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Wednesday, 21 September 2007

Melbourne Planning Audit  
Department of Planning and Community Development  
PO Box 500  
East Melbourne VIC 3002

Dear Sir/Madam

**Greater Dandenong City Council Melbourne 2030 Audit Submission**

The Greater Dandenong City Council appreciates the opportunity to make a submission to the Melbourne 2030 Audit. Greater Dandenong is generally fully supportive of Melbourne 2030.

Council's experience as a Transit City with the involvement of the State Government and VicUrban has proven to be positive and beneficial, with the master planning for the Central Dandenong Activity Centre nearing completion. Further, Council's Dandenong South Industrial Extension Area brought about by the State Government extension of the Urban Growth Boundary to provide for future industrial land has also been a positive experience. The Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development has chaired a reference group of Government agencies to facilitate several agencies in a very complex rezoning and development of the Dandenong South Industrial Extension Area structure plan covering 1000 hectares of rural land adjacent to Greater Dandenong's existing industrial areas.

Melbourne 2030 has provided a whole of Government approach to planning which is evident by the progression of the above mentioned projects. Council has provided below both general and Greater Dandenong specific comments for consideration by the Audit Expert Group. We believe that if these matters are addressed there will be further significant benefits arising from Melbourne 2030.

Activity Centres

1) Council believes that it would be beneficial to investigate the development of an Activity Centre specific zone. It is believed that the development of Activity Centres would better reflect the Melbourne 2030 directions and policy through the creation of such a zone. An Activity Centre Zone would be able to deal with the diverse nature and

activities which make up major activity centres. Greater Dandenong believes that Melbourne 2030 has provided a good policy background for the Central Dandenong

Activity Centre which went through a process of developing and applying a Comprehensive Development Zone. It is however believed that a specific Activity

Centre Zone may have assisted in the faster development and implementation of the Central Dandenong Activity Centre Structure Plan. Importantly an Activity Centre Zone would need to accommodate unique character, local planning objectives or similar matters pertinent to individual Activity Centres.

2) The status of Parkmore Shopping Centre is noted in Melbourne 2030 as a Major Activity Centre (MAC). The shopping centre is in single ownership and has limited opportunities to sensitively develop higher densities of housing or a broad range of activities and use beyond its existing retail uses. Council believes that its status as a Major Activity Centre should be reviewed.

3) Emerging activity centres particularly those in green field sites, and in the case of Greater Dandenong in Keysborough, are currently left to develop by market forces. It is suggested that Melbourne 2030 should provide a template for development with set goals and requirements to be met for the establishment of new activity centres.

4) There is a need to recognise and plan for Bulky goods and Out-of-centre Activity Centres. The purpose of this recognition is to cluster and contain existing Bulky goods and Out-of-centre centres so as to create denser development that may be serviced by public transport in the future.

#### Transport

1) Melbourne 2030 needs to provide more certainty on timely delivery of state infrastructure items such as arterial roads, traffic signals, and public transport services. Infrastructure agencies such as VicRoads and Department of Infrastructure should be included in the master planning for the up grading of infrastructure and be able to provide timelines for the delivery of such items of infrastructure. Forward budgeting methodology for major infrastructure needs a review to ensure timely delivery of State infrastructure.

2) Council advocates for the improvement of Public Transport (PT) to Dandenong South industrial employment areas including the designation of new Smart bus routes connecting to other branches of the Proposed Public Transport Network (PPTN) and the provision of weekend services.

3) Council believes that for the full expression of Dandenong as a Transit City in terms of Melbourne 2030 it requires the improvement of traffic circulation in and around Dandenong Central Activity Centre. This circulation will require the provision of a Stud

Road - Cheltenham Road link. To achieve this higher funding priority within the State's infrastructure program will be required.

4) Melbourne's existing public transport routes are focussed on Melbourne's inner city network, metropolitan Melbourne has poor cross town connections making public transport journeys arduous. The Springvale Road Smart bus is a good example of how to address the problem. The running of a Smart bus on the Eastlink Tollway could be an example of using existing infrastructure to improve linkages between the Public Transport routes radiating from central Melbourne.

#### Housing

1) Council believes that there needs to be demonstrations of cost effective residential dwellings in suburban Activity Centres across Melbourne with an emphasis on sustainable design and amenity. The purpose of these developments is to encourage the private development industry to provide a wider range of housing types. Such demonstration developments should provide incentives for suburban single bedroom dwellings and could include social housing 'pilot projects'.

2) At present the quality of new design (energy, design, liveability) in detached dwellings and apartments is generally poor. Melbourne 2030 needs to strongly encourage the development of innovative affordable design that provides strong environmental and amenity outcomes.

#### General

1) The development of the Structure Plans as currently practiced has a large financial and time commitment imposed on local government. The Structure Plans by the nature of their development become fixed and cumbersome to amend. It is suggested that Structure Plans should be higher level strategic documents that are able to be amended in a cost and time effective manner to enable local area planning to respond to valid changes in market demands.

2) The State Government needs to move actively to articulate the positive Melbourne 2030 message and its broader implication on the community so that community has an understanding of Melbourne 2030 and the notion that it is embraced by all government departments and agencies in the formulation of their budgets and work plans and that it is not solely the domain of local government to implement. A whole of government approach to

Melbourne 2030 needs to be continued actively at all levels of State Government and agencies to assist local government in the application of Melbourne 2030.

3) The Melbourne 2030 directions and policies needs to be more overtly articulated in the Victorian Planning Provisions to ensure in their application at a local level.

4) Where State Planning Policy Framework is an issue at VCAT or Panels Victoria, senior officers of DPCD need to attend to support and explain state policy positions as expressed in the State Planning Policy Framework and Melbourne 2030.

5) The introduction of new State Government policy and legislation needs to be accompanied with appropriately developed tools to implement them. Greater Dandenong City Council was required to develop an appropriate Native Vegetation Precinct Plan template in response to the recent amendments to the Native Vegetation legislation. Council has borne the cost of the Native Vegetation Precinct Plan and is willing to have its developed intellectual property shared. It is Council's concern that major projects have been and will continue to be held up whilst solutions catch up with imposed policy. It is imperative that all new legislation should be accompanied when approved with developed implementing tools/templates that have been tested, are cost neutral to local government, and can be readily and practically used by local government.

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