events are also important attractors to investment from overseas for such things as, head offices and science and technology centres. These investors need places that offer a variety of services, including arts and culture, to attract and keep key workers.

Melbourne also needs to make sure that Melbournians have access to different experiences, entertainment and interest to maintain a varied and vibrant workforce and age structure.

Topic 3: Affordable Housing

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Mandatory Targets:

The supply of public and social housing has fallen by 100,000 dwellings over the last decade relative to the total number of dwellings in Australia. Construction of new private dwellings is at least 20% (30,000 dwellings) below the necessary annual rate.

Environmental Sustainable Design:

Government and industry should focus on providing environmental sustainable design within affordable housing. In this context environmental design should include all aspects such as energy efficiency and water conservation, which maximise the self sufficiency of the property.

Affordable Housing Location:

The provision of housing close to transport, employment and services is an important aspect of Melbourne 2030. The provision of affordable housing in such locations, is even more so, as people from low socio-economic backgrounds. With inner suburban areas running out of infill development sites, the ability to provide affordable housing is also running out, so government needs to act now to take advantage of current land stocks.

State Planning Tools and Incentives:

The Government needs to look at a variety of planning tools and incentives if it wishes to encourage the private sector to develop affordable housing options.

Private/Public Partnerships:

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Private/public partnerships are another tool that should be explored by government in the implementation of Melbourne 2030. Housing associations provide a valuable resources and skill set in delivering these partnerships.

Recommendation:

Mandatory Targets:

Provide greater incentives and mandatory targets (15% for all private developments of 50 units or more) for the provision of affordable housing in private housing development.

Environmental Sustainable Design:

Provide ESD principals within all affordable housing options, with all new residential units meeting a minimum 5 star efficiency rating.

Affordable Housing Location:

Ensure that the location of affordable housing is close to transport, employment opportunities and services. The State Government should also quickly make a legislative response to affordable housing before little infill development sites capable of providing such housing are left within inner suburban areas.

State Planning Tools and Incentives:

Government to investigate developing inclusionary zoning instruments that can be implemented as part of the State Planning Provisions and local planning schemes.

Private/Public Partnerships:

Private/public partnerships should be further investigated as a means of providing affordable housing options in the market place.

Rationale:

Mandatory Targets:

By introducing a mandatory target for affordable housing it will ensure the creation of Public / Private partnerships, where relatively small levels of public investment can leverage private investment.

Developers will also know of there obligations and be able to factor these in when buying land for property development.

Environmental Sustainable Design:

ESD is considered an important contribution to housing affordability and particularly important for those people who are in housing crisis (i.e. spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs). Cutting the consumption of power and water, which in turn cuts the costs of running a household are just two ways of making housing more affordable for low income earners.

Affordable Housing Location:

Having housing close to transport, employment opportunities and services, has the benefit of cutting the cost of travel, particularly private vehicle costs, and makes it more viable for households not to purchase additional vehicles. For those living in affordable housing on low incomes it is important that affordable transport options or the ability to walk to destinations is available, cutting transport costs, contributing to household savings. If government acts now on affordable housing it will be able to take advantage of inner suburb land for provision, before sites become limited in number.

State Planning Tools and Incentives:

One of the ways it may be possible to get an allocation of land for affordable housing is through mechanisms that require contributions by developers. If developers know upfront that they will be required, under the planning scheme, to provided affordable housing, they can factor this into the land cost, prior to purchasing.

Private/Public Partnerships:

Private/public partnerships provided a way of developers accessing resources and skill sets that can deliver affordable housing outcomes, while maintaining profitability.

Topic 4: Climate change

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Since the inception of Melbourne 2030, climate change has become a topic of growing importance, so much so that it would probably now rank as the key issue of Melbourne 2030, focussing our attention on how we can make Melbourne a more sustainable city.

Global:

The importance, predictions and consequences of climate change are becoming more real and evident.

- Continued warming of the climate;
- Polar ice caps are melting faster than anticipated;
- sea levels are rising, producing greater threats to coastal cities;

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- tropical diseases are migrating further north and south from Equator; and
- flora and fauna are unable to adapt to the increase environmental changes, producing a major threat to biodiversity;

and there increased likelihood of

- the insecurity of potable water supplies;
- failure of crops and reduction in live stock;
- extreme weather events, such as flash flood, tropical storms, cold snaps, and heat waves, with extended droughts.

Local:

Within Maribyrnong itself climate change is predicted to have consequences for the way we use land and how people live.

The Maribyrnong river is tidal in nature. Higher intensity rain fall and sea level rises will alter flooding regimes; droughts will alter inflows to river, as well affects environmental flows and irrigation practices. This will need to be considered in further planning along the Maribyrnong River.

Recently the City of Maribyrnong adopted a strategy for Council itself to be carbon neutral by 2015 and create the opportunity for the community to be carbon neutral by 2020.

Recommendation:

The State Government can affect change on global warming by:

- Setting greenhouse gas emission reduction level under Melbourne 2030;
- Implementing Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) principles in all new developments;
- Increasing Victorian Renewable Energy Target to 30% by 2050 and provide greater incentives for individual sources of renewable energy e.g. introduce feed-in tariff for PV cells. This will assist in alleviating peak energy demand by providing a greater diversity of power supplies;
- Considering the replacement of coal-fired power stations in favour with gas and renewables, through the further support of renewable energy generation. The technology for 'clean coal' does not yet exist, the technology for renewables such as wind and solar do exist, but requires further work to reach better generation levels;
- Enacting ESD proactively in future developments equivalent to 7 stars. This would help achieve best practice rather than eliminating worst practice;
- Promote transport opportunities for new housing locations;
- More funding for public transport, with extensions to the rail and light rail to reduce CO2 emissions;
- Getting freight back on rail, in line with Melbourne 2030 policy;
- Introducing higher standards for air-conditioning to limit their energy consumption;
- Encouraging the creation of an emissions trading scheme;
- Introducing greater disincentives on large, inefficient vehicles such as SUVs (4WDs);
- Encouraging initiatives like Greenfleet;
- Consider the establishment of a congestion tax for the city;
- Mandatory code of practice for reducing embodied energy in packaging and products;
- Lobby the Federal Government for changes to the Fringe Benefit Tax for company vehicles, to discourage excess travel;
- Lobby the Federal Government for yearly public transport tickets to be tax deductible;
- Supporting the establishment of more clean energy businesses and power generation.

The State Government can mitigate affects of global warming by;

- Updating of flood modelling to enable better planning in urban areas to protect residents from flash floods;
- Protecting of existing agricultural land for local food production, reducing food miles, thus cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

Rationale:

Climate change has been described by as the greatest ever challenge to humanity. It has clear implications for food and water security, and could result in many humanitarian disasters around the globe, and displacement of millions of people.

Locally it will result in increased temperatures and ongoing water shortages and droughts.

Melbourne 2030 needs reflect the latest science and urgently respond to climate change. The cutting of greenhouse gas emissions through mandatory targets under Melbourne 2030 would be a major step in this process.

Topic 5: Cycling

Importance 3 ●●●

Comment:

Cycling is a growing transport mode within Melbourne, particularly within the last five years.

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Cycling is a great way for Melbournians to get around town, to and from work, and on a recreational basis.

It promotes the health and fitness within the community and reduces the use of private vehicles, cutting both CO2 emissions and use of fossil fuels.

Further it is good for the economy, as it frees up money invested in private vehicles and reduces wear and tear on our roads.

Recommendation:

As part of Melbourne 2030 the state government should:

- require more cycling infrastructure, particularly high quality cycle lanes and storage and change facilities at public transport nodes;
- require new developments to include better facilities, upon what is already required;
- Complete the principle bicycle network; and
- Develop safer routes for school children.

Rationale:

Cycling is an easy way for people to get around town, encourages health and fitness, and reduces the use of private vehicles, cutting CO2 emissions.

Topic 6: Economy

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Western Region Employment and Industrial Development Strategy:

As part of Melbourne 2030, the six western metropolitan Councils, being Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham, and the then Department of Sustainability & Environment undertook the Western Region Employment and Industrial Development Strategy (WREIDS). The strategy was commissioned to "...provide an overall economic framework for investment and industry development in the Western Region, and coordinated approach for future development within the wider context of the metropolitan and state policy" (WREIDS Summary Report, July 2007).

The strategy seeks to achieve this vision through the following outcomes;

- Regional vision and leadership;
- Strong employment growth;
- Land use renaissance and change;
- Transformation of the region's industrial base;
- Transport and access;
- Industrial land requirements;
- Policy framework for industrial land conservation.

Maribyrnong City Council sees WREIDS as an important strategy in growing the economy of the west and developing employment for our community. Without a strategy to move the west forward, employment and economic conditions in the west will deteriorate.

Job Creation:

The economy of Melbourne is extremely important to the daily lives of its residents. The challenge for Melbourne 2030 is to ensure that Melbournians have equal access to jobs, services and goods, allowing the city to grow to the advantage of all.

With the Western Metropolitan Region experiencing significant population growth, the continued growth of associated economic activity will lead to increased demand on the major arterial and rail networks serving the Region through to inner Melbourne. In addition, the substantially increased activity projected for the Port of Melbourne, the strengthening of the logistics industry in the west of Melbourne, and changes to manufacturing and importing, suggest serious environmental, economic and social consequences for Maribyrnong and the region in 10 – 20 years time if these issues are not adequately addressed.

Within WREIDS (August 2007), the west is predicted to grow from 616,100 residents as of 2005, to 850,000 residents by 2031. With this increased population there needs to be concerted effort to ensure that these additional people have access to jobs, services and goods. A key finding of WREIDS is that the west only provides for 315 jobs per 1000 people, whereas the MSD average provides for 458 jobs per 1000 people. On current trends the provision of jobs per 1000 is not predicted to increase.

The lack of jobs for residents of the west in the west, means there will continue to be increased travel demand by both public and private means, and more importing of services and goods from other regions, particularly the inner region. WREIDS estimates that there is over \$2 billion of escaped expenditure from the western region every year.

It is therefore important that the State Government plays a role in supporting the development of sustainable business and industries within the West to cater for the employment, services and goods needs of the west.

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Land Availability:

The provision of appropriately located employment land is a key concern for Council. Without adequate provision, the ability of the west to maintain its jobs per 1000 will be compromised. WREIDS explores this topic and makes recommendations to overcome this concern.

Out of Centre Development:

Council strongly supports the Direction 1 "A more compact city" which encourages the further development of activity centres for providing for a range of services to the public, while limiting "Out of Centre" development.

Council also supports the Department's commencement of the "Retail Policy Review 2007" which is undertaking a "whole of retailing" analysis for Victoria. Council is concerned that allowing significant out of centre development for bulky goods and the growth of discount factory outlets, will place at risk the function of activity centres and their ability to grow and provide the range of services as envisaged under Melbourne 2030.

Recommendation:

Western Region Employment and Industrial Development Strategy:

The State Government should acknowledge WREIDS as a regional strategy from the western metropolitan area, and assist Councils in implementing its recommendations. This should also include the development of a regional policy direction for the six municipal councils within WREIDS.

Job Creation:

To help encourage the development of jobs within the west, and particularly key activity centres, it is suggested that decentralisation of government departments should occur to encourage growth in office demand, which in turn will deliver a multiplier effect to the centres, with growth in retail and services jobs.

A range of incentives and interventions for big businesses to decentralise and locate in activity centres could also contribute to job provision, and broadening of goods and services.

Land Availability:

Continued monitoring of industrial land supply undertaken as part of the Urban Development Program is supported, but furthermore it is recommended that a register of surplus, or potentially developable government and council land be established. This could include land such as Council car parks that could be developed over the top of, or railway sidings. This could be done as an Activity Centre Audit, identifying land for possible development in an Activity Centre Land Supply Report.

Out of Centre:

Council recommends that the review consider all aspects in appropriately locating retail, including community access, equity, amenity & affordability. Market trends should not be permitted to dominate the direction of the retail policy at the expense of good planning, and a "whole of economy" picture should be taken into consideration.

Rationale:

Western Region Employment and Industrial Development Strategy:

As WREIDS provides a growth framework for the economy and employment in the west it should be supported by the State Government, given the consequences outlined within the strategy of inaction.

Job Creation:

Government needs to lead investment where there may be little confidence in the market. With the redeployment of agencies to key activity centres it will kick start confidence in the areas, and contribute to jobs within these local areas and regions.

The development of the inner ring of Principal Activity Centres for a greater share of job provision is consistent with Policy 1.1 "Build up activity centres as a focus for high-quality development, activity and living for the whole community." The decentralisation of TAC to Geelong is an example of such policy, having flow on effects to the wider community. Activity Centres, such as Footscray, would benefit from such decentralisation, kick starting the investment market in office development, and flow on affects to develop the growing residential apartment market.

Growth of employment in inner Activity Centres will also have a positive affect on lessening the transport burden on the CBD.

Land Availability:

An Activity Centre Audit producing and an Activity Centre Land Supply Report could be used by government to assist major developers finding suitable locations for new employment uses, or housing options in Activity Centres. It would provide a conduit for developers to speak to Councils about proposals, and could even be expanded as a link between major activity centre land owners and large scale developers. Without such links many activity centres that could accommodate growth may continue to stagnate.

Out of Centre:

As activity centres generally are supported by good public transport, and contain other services and employment, private trip generation would be less than trips generated by such stand alone centres, better social outcomes can be expected and more choice

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available to consumers. Economically it is seen as a much better allocation of resources to pool main functions in activity centres, as less needs to be spent on public transport provision, road upgrades and services.

A prime example of a poorly planned stand alone centre is the Essendon Airport DFO and homemaker centre, which is to most parts totally car based, and has caused major disruption to local roads and the adjacent Tullamarine Freeway. Though not in the jurisdiction of the State, the site has economically weakened the Activity Centre Network in the area, including Airport West and Highpoint, while providing little social or amenity outcomes for its catchment. The proliferation of such stand alone centres is contrary to Directions 1, 5, 7, 8 & 9.

Topic 7: Environment

Importance 4 ●●●●

Comment:

Like never before, the environment has become a significant issue for Victorians, and Melbourne 2030 needs to continue to reflect the importance of managing the environment in a sustainable manner.

With the ever increasing ramifications of climate change becoming more evident, the protection of our environment is paramount in helping reverse this challenge.

The biodiversity of Melbourne and beyond, needs to be protected under the strategy. Our catchment areas need to be protected from logging to look after our water supplies, our waterways need to be protected from pollution and rubbish, we need to reduce our consumption and manage our waste appropriately, and we need to protect our air quality.

Recommendation:

To protect Melbourne's water supplies, catchments and waterways Government should:

- Cease logging in water catchments;
- Maintain equitable permanent water restrictions;
- Maintain water tank rebates;
- Make water tank connections to toilets compulsory in all new developments;
- Make water efficiency practices compulsory in all new developments;
- Create a separate funding stream for local government to implement large scale stormwater reuse projects;
- Continue to fund local government stormwater action plans and WSUD projects.

Government can reduce vehicle emissions by:

- providing more public infrastructure, particularly rail and light rail, to reduce vehicle use, cutting CO2 emissions and air pollution;
- investigating the introduction of a vehicle idling law;
- reducing car parking spaces in CBD;
- investigating the use of alternative fuels for all State and Council vehicles (e.g. CNG, electric)

State Government should provide funding to Council's for biodiversity mapping and protection.

Government should provide seed funding to implement a subsidised waste reduction strategy for all food premises; provide continued leadership and funding for the management of e-waste collection.

Rationale:

Environment protection is essential for the provision of a healthy and sustainable city. It ensures that people can lead healthy lives and that the natural resources are not squandered away.

The protection of Melbourne's biodiversity is important, so that our native flora and fauna are kept from extinction, providing a valuable reminder of our past, and an enduring legacy to the future.

Topic 11: Open Space

Importance 3 ●●●

Comment:

Within the City of Maribyrnong there are areas of deficiency within the public open space network, as identified in our Open Space Strategy, 2006. The only opportunity that Council has to address this issue is through rezoning opportunities in brownfield sites.

With the inner western areas of Melbourne slowly being gentrified and rezoned from its industrial past, the distribution problems of open space are difficult to solve with developers keen to maximise the value of their site, thus extra pressure is placed on existing open spaces.

The Maribyrnong River Valley is an area where further regional open space could be provided, particularly within the defence site in

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northern Maribyrnong.

Recommendation:

State Government needs to assist Councils to:

- rectify gaps in the open space networks;
- enact broader developer contributions that will provide more resources for the establishment of more open space for the community. Consider increasing developer contributions from 5% to 8% as a minimum.

The State Government should look at the opportunities to extend the regional park network along the Maribyrnong River, and set aside funding to complete it.

Rationale:

With more people moving to inner areas, placing more stress on existing open spaces, both new passive and active open space areas need to be found to accommodate the growth in population.

Maribyrnong City Council does not have the funds available to create new open spaces, and it is concerned that some areas of Maribyrnong are not sufficiently catered for. These deficiencies can lead to other social problems in areas, such as obesity, inactivity and unsocial activity.

Regional parkland along the Maribyrnong River will help in providing for recreational space and activities for the community, and go some way in meeting the open space needs of Maribyrnong Council.

Topic 12: Planning

Importance 4 ●●●●

Comment:

Ecological Sustainable Design

Considering Direction No. 7 "A Greener City", there is still a degree of uncertainty in the approach and direction towards ensuring that sustainable development principles are addressed in new development.

Although there has been a planning scheme amendment to clause 56 (Residential Subdivision) to create "Livable and Sustainable Communities" through sustainable subdivision design, a similar direction should be taken for all other developments, particularly high density residential.

In addition to this, ESD initiatives driven by local government, such as the STEPS assessment tool, have not been adequately supported by the State Government, despite the fact that they work towards achieving outcomes outlined in Melbourne 2030. Whilst Council acknowledges that DPCD is in the process of developing a similar assessment tool, proactive councils who have developed their own should not be hindered by this process.

Integrated Transport plans

Further direction should be provided regarding the form and content of integrated transport plans.

Integrated transport planning is prescribed by Clause 52.36 of the Planning Scheme and Direction 8 "Better Transport Links", however, there is a lack of detailed direction or guidance for the development industry in addressing this matter.

The development industry to a degree has difficulty in preparing adequate analysis and response to this increasingly important planning matter.

Multi Level Building Design

The document Guidelines for Higher Density Residential Development have provided guidance for the design of development of four or more storeys.

However, the development industry in some cases has difficulty in integrating the strategic and local suitability of a site with the creative process of designing a higher density development.

Housing Affordability

There needs to be more direction about how affordable housing should be addressed from a policy direction, together with a practical approach for the development industry.

Development Contribution Plans

The issue of Development Contribution Plans, and the ability for Councils to charge appropriately to provide for added infrastructure

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is an ongoing concern. The State Government needs to look at the issue and identify other ways Councils can charge appropriately and make it simpler to collect these contributions from land developers.

Recommendation:

Ecological Sustainable Design

A state guideline or practice note should be prepared as a resource for all stakeholders to consider how to incorporate Ecological Sustainable Design into developments, particularly high density residential.

Greater State Government support should be given to local councils who dedicate resources to developing tools and policies aimed at implementing ESD objectives, many of which are represented in Melbourne 2030.

Integrated Transport plans

The State Government should initiate a process to help developers in integrated transport planning. It could include a toolkit of how to develop such plans.

Multi Level Building Design

Melbourne 2030 needs to emphasize more on local policy settings for high density livability. The solution to this may be an educative process, towards emphasizing the need to address the local policy setting.

Housing Affordability

State Government should look at a range of planning tools to implement affordable housing targets for new developments.

Development Contribution Plans

State Government should investigate other mechanisms to obtain development contributions from developers that provide a more realistic charge and collection system than that in place. This could replicate the open space contribution, where a percentage figure is charged, and can be used for service or infrastructure provision in the local government area, making it a more flexible alternative.

Rationale:

Ecological Sustainable Design

The current practice for high density residential that incorporates ESD initiatives are introduced predominantly through negotiation, and this can result in varied outcomes, some more positive or negative than others.

Local government innovation in the encouragement and requirement of ESD principles in new development has the advantage of being developed at the 'coal face' of the planning process.

Integrated Transport plans

By providing developers with assistance in integrated transport planning, government can be better assured of a positive outcome for the community.

Multi Level Building Design

It is important for high rise development to respond to the local setting, so that these buildings can better integrate with their surrounds and local community.

Housing Affordability

With no requirement for developers to provide for affordable housing in new developments, it is unlikely that any would be provided. As the cost of such provision would not be factored into the initial cost of the land, the ability of developers to structure affordable housing into their costings is prohibitive.

Development Contribution Plans

The current DCP is extremely difficult for Councils to get in place and provides only limited funds for particular infrastructure requirements. A more flexible system would enable Council to respond better to the needs of the community as they become apparent and collect a more appropriate charge from developers.

Topic 15: Rivers and Coasts

Importance 4 ●●●●

Comment:

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Melbourne depends heavily on the bay, the rivers and tributaries that are found within the Port Phillip Catchment.

Not only are they important to the environment, but parts of the system contribute to the water we drink, provide water for food production, are important fisheries, allow for trade through the bay's ports and play important recreational and tourism roles. The ongoing health of the bay, rivers and tributaries are more than important for Melbourne.

Climate Change:

It is predicted that climate change will adversely impact on coastal and riverine environments within the decades to come.

Climate change has been forecast to cause rising sea levels, coastal erosion and inundation of low lying coastal areas. Flooding from intense rain events will cause stream bank erosion and poor quality water, which in turn will affect the aquatic environs. Bike paths adjacent to rivers will be adversely affected by additional flooding events, as will nearby buildings.

Maribyrnong Council notes the recent announcement from the State Government regarding the mapping of coastal areas for the affects of climate change, and believes that this will give all levels of government a valuable tool to tackle the affects of rising sea levels and major storm events.

Recreation and Tourism:

With growth in population will come increased pressure on the bay and rivers to provide for the growth in recreational and tourism needs.

This will place pressure on infrastructure within these areas to handle the growing demand.

The Maribyrnong River is increasing becoming a popular location for recreational boating and fishing. Better infrastructure on the Maribyrnong is particularly needed to cater for this growth.

Maribyrnong River Valley Project:

Council has been involved in this regional project which works towards strengthening the policies and planning controls along the Maribyrnong River, as part of the Melbourne 2030 strategy. Council believes this project is vital in ensuring the current and future pressures on the river valley are well managed, and this important natural feature is protected. The project has produced a set of draft guidelines, which are currently being considered for adoption by Council, prior to final approval by the Minister for Planning. The support of the State Government, through the Melbourne 2030 Local Government Assistance Fund, has been vital to the success of this project.

Recommendation:

Climate Change:

- Amend the Victorian Planning Provisions to reflect the work being undertaken by the State Government for costal areas and riverine environs, regarding the affects of climate change. Extrapolate the affect on the built form within these areas, so better planning outcomes can be achieved;
- Continue funding for local government stormwater action plans;
- Develop and adopt Water Sensitive Urban Design principles for new developments;
- Develop further policies on impervious surfaces, and how to manage these areas to reduce runoff;

Recreation and Tourism:

As part of Melbourne 2030, the State Government should continue to contribute funding to develop recreational and tourist infrastructure on our bays and waterways. Such funding should be provided to complete bike trails, mooring facilities, and boat ramps, particularly in the western region and the Maribyrnong River, where facilities are limited.

Rationale:

Climate Change:

Without continued analysis from State Government the affects of climate change will not be known until they are upon us. Planning now will help governments enact policies to protect the environment, the built form and people from the worst affects of rising sea levels and major storm events.

Recreation and Tourism:

The development of facilities in the west is considered of importance as there is a distinct lack of boat facilities in the west, and an incomplete trail network, particularly on the Maribyrnong River at this time.

Topic 18: Transit Cities

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Making things happen:

The State Government plays a most important part in making Transit Cities happen. For both Footscray and Dandenong the State

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Government has provided substantial funds to develop aspects of both transit cities, and in our case at Maribyrnong, the government has provided money for "Footscray Renewal". Much of this money will go to public works in the form of a new pedestrian bridge at Footscray Station, works in Nicholson Street Mall and Irving Street.

In both instances Government agencies talk and interact together, working collaboratively with local government efficiently and openly to affect change.

Although there is a significant financial commitment for both Footscray and Dandenong transit city projects, the engagement by government departments regarding these projects should be seen as an ideal collaborative model for other transit cities and activity centres. This model gives councils the ability to establish open partnerships, creating confidence in the projects and enabling outcomes to be achieved sooner. The model demonstrates that when there is a clear mandate from the State Government, and commitment on both sides, positive outcomes can be achieved.

Is structure planning needed?:

Since the release of Melbourne 2030 Footscray is one of only a few Transit Cities not to have prepared a structure plan. Despite this, Council's approach to implementing the Footscray Transit City project has received recognition in the 2005 PIA Awards: Melbourne 2030 Implementation, Ministerial recognition and was successful for \$52.1 million of funding in the 2007/08 State Government budget.

In brief, Council has not prepared a structure plan as the Department of Infrastructure and VicTrack did not have a preferred option on the redevelopment of the Footscray Railway Station – whether to build a new station to the north or redevelop Footscray's principal public transport network from its present location. Council could have prepared a structure plan, but would have been 'second guessing' the Government's objectives for the future use and development of the Railway Precinct. This issue has only been recently resolved, when the 2007/08 State Budget announced capital works improvements at the station's current location.

Without a structure plan for the last five years, Council has embarked on a place management model of preparing a number of strategic projects, capital works and advocacy programs to implement the shared vision for Footscray, without compromising the Government's planning and requirements for Footscray Railway Station.

Implementation:

An important requirement in the implementation of "Footscray Renewal" has been the significant funding provided by the State Government and Council to make the vision of Footscray come to life. The Council is committed towards realising the full and shared vision for Footscray Transit City, but also knows this will take between 25 – 30 years to achieve this vision. Melbourne 2030 as a 25-30 year strategy requires a budgeted implementation plan for future funding of other nominated Transit Cities over the short, medium to long term, providing details of its priorities, commitments and timeframes. This will give direction for all stakeholders and afford Councils the time and ability to align its budget priorities with those in Melbourne 2030.

Whole of Government Approach:

Like Activity Centres there needs to be further commitment from the State Government to develop a "Whole of Government Approach" to transit cities across all relevant departments and agencies. This would include land use planning, transport planning, both road and public, public housing and other government funding, and service provision.

Cost of Strategic Planning

The cost of planning transit cities is a major burden for Councils enacting the policy directions of Melbourne 2030. Within transit cities the cost from the development of plans such as structure plans, and the associated information and advice needed to make decisions, including economic advice, social planning, urban design and integrated transport planning is significant. There needs to be commitment from the State Government to further fund such associated costs if good outcomes are to be expected.

Recommendation:

Making things happen:

Its is recommended that the collaborative approach between State Government departments and agencies and Councils, as seen at Footscray be used as a model for other Transit Cities and more broadly, activity centres.

Is structure planning needed?:

It is recommended that Councils be able consider a range of options in the planning of activity centres and the place making model used effectively by Maribyrnong City Council be considered as an example of such planning.

Implementation:

Develop an Implementation Budget Plan for Melbourne 2030, outlining the short, medium and long term goals for the government, and provide details of priorities, commitments and timeframes.

Whole of Government

Ensure that a "Whole of Government" approach is made when providing advice, funding and infrastructure within Transit Cities.

Cost of Strategic Planning

Review the funding allocated to Councils to fund their transit cities strategic planning work.

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Rationale:

Making things happen:

Being the custodian of Melbourne 2030, the State Government must endeavour to ensure its departments and agencies work in partnership with local government to implement its transit city program. As local government in leading the transformation of these centres into vibrant places to work, live and play, high level cooperation with these bodies is necessary to affect change.

Is structure planning needed?:

Without the requirement to prepare a structure plan over the last four years, Council has found the approach to be flexible, in regards broader community's expectations and more importantly, has been recognised by the State Government and professional peers.

In this, Council sees merit in being able to use the right planning tool for the right job. As all Transit Cities or Activity Centres areas are not the same there is much logic in being able to respond to individual centre's needs.

Implementation:

As transit cities are a key focal point of Melbourne 2030's directions to consolidate Melbourne and make activity centres better places to work, live and play, budgeting a plan for each of these transit cities is important. The development of an Implementation Budget Plan for Melbourne 2030 will enable certainty for Government, Councils and the development industry as to when major projects will be undertaken, and enable Councils to budget accordingly for these works in tandem.

Whole of Government:

Key to the development of transit cities is a coordinated response, allowing for a more seamless approach for the provision of advice, infrastructure and services.

Cost of Strategic Planning:

Without appropriate funding to undertake strategic planning work, Councils will find it difficult to ensure in depth analysis and planning is complete for transit cities.

Topic 19: Transport

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

For Melbourne to remain a highly liveable city, Government must ensure the transport infrastructure is in place to deliver sustainable transport options and services well into the future.

A combination of road, rail, cycle, pedestrian, and water transport infrastructure is needed, with significant funding, in particular required for Melbourne's public transport infrastructure and service provision. The Metropolitan Transport Forum has produced three documents that outline how the state government can move on this issue – "Creating Choices", "Funding Choices" and "The Economic Benefits of Investing in Public Transport in Melbourne".

The transport network constraints most affecting linkages between Maribyrnong, the broader western metropolitan region and the principal destinations of central Melbourne and the Port of Melbourne locations are:

- Passenger train capacity issues along the Sydenham and Werribee lines and through the North Melbourne station;
- Travel demand and capacity constraints on major east – west roads including crossings on the Maribyrnong and Yarra Rivers;
- Inadequate transport infrastructure to effectively move freight to/from the Port (including rail freight facilities).

The principal influencing factors on these constraints are:

- Population growth in the western metropolitan region particularly in the Werribee growth corridor and lack of corresponding employment opportunities;
- Growth of the Melbourne CAD and activity within it;
- Growth of the Port of Melbourne in area and activity.

Congestion costs, oil consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and social exclusion will continue to increase if unsustainable urban development and transport behaviours are allowed to continue. Council believes that Melbourne needs a new approach to transport planning, with transport decisions that promote economic growth, energy efficiency, enhanced communities and social inclusion, public health, equity and environmental quality.

The issues of port related traffic, port storage and the allocation of land for generally port-related purposes will continue to be an ongoing concern for Maribyrnong City Council to manage. Melbourne 2030 has lacked delivery, in terms of managing freight and the needs of the community to enjoy a peaceful and healthy environment. The target of 30 percent of freight on rail by 2010 continues to be further unlikely with the growth of freight and the lack of appropriate infrastructure and pricing models to make this a reality.

Council's Integrated Transport Strategy (MITS) 2002, identified freight as a key issue for Maribyrnong and made the following

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recommendations:

- Identifying the primary routes for trucks and hazardous materials;
- Development of a freight movement network using the primary arterial road network away from residential land use;
- Location of freight generating land uses and freight handling centres e.g. container storage sites;
- The potential to increase the role of rail in the movement of freight.

The Freight, Transport and Land Use Strategy to be carried out by the State Government will be an important tool in handling freight issues from areas affected by growing freight demand.

Integrated Transport plans:

Further direction should be provided towards integrated transport planning.

Integrated transport planning is prescribed by Clause 52.36 of the Planning Scheme and Direction 8 "Better Transport Links", however, there is a lack of detailed direction or guidance for the development industry in addressing this matter.

The development industry to a degree has difficulty in preparing adequate analysis and response to this increasingly important planning matter.

Recommendation:

In consideration of the above comments Council suggest that:

-The growth predicted for Melbourne Port will have a huge impact on Maribyrnong. Decisions and actions that promote expansion of growth in port related road freight must properly consider social and environmental impacts on surrounding communities. A significant proportion of this road traffic growth could be shifted to rail freight, and the State Government needs to be more proactive in its stance if it wishes to see 30 percent of freight on rail by 2010.

-Maribyrnong Council is at the confluence of major transport links to the west. A need exists to ensure that the residential amenity and liveability of the inner western suburbs is not threatened by the predicted growth in traffic along these routes, i.e. require a full 'community benefit' analysis for major land use and transport projects that ensures sufficient resources are allocated to improve Footscray (Transit City) and other inner western suburbs.

-More sustainable transport choices need to be provided and promoted, facilitating a shift in favour of transport modes other than the private car. Significant investment is required for improvements to Melbourne's public transport system and services, particularly if the Government is going to meet its own target of 20 percent trips by public transport by 2020. This will need to include better integrated transport options and upgrades to transport facilities.

-Planning needs to start now. There is a long lead time between identifying a problem, developing options, consultation and obtaining funding. There needs to be a long term vision and plan, beyond the government's current plan "Meeting our Transport Challenges", which was limited in its new provisions for the Western Region. It must include further and more substantial funding allocation for public transport.

- Government expedite the development of the Freight, Transport and Land Use Strategy.

Integrated Transport plans:

The State Government should initiate a process to help developers in integrated transport planning. It could include a toolkit of how to develop such plans.

Rationale:

Melbourne's transport system is dominated by road based motor vehicle travel, with more than 70 per cent of all personal trips made by car and less than 10 per cent by public transport. As one of the world's largest cities by area, passenger and freight transport compete for limited road space resulting in congestion and increased travel times. The average travel time in Melbourne is 82 minutes per day, significantly higher than the 60 minutes maximum acceptable global level.

This car dependency results in significant congestion and pollution, which will be exacerbated with the expected doubling of the freight task by 2015. Greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector are growing substantially, rising by 27 per cent between 1990 and 2002. Latest projections indicate that emissions from the transport sector will rise by 42 per cent between 1990 and 2010.

In regards to freight, it is important to encourage greater integration of the location of freight handling areas and freight movement groups to increase transport efficiency and reduce impact on the amenity of residential areas. An integrated approach will facilitate the efficient safe and cost effective movement of freight, ensuring that freight handling areas are located where good access exists. Importantly government should also ensure that the impact on the local environment by freight movement, storage and distribution are considered in the planning and management of urban areas. The development of the Freight, Transport and Land Use Strategy will go a long way to achieving this goal.

Integrated Transport plans

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By providing developers with assistance in integrated transport planning, government can be better assured of a positive outcome for the community.

Topic 20: Urban Design

Importance 5 ●●●●●

Comment:

Melbourne 2030 has provided great guidance and been successful in repositioning good Urban Design outcomes for the city as being a key component of the future vision for Melbourne. The increased focus for Urban Design, and understanding of the links between the various directions within M2030 that contribute to good design outcomes, is particularly well dealt with when addressing broad structural challenges facing the metropolitan area and at identified key hubs such as transit cities and activity centres.

In this respect Melbourne 2030 has dealt with the easy places to achieve good urban design outcomes and greater city sustainability. However, it has fallen short in providing guidance on the predominant type and most unsustainable city form – the vast tracts of suburbia that exist within Melbourne.

The question then arises: how do we achieve improved urban design outcomes and greater city sustainability in our pre-existing suburban areas?

This has been a major identifiable gap in Melbourne 2030 and its application in relation to Urban Design. The focus needs to be directed towards the suburban areas in a similar manner to that focus that has been given to the Activity Centres. This would provide guidance on urban design methods, approaches and techniques for retrofitting vast tracts of the metropolitan area for sustainability.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that a number of actions are led by Department of Planning and Community Development:

- A forum is convened to discuss an urban design led approach to retrofitting suburbia for sustainability;
- Applicable examples of retrofitted suburbia from local, national and international contexts are identified by DPCD to provide inspiration for what is achievable in Melbourne;
- Guidelines are developed by DPCD to assist local government and the development industry with practical tools to retrofit suburbia for sustainability.

Rationale:

Suburbia, the predominant typology existent in metropolitan Melbourne, offers the greatest challenge to improving sustainability within the existing city's structure. Currently there is a lack of focused debate on the challenge that exists within these areas and practical guidance on what needs to occur as we move towards 2030. As such, a focus similar to that which has been applied to Activity Centres under Melbourne 2030 also needs to be applied to the vast extent of suburbia that is between the Activity Centres.

Executive Summary

Maribyrnong City Council welcomes the opportunity to participate in the Melbourne 2030 Audit and is committed to its focus of a more sustainable Melbourne for all. Council is generally supportive of the directions of Melbourne 2030 and sees the strategy as a means to achieving the goal of a more sustainable Melbourne.

In saying this there are many challenges that Melbourne 2030 needs to address if the strategy is to be successful. One of the main challenges is sustainability. The emergence of global warming as a serious threat to the environment and the way we live means urgent action is needed to get the core message of Melbourne 2030 back on track. Other main challenges include gaining wide spread community support for the strategy, filling policy gaps within state and local planning legislation, and ongoing funding arrangements for the implementation of policies and projects. Particularly of concern for Maribyrnong and the western metropolitan area are the housing affordability crisis and providing jobs and economic growth.

The State Government will need to make serious decisions and financial choices in dealing with the challenges of Melbourne 2030. This will only be achieved by creating more sustainable outcomes in the planning for Melbourne, which will need to include:

- more public transport to get people out of cars;
- integrated transport planning;
- getting more freight on rail;
- more energy efficient design;
- water sensitive urban design;
- providing local employment so people don't have to travel far and economic growth of the western region;
- more affordable housing; and
- retrofitting our existing suburbs for sustainable living.

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One of the key areas that has yet to be addressed in the implementation of Melbourne 2030 is how to make our existing suburban areas (distinct from activity centres) more sustainable. Considering the majority of Melbournians live within the established suburban belt, this area has received little attention, maybe due to the fact that it is a significant challenge to retrofit sustainability across the large suburban expanse, as apposed to activity centres or new outer suburban developments. It will require considerable thought and the planning will need to start now if we are going to make Melbourne a sustainable city for all its inhabitants.

Another key aspect to the success of Melbourne 2030 is the need for a “Whole of Government” approach to land use and infrastructure. There needs to be better coordination between departments and agencies, and a whole of government response to projects, such as rezonings.

State Government has to recognise that the implementation of Melbourne 2030 costs Councils significant money and resources to undertake the necessary planning to achieve positive outcomes for the community. State Government should consider these added costs, and budget appropriate monies through a clear long term funding initiative program.

The State Government also needs to consider the planning tools available to Councils to undertake good planning outcomes, particularly around the issues of ecological sustainable design, housing affordability, and public open space levies. Developer contributions are an ongoing concern for Councils.

In all Council believes that Melbourne 2030 has been successful in achieving many positive outcomes for our community. The growing success of Footscray through the “Footscray Renewal” project is but one example of Council and State Government cooperation that has and will continue to result in positive outcomes for the community. If the State Government can replicate this approach for other projects and provide adequate funding to develop and implement these, then Melbourne 2030 will continue to be a strategy that will achieve a more sustainable Melbourne for all.
