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Q3. Name of organisation Friends of Merri Creek Inc.

Q4. Please select from one of the options below I am making this submission on behalf of an organisation. Submissions by organisations will be published including the name of the organisation.

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Q8. I have read the relevant terms of use and consent to the conditions outlined within these. Yes

Q9. Please note that submissions where the relevant terms of use have not been agreed to may not be considered as part of the Plan Melbourne Refresh. Please describe below your reasons for submitting despite together with any specific reasons for not agreeing to the terms outlined above.

not answered

Q10. The discussion paper includes the option (option 5, page16) 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?

A metropolitan open space network for people and nature. A well-connected network of public open space enhances livability; encourages healthy outdoor activity and sustainable non-motorised transport; and protects waterways, water quality, distinctive landscapes and natural heritage; maintains vital drought refuges and habitat corridors for movement of native animals. There are gaps in the network in established suburbs, and an urgent need for strategic open space network planning in urbanising areas.

Q11. 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?

Strongly Agree

Q12. Please explain your response

not answered

Q13. 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?

Strongly Agree

Q14. Please explain your response

Further expansion would jeopardise the intrinsic natural values of our environment and place endangered species and ecosystems at further risk. Previous exercises such as Melbourne 2030 demonstrated that there is still ample opportunity to handle population growth within existing boundaries.

Q15. 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 wedges and peri-urban areas?

We support the submission by the Green Wedges Coalition on this issue. We would add that the values of waterway corridors and major parks and reserves should also be more clearly articulated, to be protected and safeguarded.

Q16. 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 other elements should be included in a 2050 concept map for Melbourne?

not answered

Q17. **The discussion paper includes the option (option 10, pages 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 proposed definitions adequately clarify the concepts?**

not answered

Q18. **Please explain your response**

not answered

Q19. **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 Agree

Q20. **Please explain your response**

not answered

Q21. **Any other comments about chapter 2 (growth, challenges, fundamental principles and key concepts)?**

Introduction As a respected and highly experienced environmental organisation which has built up considerable knowledge and expertise in our local waterway's catchment, the Friends of Merri Creek have not only advocated for the restoration and conservation of the Merri Creek in Melbourne's north but have also mobilised our community to take practical measures to achieve our mission. We do need policy and political support to do this however, and in recent years we have been engaged in a constant struggle to ensure that new developments in the catchment respect and enhance the intrinsic natural values of the Merri Creek, protecting ecosystems and ensuring the provision of ample open space. It is a mixed bag with a number of losses but a few wins too. We firmly believe that this waterway and (for that matter, all waterways in the metropolitan area) is a major asset on environmental, social and economic grounds and its restoration and conservation is critical. Protection and management are paramount to ensure that remnant values are not lost and are there for future generations. We make one general point in relation to Plan Melbourne 2016: The planning process must have integrity. Any future planning regime in Melbourne and across the state must avoid for example the fate of the Melbourne Strategic Assessment whereby Precinct Structure Plans were moving ahead rapidly even before consideration of the critical Biodiversity Conservation Strategies, leading to poor planning decisions and threats to endangered species and biodiversity. The narrowing of the creekside corridor for the Growling Grass Frog in Donnybrook is an exemplar of how not to do things. Planning processes must have integrity, they must be rigorous and and respect ALL stakeholders, not just a few. We support the suggestion (p26) of a separate chapter on Place and Identity to elevate the distinctiveness of Melbourne's built and natural environments. This should refer to the importance of planning and urban design that is responsive to indigenous ecological communities, as demonstrated in Start with the Grasslands <http://vnpa.org.au/admin/library/attachments/PDFs/Reports/Start%20with%20the%20Grasslands.pdf>

Q22. Climate change comments

not answered

Q23. 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?

not answered

Q24. 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?

not answered

Q25. Please explain why you have chosen your preferred option

not answered

Q26. The discussion paper includes the option (option 22, pages 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?

not answered

Q27. Why?

not answered

Q28. **The discussion paper includes the option (option 23, pages 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?**

not answered

Q29. **Why?**

not answered

Q30. **The discussion paper includes options (options 24 to 30, pages 34-35) 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?**

We support the reclassifying of Lockerbie as a Future Emerging Activity Centre (local significant element) if this will lead to review of the drastic reduction in the conservation corridor to accommodate a metropolitan activity centre straddling the Merri Creek. The impacts on the corridor are likely to result in the loss of one of the healthiest known populations of the endangered Growling Grass Frog around Melbourne.

Q31. **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?**

not answered

Q32. **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? Reference page 36.**

not answered

Q33. **Any other comments about chapter 3 (delivering jobs and investment)?**

not answered

Q34. **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?**

not answered

Q35. **Why?**

not answered

Q36. 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?

Strategic planning for the metropolitan open space network should be integrated with planning for walking and cycling networks.

Q37. Any other comments about chapter 4 (a more connected Melbourne)?

not answered

Q38. The discussion paper includes the option (option 36A, pages 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?

not answered

Q39. Why?

not answered

Q40. What, if any, planning reforms are necessary to achieve a 70/30 target?

not answered

Q41. 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?

not answered

Q42. Why?

not answered

Q43. 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?

not answered

Q44. Why?

not answered

Q45. 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?

not answered

Q46. 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?

not answered

Q47. 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?

not answered

Q48. 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?

not answered

Q49. 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?

not answered

Q50. 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?

not answered

Q51. Any other comments about chapter 5 (housing)?

not answered

Q52. 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?

Strongly Agree

Q53. Why?

We especially support these principles, especially "to enhance the community's access to nature across our urban areas". This is what Friends of Merri Creek has been working for since 1988, both on-ground and through education and advocacy.

Q54. The discussion paper includes the option (option 47, page 72) proposes 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 proposal?

Strongly agree

Q55. Why?

Wildfires are likely to increase in intensity and frequency with climate change. Co-ordinated fire management plans for high-risk urban fringe areas and outer suburbs are urgently needed, as indicated by the chaotic response to evacuation associated with the Donnybrook-Epping fire of February 2013. These plans should include fire prevention and control measures as well as emergency management procedures.

Q56. 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?

not answered

Q57. **The discussion paper includes the option (option 50, pages 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?**

not answered

Q58. **Why?**

not answered

Q59. **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?**

not answered

Q60. **Why?**

not answered

Q61. **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 proposal?**

Strongly agree

Q62. Why?

We still have the opportunity to establish a conservation open space network around Melbourne's fringe and in adjacent green wedges. It is also possible to re-establish habitat corridors across existing urban areas, as demonstrated along the Merri and other waterways. Such a network would maintain ecological connectivity and the full range of habitat types, to sustain the remarkable diversity of flora and fauna that lives in, and moves across, the Melbourne region. The metropolitan open space strategy (Plan Melbourne Initiative 4.5.1), should address this important strategic direction. Its scope should include open space for nature conservation as well as recreational open space. A metropolitan open space strategy is needed urgently to provide a framework input to precinct structure planning in urban growth areas. If the strategy deals with conservation as well and recreational open space, it would also provide a framework guide for Initiative 4.5.3, extending the landscape [?] and vegetation cover of metropolitan Melbourne. Friends of Merri Creek, Wallan Environment Group & Merri Creek Management Committee have recently prepared a Proposal for a Greater Wallan-Merri State Park (attached to this submission), and we urge incorporation of this concept into Plan Melbourne 2016. This proposal would address both conservation and open space needs in the north of Melbourne. As the Northern Growth Corridor will accommodate 300,000 new residents and at least 83,000 jobs, we believe that a major park will create a living legacy for our children and grandchildren and a magnificent public asset can be created if these are linked and managed in an integrated way. Such a park would have major benefits including:

- A major asset for Melbourne's northern suburbs that protects special natural areas and landscape features.
- An open space network for residents, workers and visitors to northern Melbourne that encourages healthy outdoor recreation.
- A long-distance trail network that connects with other trails in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria and acts as a focal entrance point to Greater Melbourne.
- Protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.
- Wildlife habitat and movement corridor that will sustain migratory and resident native species.
- Flood buffering and water quality treatment to reduce the impacts of urban growth on the Merri Creek downstream.
- Enhanced livability and distinctive identity for planned suburbs in the Northern Growth Corridor.
- Large expanses of vegetation and wetlands that will help mitigate the high temperatures expected with climate change.
- Opportunities to protect high-quality native vegetation as offsets for clearing.

This Park proposal builds on recent planning for northern Melbourne that has identified a number of disparate sites for conservation and open space, including conservation areas designated through the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. It extends further north to important areas near Wallan, now within the UGB. In contrast, Plan Melbourne Map 26 (Open space, natural features & biodiversity conservation) shows Merrifield Park Regional Park as the only future regional-scale open space in the extensive Northern Growth Corridor. This 'regional park' seems to be an opportunistic designation of a retarding basin property that has some potential for relatively low-cost development of sporting and play facilities. The previous plan for Melbourne, Melbourne 2030, identified a 'Merri Creek Regional Park' as one of six new metropolitan parks to redress the current imbalance and provide for future growth areas (Initiative 5.7.1). This does not appear in Plan Melbourne, but should be re-introduced in Plan Melbourne 2016. Our State Park proposal embraces the key habitat corridors in the growth corridor. It also addresses concerns about the extent, implementation and management of conservation areas identified in the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. Arrangements for 'permanent protection' of these areas remain vague and uncertain. In addition, there are no commitments to provide resources to support the management of these areas, whether publicly or privately owned, to retain their conservation values. All native vegetation in an urban or peri-urban context requires ongoing management to address threatening processes including pest plants and animals, and inappropriate fire regimes. All BCS conservation areas currently identified for 'nature conservation' should be placed under an public acquisition overlay and be acquired as soon as possible, then protected under relevant schedules of the National Parks Act 1975 or under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 to have equivalent level of protection IUCN category I, II or IV. There is reference in Plan Melbourne (Initiative 5.2.1) to private landholders protecting biodiversity with conservation covenants. There should be a standard set of financial incentives and support for conservation land management available to private landholders who enter into conservation covenants. This should include rate and land tax rebates, funded by the State government.

Q63. 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?

not answered

Q64. 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?

not answered

Q65. Why?

not answered

Q66. 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?

not answered

Q67. Why?

not answered

Q68. 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?

not answered

Q69. **Why?**

not answered

Q70. **Any other comments about chapter 6 (a more resilient and environmentally sustainable Melbourne)?**

Plan Melbourne contains a case study of Merri Creek (p148). If this is to be retained in Plan Melbourne 2016 (and we hope it will be), there are a few inaccurate statements that should be corrected. We would be happy to provide details and/or discuss this further.

Q71. **Please provide your feedback on 'Chapter 7. New planning tools' below. If you do not want to provide feedback on this chapter please selected 'save & continue'.**

not answered

Q72. **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?**

not answered

Q73. **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?**

not answered

Q74. **Any other comments about chapter 7 (new planning tools)?**

not answered

Q75. **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?**

not answered

Q76. **If a separate implementation plan is developed for Plan Melbourne 2016 what will make it effective?**

not answered

Q77. **Any other comments about chapter 8 (implementation)?**

not answered
