

# PLAN MELBOURNE SUBMISSION FORM

## SUBMITTER'S DETAILS AND PRIVACY

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- I agree that my comments or submission can be published openly with my name and suburb/town but no other details
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ARE YOU SUBMITTING AS AN INDIVIDUAL OR ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANISATION?

- Individual  
 Organisation

IF ORGANISATION, PLEASE SPECIFY

- Community-based organisation (e.g. groups of community members representing a particular interest or area)  
 Planning and built environment industry (e.g. planning consultants, developers, architects etc and their representative organisations)  
 Transport and infrastructure industry (e.g. transport planners, engineering firms, infrastructure managers e.g. road, rail ports etc)  
 Environment and sustainability industry (e.g. water, waste, energy and conservation professions)  
 Other industry (other for-profit business organisation or an organisation representing business or industry interests)  
 Local government  
 Education and think tanks (universities, academics, schools, and research organisations)  
 Other government departments or agencies  
 Other - Please specify Public Works Professionals

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IF YOU WANT TO PROVIDE SOME OVERALL FEEDBACK OR SUMMARISE YOUR COMMENTS ABOUT PLAN MELBOURNE, PLEASE SELECT THE GENERAL COMMENTS SECTION WHICH CONTAINS FIVE QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO FOCUS ON.

IF YOUR FEEDBACK IS ABOUT A SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION AND HOW IT RELATES TO PLAN MELBOURNE, PLEASE SPECIFY IN THE SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION SECTION.

## PLEASE MAIL TO:

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*OR*

## SCAN AND EMAIL TO:

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VIC Division

**IPWEA**

INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC WORKS  
ENGINEERING AUSTRALIA

## **PLAN MELBOURNE – Metropolitan Planning Strategy**

**Submission by the Institute Public Works Engineering Australasia (Victoria Division) (IPWEAvic)**

### **Introduction**

Plan Melbourne is an extensive, visionary document. All Victorians need to think carefully about what kind of city they want Melbourne to be in 2050 and actively participate in the consultative process offered by the State Government.

The IPWEAvic has extensive technical knowledge on the planning, provision and maintenance of the physical infrastructure and environment that is integral to the daily lives and well being of existing and future communities. The IPWEAvic is therefore pleased to have this opportunity to provide a submission to the State Government on this key strategic plan.

There is no doubt that Melbourne faces considerable challenges as it continues to grow. The desire to see this growth coupled with success is supported. This growth is creating and will continue to create strains upon, not only to the how and where of new and infill/renewal development, but on how to address the necessary maintenance and upgrading (if required) of the existing ageing infrastructure. Any spare capacity which was the legacy of previous generations is almost exhausted and any increase in density in existing areas must ensure that it supported with contributions to the invisible infrastructure as well as the visible.

It is important that any strategy, which intends to be relevant for over thirty-five years and ultimately influence how Melburnians live and contribute to the State's economy and community life, takes a strategic and integrated approach to the challenges that lie ahead.

IPWEAvic strongly recommends the application of well researched integrated Service Planning at both State & Local Government levels to inform the timely provision of appropriate infrastructure to support the liveability of our communities.

The concept of a city of 20 minute neighbourhoods has not been well defined. This notion is clearly variable, dependent on where you live or seek to live. Twenty minutes for inner city residents, usually refers to how far they can travel by the sustainable transport modes they have at their disposal. For residents in growth areas, it is more commonly understood to be how they can travel by the transport option(s) they have access to which is usually private passenger vehicle due to the lack of transport choices in growth areas. While many would applaud the prospect of being able to reach their destination in 20 minutes by public transport, the ambiguity around the theme's definition and consequently its delivery do not serve the community well.

The polycentric city theme is supported. The distribution of opportunity across Melbourne for recreation, employment and to provide diversity is vital to providing choice, a cornerstone of economic success and growth. Whilst the concept is supported, its achievement may require government to decentralise some government services to create employment opportunities as a catalyst for local employment in growth areas and to reduce disproportionate travel to the Melbourne CBD.

Planning and delivery of Transport and transport infrastructure opportunities will provide a means for the wider community to participate fully in society and the economy as employees, employers and service users. Transport infrastructure projects also provide important contributions to the economy themselves. It is noted that public transport projects also contribute after they are completed by creating jobs in the service sector.

From a sector perspective, it is clear that the State Government recognises the need for high quality infrastructure and a strong pipeline of projects which will create jobs not just for the short term, but also for the foreseeable future. These jobs are not just in the construction sector. The engineering profession greatly values these pipelines, as ensuring that there are opportunities to train and develop young professionals whose skills will be needed in future decades.

When these pipelines break or unacceptably restrict the delivery of major infrastructure projects (eg. Transport, education and health infrastructure), it becomes too expensive to retain these skills. A concentration of this training in a single project is a high risk approach, and may ultimately fail the Victorian community. While projects can be delivered by overseas providers, what is commonly observed is that the proper understanding of the community's nuanced expectations is not achieved, resulting in poor project satisfaction, and ultimately a political backlash. It is strongly urged that the infrastructure project pipeline must be diverse, providing a range of small and medium projects as well as large projects to ensure that competition is maintained for potential changed economic circumstances. Future generations of taxpayers will be well placed to benefit from this approach.

The Plan's expressed support for public transport projects such as regional rail link and Metro Rail is supported as part of a suite of projects that will meet Melbourne's needs.

The Planning Minister has commented in his foreword that he sees Melbourne's CBD operating on a 24 hour basis. This will be most successful if it is supported by expanded public transport operating timetables, to ensure that employees as well as customers have choices on how to safely travel to and from the CBD on a 24/7 basis. It should be noted that mobility and access should be universal services available to all communities, irrespective of their geographical location.

## **Outcome 1 – Delivering Jobs and Investment**

### Direction 1.5.6 - Third Airport

IPWEAvic supports the commencement of planning for a third airport for Melbourne. Observation of the difficulties experienced in Sydney demonstrates the value of commencing this process at an early opportunity.

### Direction 1.6 - Project Pipeline.

IPWEAvic fully supports this concept. Delivery of the pipeline of major projects that are

fundamental to the implementation of the Plan will require a public/private funding partnership over a long period – private/developer investment alone will not be sufficient.

The intergenerational aspect of all the major projects warrants government borrowing to contribute to the infrastructure cost.

The proposed timing of delivery of the Plan's long term vision requires review. Several designated long term projects must be accelerated to be delivered in the medium term. This will require the requisite planning and programming to be undertaken in the short term. This includes:

1. The rail extension to Melbourne Airport;
2. The East-West link to connect the M80 to the Eastern Freeway;
3. The grade separation of metropolitan rail crossings on a 'rolling annual program' basis;
4. Undertaking the existing arterial road upgrade backlog in the short to medium term;
5. Annual bus service expansion and service upgrades to service growth areas (buses are the key public transport service capable of responding flexibly to the immediate needs of greenfield growth); and
6. Ensuring all communities, irrespective of their geographical location, have equal access to transport choices.

## **Outcome 2 - Housing Choice and Affordability**

The proposed reformed residential zones are supported in principle, but community tension at the time of declaration of the boundaries around Neighbourhood Residential Zones and General Residential Zones will demand transparent community engagement.

Housing choice and affordability must accommodate the needs of key workers – eg. emergency services workers (police, fire services, ambulance), medical workers and teachers in renewal and greenfield areas.

Provision of essential infrastructure (transport, health and education services) must be provided in tandem with growth, be it infill/renewal or greenfield.

### Direction 2.2 - Housing near Public Transportation

The approach of increasing the number of homes close to existing public transport is supported. It is also proposed however, that the complementary strategy of increasing the amount of public transport, taking it closer to more homes should be a part of the overall strategy. Public transport should be an option available to a greater number of Victorians, and the benefits for property owners who are fortunate enough to be close to existing public transport should be extended to more Victorians. This argument also applies to Initiative 2.2.4.

### Initiative 2.2.5 - Remediation

It is noted that the document discusses the desire to expedite remediation of land in some areas. The rehabilitation and enlivening of otherwise fallow properties is supported by IPWEA vic. Nonetheless, it is considered that appropriate care must be taken with such sites, as the final responsibility for these decisions on the adequacy of the remediation, when the residual onus becomes distributed across a high number of residents may prove contentious.

## **Outcome 3 - A More Connected Melbourne**

### SmartRoads

IPWEA vic supports the recent adoption of SmartRoads by VicRoads as a mechanism to better understand the different uses and priorities of our major road networks. This more sophisticated approach to road infrastructure management and planning is still being imbedded in VicRoads, and the benefits are not fully realised.

### Initiative 3.1.1 - East West Link

It is noted that the arguments for more options for city bypasses appear to be counter to the objective of delivering a 20 minute city.

### Initiative 3.1.2 - Melbourne Metro

This initiative is supported as a mechanism for increasing transport diversity and supporting the proposed growth of jobs in the CBD. It is noted that no timeframes are detailed in this document. This is considered to be a missed opportunity. IPWEA vic would prefer to see simultaneous project development and funding for these two projects over the current sequential model.

### Initiative 3.1.3 - Trams

The continued upgrading of Melbourne's trams is also supported. It is agreed that the tram network serves not only as an important transport mechanism, but also as a strong element in the visual iconography of Melbourne and as a delight to tourists (recognised as an important major component of the state's economy).

### Initiative 3.1.4 - Buses

Buses are recognised as servicing a considerable proportion of Melbourne. As an on road option, the continued expansion of bus infrastructure is vital to ensure that the funding tied up in the rolling stock provides best value.

### Initiative 3.1.5 - Cycling and Walking

These areas are seen as too important to be left solely to local government to deliver. Nothing speaks of importance as strongly as a commitment of funding. These projects should not be underestimated as being able to deliver excellent economic return when transport and wider economic benefits are correctly included in the economic analysis.

### Initiative 3.2.3 - Removal of level crossings

The removal of level crossings is supported by IPWEA vic. It is stressed however that this should be achieved with as little negative impact to local pedestrian access as possible, or one problem will simply be replaced with another.

### Initiative 3.2.4 - Development of suburban road system

It is agreed that the suburban arterial road system needs greater support and improvement. The identified growth in the outer areas will place greater demands on the already stressed existing arterial road system. Contributions from the development of these outer areas must be made available in conjunction with State funding to upgrade these roads.

This also applies to Initiative 3.3.1.

#### Initiative 3.4.1 - Pedestrian friendly neighbourhoods

This applies in older and also newer neighbourhoods. Many of which have been constructed with poor pedestrian infrastructure. One possible solution is to consider the selected introduction of more local street shared zones in precincts where this is supported by the community.

Further feasibility Investigation into the Baywest freight project is suggested given its proximity to major transport infrastructure (road and rail), the Outer Metropolitan Transport corridor and the growth to the south west of Melbourne (ie Geelong, Wyndham and Melton).

### **Outcome 4 - Liveable Communities and Neighbourhoods.**

#### Initiative 4.4.2 - Education, Health, Recreation and Cultural Facilities

IPWEA vic supports the objective of coordinating these types of infrastructure. It is observed that the creation of a flexible facility is often more difficult than the creation of a single purpose facility. Therefore the planning of these developments must be assisted to ensure that they are available in a time to be of use to the community.

#### Direction 4.5 - Open Space

It is noted that the document proposes more open space be created using innovative approaches. This is supported, however, it is noted that innovations should also be considered when risk assessment and management is being considered. Many of the current dilemmas faced between levels of government arise from extremely cautious risk management approaches which ultimately reduce flexibility and erode the potential economic value that could be derived from a new facility or space.

This also applies to Direction 4.6. (Public places)

The creation of medium and high density developments in renewal and greenfield locations will demand specific attention to the provision of open space for the communities that will live in these areas to maintain a healthy lifestyle as part of a sustainable urban structure. This will likely require higher than existing legislated open space provision and regard for open space distribution to ensure walking access will be important. Making our cities greener is likely to fall into the public domain as medium and high density developments will be challenged to achieve this on their residential sites. The space allocated for access (ie road reservations) and open space will require innovative design and adequate geometry to allow opportunities for appropriate greening of neighbourhoods.

#### Direction 4.8 - Design Excellence

It is considered that design excellence also encompasses the many “invisible” aspects of projects such as the essential service systems and the operation of a facility. This emphasis on excellence is strongly supported.

Future proofing government investments is a challenge, and it is proposed that this aspect of design should also be strongly recognised and feted.

## **Outcome 5 - Environment and Water**

### Initiative 5.1.1 - Majority of new dwellings to be close to Public Transport

Earlier comments have supported this objective and expanded on it.

### Initiative 5.2.2 - Waterways

IPWEA Vic supports the protection of waterways. Failure to do so reflects a poor understanding of whole of life costs to the community. It could be argued that historic failings in this area have resulted in costs now being borne by today's community. Intergenerational cost shifting is to be avoided as strongly as inter government cost shifting.

### 5.2.3 - Coastlines

While not applying to every sector of government, IPWEA Vic also supports the protection of coastlines as providing important social as well as economic and environment benefits for Victoria.

### Direction 5.5

The elevation of infrastructure management understanding in the wider community to recognise the whole of life cycle aspect is strongly supported by IPWEA Vic. This careful approach is consistent with the earlier comments about the undesirability of intergenerational cost shifting.

IPWEA Vic strongly supports the application of this principle in the integration of the whole of water cycle management to deliver sustainable and resilient urban development.

### Initiative 5.5.1 - Water Supply Management Plans

IPWEA Vic support this practice as part of its objectives of seeking to achieve better understanding of hidden infrastructure, and the true cost of projects. Proper acknowledgement of costs and use of risk management tools around changing environmental conditions is vital.

### Direction 5.6 - Water and Sewerage

The above concerns are also applicable to this element of essential infrastructure. The age and capacity of much of this existing infrastructure demands critical assessment in conjunction with any proposed renewal or infill development to determine if upgrades and/or reviewed asset management plans are required. This is merely good management practice. The IPWEA Vic is becoming increasingly concerned that this important obligation is not being undertaken with sufficient rigour for all developments.

### Direction 5.7 - Energy Reduction and Clean Energy

IPWEA Vic considers this to be an under developed aspect of Plan Melbourne.

Recognition of innovations and new approaches must be taken to the next level of encouraging wider application and implementation of these technologies and especially seeking opportunities to retrofit them to existing built infrastructure.

IPWEA Vic supports the potential expansion of environmental upgrade agreements beyond the City of Melbourne as a possible mechanism to encourage faster uptake.

### 5.8 Waste Management

IPWEA Vic has separately provided a submission to the Metropolitan Waste Management Group and Sustainability Victoria on their draft strategies. (See attachments)

## **Outcome 6 – A State of Cities**

The wider view of the document looking beyond Melbourne to the regional centres is supported by IPWEA Vic. Planning to enhance the lives of all Victorians will provide greater choice for our increasing population, and also ensure that facilities are created to meet the ageing demographic of the community.

## **Outcome 7 – Implementation: Delivering Better Governance**

### Direction 7.2 - Local Government delivery timing

IPWEA Vic supports improvements that will better align the delivery of infrastructure with the provision of funding. It is considered that the simplest mechanism for ensuring this is to require developers to contribute more to community infrastructure by recognising that the area impacted by their project is much wider than the streets bounding the site. Impacts can be felt considerable distances from developments. Many of the dilemmas discussed in Plan Melbourne can be considered to be the legacy of too narrow a focus being placed on the area for which development contributions can be sought.

### Direction 7.4 - New Funding Sources

IPWEA Vic supports the exploration of new funding sources and mechanisms including reconsideration of developer contributions, value capture as described in the document. Consideration should also be given to road tolling and new intelligent vehicle technology, whilst productivity gains must also be rigorously pursued.

The scale of the challenges associated with delivering the outcomes articulated in the Plan will require funding partnerships between all three levels of government and the private sector. This should extend to a critical review of existing tax systems, including the GST.

Failure to obtain adequate longitudinal funding will result in further widening of the existing infrastructure gap, and urgent action on this is encouraged.

## **Conclusion**

IPWEA Vic welcomes the comprehensive vision of Plan Melbourne and its integration of many previously segregated aspects of infrastructure planning, funding and delivery. The inclusion of whole of lifecycle thinking and the elevation of previously overlooked infrastructure are highly supported inclusions in this major strategic plan.

However, some gaps remain. Plan Melbourne's must deliver outcomes that work for all Melbournians. It provides a new way of thinking about development for greenfields sites. Greater clarity around how renewal and infill developments can be harmoniously delivered in established areas are suggested for inclusion in the Plan.

It is understood that this document is to be implemented in January 2014. IPWEA Vic looks forward to the monitoring and further adaption of the document to reflect the learnings which arise during the Plan Melbourne implementation. IPWEA Vic is keen to actively participate in and contribute technical knowledge to the successful implementation of the Plan over the next thirty-five years.