

Submission Template

Chapter 2: Growth, challenges, fundamental principles and key concepts

1. The discussion paper includes the option (option 5, page 16) that Plan Melbourne better define the key opportunities and challenges for developing Melbourne and outlines some key points for considerations in Box 1. *Are there any other opportunities or challenges that we should be aware of?*

2. The discussion paper includes the option (option 6, page 18) that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals be included in Plan Melbourne 2016. *Do you agree with this idea? If so, how should the goals be incorporated into Plan Melbourne 2016? Choose one option:*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Please explain your response:

3. The discussion paper includes the option (option 7, page 18) to lock down the existing urban growth boundary and modify the action (i.e. the action under Initiative 6.1.1.1 in Plan Melbourne 2014) to reflect this. *Do you agree that there should be a permanent urban growth boundary based on the existing boundary? Choose one option:*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Please explain your response:

4. The discussion paper includes the option (option 8, page 18) that Plan Melbourne 2016 should more clearly articulate the values of green wedge and peri-urban areas to be protected and safeguarded. *How can Plan Melbourne 2016 better articulate the values of green wedge and peri-urban areas?*

5. The discussion paper includes the option (option 9, page 18) to remove the concept of an Integrated Economic Triangle and replace it with a high-level 2050 concept map for Melbourne (i.e. a map that shows the Expanded Central City, National Employment Clusters, Metropolitan Activity Centres, State-Significant Industrial Precincts, Transport Gateways, Health and Education Precincts and Urban Renewal Precincts). *What elements should be included in a 2050 concept map for Melbourne?*

6. The discussion paper includes the option (option 10, page 18) that the concept of Melbourne as a polycentric city (i.e. a city with many centres) with 20-minute neighbourhoods (i.e. the ability to meet your everyday (non-work) needs locally, primarily within a 20-minute walk) be better defined. *Do the definitions adequately clarify the concepts? Choose one option:*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Please explain your response:

7. The discussion paper includes options (options 11-17, pages 23 to 27) that identify housing, climate change, people place and identity and partnerships with local government as key concepts that need to be incorporated into Plan Melbourne 2016. *Do you support the inclusion of these as key concepts in Plan Melbourne 2016?*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- x Strongly Agree

Please explain your response:

An enduring attraction of new housing estates is a consistency of housing styles and the security of knowing that the streetscape will not be changing in the near future. There is no such security in established suburbs where every 'For Sale' sign is a harbinger of higher density development, the demolition of houses of similar style and the construction of a hodgepodge of styles and standards of building across Melbourne (all executed under the banner of 'diversity') that renders each suburb indistinguishable from the next. There is nothing to aspire to and no guarantee that neighbouring properties will still be there in a few years time. Why bother striving to buy a house? Why bother aiming to live in a more affluent suburb when it will likely soon succumb to the great slumming down of suburbia?

With the virtually unfettered housing demolition and the construction of new 'affordable' (and

often cheaply built) dwellings, valued neighbourhood character attributes are being lost. Solid older homes are demolished only to be replaced with cheaply built modern houses or multi-unit developments. Often where an old house is destroyed to build another single dwelling, the new dwelling has nothing over the old dwelling that a sympathetic renovation could not have achieved, with far less impact on the streetscape and neighbouring properties. So why don't our demolition rules require applicants to make a stronger case for why a building should be demolished? There are too few hurdles to demolishing a building and too few incentives to renovate and existing one.

This hodgepodge of design gives Melbourne an appearance little different from any other second rate city. Why would any tourist wish to visit here? What is our appeal? Much of Melbourne's charm has been lost already and is not being replaced with something better.

8. Any other comments about chapter 2 (growth, challenges, fundamental principles and key concepts)?

Chapter 3: Delivering jobs and investment

9. The discussion paper includes the option (option 20, page 30) to revise the Delivering Jobs and Investment chapter in Plan Melbourne 2014 to ensure the significance and roles of the National Employment Clusters as places of innovation and knowledge-based employment are clear. How can Plan Melbourne 2016 better articulate the significance and roles of the National Employment Clusters as places of innovation and knowledge-based employment?

10. The discussion paper includes two options (page 30) relating to National Employment Clusters, being:

Option 21A: Focus planning for National Employment Clusters on core institutions and businesses

Option 21B: Take a broader approach to planning for National Employment Clusters that looks beyond the core institutions and businesses

Which option do you prefer?

- Option 21A
 Option 21B

Please explain why you have chosen your preferred option:

11. The discussion paper includes the option (option 22, page 30) to broaden the East Werribee National Employment Cluster to call it the Werribee National Employment Cluster in order to encompass the full range of activities and employment activities that make up Werribee. This could include the Werribee Activity Centre and the Werribee Park Tourism Precinct. *Do you agree with broadening the East Werribee Cluster? Choose one option:*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

12. The discussion paper includes the option (option 23, page 30) to broaden the Dandenong South National Employment Cluster to call it the Dandenong National Employment Cluster in order to encompass the full range of activities and employment activities that make up Dandenong. This could include the Dandenong Metropolitan Activity Centre and Chisholm Institute of TAFE. *Do you agree with broadening the Dandenong South National Employment Cluster? Choose one option:*

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

13. The discussion paper includes options (options 24 to 30, pages 33 and 34) that consider the designation of activity centres and criteria for new activity centres. *Do you have any comments on the designation of activity centres or the criteria for new activity centres as outlined in the discussion paper?*

14. The discussion paper includes the option (option 31, page 35) to evaluate the range of planning mechanisms available to protect strategic agricultural land. *What types of agricultural land and agricultural activities need to be protected and how could the planning system better protect them?*

- 15. The discussion paper includes the option (option 32, page 36) to implement the outcomes of the Extractive Industries Taskforce through the planning scheme, including Regional Growth Plans, to affirm that extractive industries resources are protected to provide an economic supply of materials for construction and road industries. *Do you have any comments in relation to extractive industries?***

- 16. Any other comments about chapter 3 (delivering jobs and investment)?**

Chapter 4: A more connected Melbourne

17. The discussion paper includes the option (option 34, page 42) to include the Principal Public Transport Network in Plan Melbourne 2016. Do you agree that the Principal Public Transport Network should inform land use choices and decisions? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

18. The discussion paper includes the option (option 35, page 43) to incorporate references to Active Transport Victoria (which aims to increase participation and safety among cyclists and pedestrians) in Plan Melbourne 2016. How should walking and cycling networks influence and integrate with land use?

19. Any other comments about chapter 4 (a more connected Melbourne)?

Chapter 5: Housing

20. The discussion paper includes the option (option 36A, page 46) to establish a 70/30 target where established areas provide 70 per cent of Melbourne's new housing supply and greenfield growth areas provide 30 per cent. Do you agree with establishing a 70/30 target for housing supply? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

21. What, if any, planning reforms are necessary to achieve a 70/30 target?

22. The discussion paper includes the option (option 36B, page 46) to investigate a mechanism to manage the sequence and density of the remaining Precinct Structure Plans based on land supply needs. Do you agree with this idea? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

23. The discussion paper includes the option (option 36C, page 46) to focus metropolitan planning on unlocking housing supply in established areas, particularly within areas specifically targeted for growth and intensification. Do you agree with this idea? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

24. The discussion paper includes options (option 37, page 50) to better define and communicate Melbourne’s housing needs by either:

Option 37A: Setting housing targets for metropolitan Melbourne and each sub-region relating to housing diversity, supply and affordability.

Option 37B: Developing a metropolitan Housing Strategy that includes a Housing Plan.

Which option do you prefer? Choose one option:

- Option 37A
- Option 37B
- Other

Why?

25. The discussion paper includes the option (option 38, page 52) to introduce a policy statement in Plan Melbourne 2016 to support population and housing growth in defined locations and acknowledge that some areas within defined locations will require planning protection based on their valued character. How could Plan Melbourne 2016 clarify those locations in which higher scales of change are supported?

26. The discussion paper includes the option (option 39, page 52) to clarify the direction to ‘protect the suburbs’. How could Plan Melbourne 2016 clarify the direction to protect Melbourne and its suburbs from inappropriate development?

The ruling under Section 79 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* that allows applicants to apply to VCAT if a local council has not made a decision within 60 days has been a gift to sly developers and encouraged an increase in poorly presented applications, rife with inaccuracies and inconsistencies that ignore the local planning policy and take far longer to assess than the cut-and-paste job that prepared them. It is an unnecessary burden on Council Planning staff and distressing to the local community who are confronted with outlandish development proposals and dragged into VCAT for no good reason. (Need I mention the ‘personal touch’ of some developers who choose to harass community members at home?) State Government would rather put local councils and the community on trial than require developers to build appropriately for a particular area. Clearly the State Government supports inappropriate development and corrupt building practices.

One obvious way to clarify the direction to protect Melbourne and its suburbs from inappropriate development is to make the local planning policies rules rather than mere guidelines that can be argued away at VCAT. Give the local planning policies as much weight as the Rescode and stop letting these development bullies waste everyone’s time and erode peace in our suburbs.

27. The discussion paper includes the option (option 40, page 56) to clarify the action to apply the Neighbourhood Residential Zone to at least 50 per cent of residential land by:

Option 40A: Deleting the action and replacing it with a direction that clarifies how the residential zones should be applied to respect valued character and deliver housing diversity.

Option 40B: Retain at least 50 per cent as a guide but expand the criteria to enable variations between municipalities.

Which option do you prefer? Choose one option:

- Option 40A
- Option 40B
- Other

Why?

28. The discussion paper includes the option (option 42, page 58) to include an action in Plan Melbourne 2016 to investigate how the building and planning system can facilitate housing that readily adapts to the changing needs of households over the life of a dwelling. In what other ways can Plan Melbourne 2016 support greater housing diversity?

Affordable housing developments usually mean cheaply built dwellings with poor functionality built to the minimum Rescode standard. I have seen narrow doorways and staircases, uneven floors and ill-fitting cabinetry. Bathrooms are a particular hotspot with bathroom doors that barely clear the corner of a bath, shower screen and bathroom doors so close together that their handles can be locked together, and toilets jammed so tightly behind doors that if the door opens while the toilet is in use, the door will collide with the user. Overall the dimensions in these dwellings are very tight with the developer trying to cram far too much 'sophisticated living' into the very limited available space.

The current minimum Rescode Standards, and the privatisation of building inspections, allow developers to construct dwellings that lack basic functionality. Narrow doorways lead to scraped knuckles, bathroom doors too close to the edge of a bath lead to knocked knees, a shower screen door and a bathroom door that lock together could be a calamity for a user who found themselves stuck. Particularly as people age, regular knocks and scrapes become cuts that don't heal and can easily become infected. These small health issues increase the person's reliance on our healthcare system and hasten their decline, leading to an increased burden on our aged care system. It is much cheaper for the government if people age at home rather than in care. Building dwellings that increase the possibility of accidents in the home makes it impossible for occupants to age in place and increases the burden on our health and aged care systems. The minimum Rescode standard needs to be raised. The silver level livable housing requirements provide for a basic level of functionality for ageing in place, and should be the minimum Rescode requirements for all dwellings.

29. A number of options are outlined in the discussion paper (page 58) to improve housing affordability, including:

Option 45A: Consider introducing planning tools that mandate or facilitate or provide incentives to increase social and affordable housing supply.

Option 45B: Evaluate the affordable housing initiative pilot for land sold by government to determine whether to extend this to other suitable land sold by government.

Option 45C: Identify planning scheme requirements that could be waived or reduced without compromising the amenity of social and affordable housing or neighbouring properties.

What other ideas do you have for how Plan Melbourne 2016 can improve housing affordability?

30. Any other comments about chapter 5 (housing)?

Independence and Resilience
Reducing the land area available for people's living space, particularly with regard to affordable housing, eliminates opportunities for independence and resilience (such as growing one's own fruit and vegetables or running a few chooks) in the face of economic adversity, such as unemployment, or the inability to work. Pushing people into smaller and smaller accommodation is effectively making them cap-in-hand beggars for whatever jobs are available, with few avenues for self-reliance to cope with major challenges.

Further, small business is often cited as the largest employer in Australia and often provide inspiration and resources for larger businesses. All small businesses start at home. Living in cramped conditions makes the possibility of starting one's own business far more difficult and will stymie the creative entrepreneurship that keeps Australia's business community vibrant. Without small business, all business becomes the domain of only the very rich.

Restricted Physical Activity for Children

One of the photos in the Plan Melbourne Refresh documentation shows a pregnant mother of a toddler in a park. A pretty picture which I suppose is meant to tell the reader that you don't need a backyard for your kids because Melbourne has parks. What it doesn't show is the same woman 6 months later struggling up three flights of stairs with a baby in pram, a recalcitrant toddler or preschooler and some shopping, somehow fitting the pram through the too narrow front door, and then finding a place to store the pram in a pokey apartment.

When children are small and mothers a more likely to not be in paid work, mothers have more time to take their children to parks. Once children have started school most average income families have discovered that they need two incomes to support their family. Parents are time poor and opportunities to take children to parks are very limited. Families need a backyard so the children have space to play independently while parents can get on with running the household or attending to other children.

At what point does a townhouse become a house? I have seen townhouse designs of up to 5 bedrooms, still with only a mere courtyard of private open space. Clearly these designs are aimed to include families in their target market, but fail to provide realistic living spaces for their needs. The 2007-2008 Australian National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey indicated that one in four children aged 5-17 years are now overweight or obese. Overweight and obesity are the result of an imbalance between the energy consumed and the energy expended continually over time. Building dwellings for families with inadequate space for children to run around removes opportunities for children to use energy incidentally while playing in their own backyard. Without these opportunities, when children are at home they will be more likely to engage in sedentary activities, gain weight and become a future burden on the healthcare system. They are also likely to raise their own children in a similar fashion, extending the healthcare burden for another generation.

Australian Jobs for Today and Tomorrow

While State Government eagerly supports the carving up of our suburbs for development to provide jobs for today, what support is it putting into using Australian construction products and workers? How about providing jobs for tomorrow? Are the dwellings being built even for locals or just visitors?

Chapter 6: A more resilient and environmentally sustainable Melbourne

31. The discussion paper includes the option (option 46, page 69) to introduce Strategic Environmental Principles in Plan Melbourne 2016 to guide implementation of environment, climate change and water initiatives. Do you agree with the inclusion of Strategic Environmental Principles in Plan Melbourne 2016? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

32. The discussion paper includes the option (option 47, page 72) to review policy and hazard management planning tools (such as overlays) to ensure the planning system responds to climate change challenges. Do you agree with this idea? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

33. The discussion paper includes options (options 48 and 49, page 72) to update hazard mapping to promote resilience and avoid unacceptable risk, and update periodically the planning system and supporting legislative and policy frameworks to reflect best available climate change science and data. Do you have any comments on these options?

34. The discussion paper includes the option (option 50, page 73) to incorporate natural hazard management criteria into Victorian planning schemes to improve planning in areas exposed to climate change and environmental risks. Do you agree with this idea? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

35. The discussion paper includes the option (option 51, page 75) to investigate consideration of climate change risks in infrastructure planning in the land use planning system, including consideration of an 'infrastructure resilience test'. Do you agree that a more structured approach to consideration of climate change risks in infrastructure planning has merit? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

36. The discussion paper includes the option (option 52, page 76) to strengthen high-priority habitat corridors throughout Melbourne and its peri-urban areas to improve long-term health of key flora and fauna habitat. Do you agree with this idea? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

37. The discussion paper includes options (options 53 and 54, pages 78 and 79) to introduce strategies to cool our city including: increasing tree canopy, vegetated ground cover and permeable surfaces; use of Water Sensitive Urban Design and irrigation; and encouraging the uptake of green roofs, facades and walls, as appropriate materials used for pavements and buildings with low heat-absorption properties. What other strategies could be beneficial for cooling our built environment?

Green walls require constant irrigation and are labour intensive to maintain making them an expensive form of gardening. While their maintenance and upkeep might occur in a high-end commercial or high-end residential environment where funds are available to be directed toward presentation, in an 'affordable' housing situation the cost of maintenance and upkeep is usually soon let go in order to direct limited available funds towards necessities.

Tall trees and adequate space for their healthy growth is a much cheaper green cooling alternative to maintain, making it a far more reliable option for cooling 'affordable' housing.

38. The discussion paper includes the option (option 56A, page 80) to investigate opportunities in the land use planning system, such as strong supporting planning policy, to facilitate the increased uptake of renewable and low-emission energy in Melbourne and its peri-urban areas. Do you agree that stronger land use planning policies are needed to facilitate the uptake of renewable and low-emission energy? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

The term 'affordable housing' only applies to the purchase price, not the ongoing cost of living in the dwelling. Heating and cooling are major household expenses. While the Rescode lists the minimum building standards and developers are free to build to a higher standard, it is well known by Councils that most developers only build to the minimum Rescode Standard, particularly when constructing so-called 'affordable' housing.

Social and affordable housing in particular should be insulated to a standard that obviates using active heating and cooling systems on all but days of the most extreme temperatures. The minimum Rescode insulation standard is too low to achieve this and needs to be raised.

Similarly, the cost of electricity is a major expense for households, and every social or affordable dwelling should be fitted with at least a 1.5Kwh solar electricity system to offset these costs. There is currently no requirement for this in the Rescode.

39. The discussion paper includes options (options 56B and 56C, page 80) to strengthen the structure planning process to facilitate future renewable and low-emission energy generation technologies in greenfield and urban renewal precincts and require consideration of the costs and benefits of renewable or low-emission energy options across a precinct. Do you agree that the structure planning process should facilitate the uptake of renewable and low-emission technologies in greenfield and urban renewal precincts? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

40. The discussion paper includes the option (option 57, page 81) to take an integrated approach to planning and building to strengthen Environmentally Sustainable Design, including consideration of costs and benefits. Do you agree that an integrated planning and building approach would strengthen Environmentally Sustainable Design? Choose one option:

- Strongly Disagree

- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Why?

41. Any other comments about chapter 6 (a more resilient and environmentally sustainable Melbourne)?

Compost

The Australian Bureau of Statistics website states that 47% of all waste from households is organic waste. Currently, there does not appear to be any Council supported program for dealing with compostable waste, and it would appear that this valuable resource is all going to landfill.

Does the Government intend for Councils to provide a separate waste removal service for compostable waste? Should apartment dwellers place their compostable waste in a green waste bin? (Many apartment buildings don't have a green waste bin). Will the planning process be factoring in a Hot Rot Composting System for all dwellings that lack the space to compost their own?

How does the Victorian State Government intend to manage the massive increases in compostable waste directed to landfill as a result of rapidly increasing numbers of townhouse and apartment dwellers?

Ref: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/4602.0.55.005Main%20Features42013?opendocument>)

Chapter 7: New planning tools

- 42. The discussion paper includes options (options 58A and 58B, page 84) to evaluate whether new or existing planning tools (zones and overlays) could be applied to National Employment Clusters and urban renewal areas. *Do you have any comments on the planning tools (zones and overlays) needed for National Employment Clusters and urban renewal areas?***

- 43. The discussion paper includes options (options 59A and 59B, page 84) to evaluate the merits of code assessment for multi-unit development, taking into account the findings from the 'Better Apartments' process, to either replace ResCode with a codified process for multi-unit development or identify ResCode standards that can be codified. *Do you have any comments on the merits of code assessment for multi-unit development?***

- 44. Any other comments about chapter 7 (new planning tools)?**

Chapter 8: Implementation

45. The discussion paper includes the option (options 1 and 61, pages 14 and 90) of Plan Melbourne being an enduring strategy with a long-term focus supported by a 'rolling' implementation plan. Do you agree that separating the long-term strategy from a shorter-term supporting implementation plan is a good idea?

46. If a separate implementation plan is developed for Plan Melbourne 2016 what will make it effective?

47. Any other comments about chapter 8 (implementation)?