



20 December 2015

Submission to Plan Melbourne Refresh: Discussion Paper

Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the discussion document.

There are many aspects of Plan Melbourne that are relevant to walking. However we have generally sought to confine our comments to aspects within the scope of the Refresh and allowed ourselves to be guided by the submission template. We have also sought to address aspects that arose as key questions or issues during the stakeholder workshop on 3 December.

Our submission is provided in the submission template as requested, but only comments on those aspects of the discussion paper that are relevant to the creation of a more walkable Melbourne. In order to maintain the numbering in the template, we have not deleted the components that we have not completed.

References are provided at the end of the submission.

We would be more than happy to discuss ways to support pedestrian oriented design in the refresh process with Departmental officers, if that would be helpful. Please contact Duane Burt, Senior Advisor, on 9662 3975 or dburt@victoriawalks.org.au.

Background

Victoria Walks is a walking health promotion body working to get more Victorians walking every day. Our vision is for vibrant, supportive and strong neighbourhoods and communities where people can and do choose to walk wherever possible.

Our cities and towns have become largely automobile dependent and less walkable. This has contributed to the emergence of more sedentary lifestyles in which Victorians do not engage in the recommended levels of physical activity. Physical inactivity is a significant factor in the dramatic rise in the levels of obesity and preventable diseases such as Type II diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Walking-friendly neighbourhoods and urban spaces are essential to encourage and enable people to walk. Walking is associated with positive health outcomes, improved fitness and better physical, social and mental health. Making towns, cities and suburbs more walkable has many health, environmental and economic benefits.

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 Agree

Please explain your response:

Plan Melbourne should advance sustainable development of the city and walking complements that objective. Including the Sustainable Development Goals will help keep this as a focus.

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:*

Agree

Please explain your response:

Victoria Walks agrees with this intent, but for this to be realistic it would require much more active management of greenfield land supply within the growth boundary – far more than anything suggested in the discussion document. We need genuine staging of growth areas to ensure that the land supply within them meets demand for the full period envisaged. Without such staging, it is likely that the land with the growth areas will be developed earlier than anticipated, resulting in pressure to extend the boundary.

A 'lock down' of the growth boundary should be real, not an exercise in tokenism that is forgotten as soon as greenfield land supplies run low.

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?*

Plan Melbourne 2016 should articulate the values of green wedge and peri-urban areas, but it also needs to outline the sustainability problems of development in these areas. Most residents of peri-

urban towns do not work locally. Arguably, the defining characteristic of peri-urban towns is that people work somewhere else.

An example is the town of Romsey in the Macedon Ranges Shire. More than 55% of employed people living in Romsey work in metropolitan Melbourne. In total, more than 70% of employed residents undertake a lengthy commute to work, not only beyond Romsey, but outside the whole of the Macedon Ranges Shire. This commute is overwhelmingly undertaken by car – only 1% of workers walk to work and only 3% use public transport for part of their journey (MRSC 2009).

Peri-urban areas may have other issues such as landscape values, heritage, tourism, or bushfire risk, which mean it is necessary to control development in particular areas. But that does not mean that other areas should be seen as good locations to skip the urban growth boundary and cater to an overspill of metropolitan growth. There will be exceptions – for example some towns offer opportunities for urban development immediately adjacent to railway stations.

Peri-urban development is fundamentally unsustainable. Expanding peri-urban towns is not preferable to metropolitan development. The Plan should be clear on this. The Plan should also clearly distinguish peri-urban areas from genuinely rural or regional areas, which have very different characteristics, where growth should be supported and facilitated.

For peri-urban and green wedge areas close to Melbourne, it is important to prevent the establishment of facilities such as schools, which might be 'land hungry' but are fundamentally urban activities. Schools need to be developed within urban areas in a way that allows the maximum proportion of students to walk to school.

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?*

The Principal Public Transport network (PPTN) should be shown on a concept map

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:*

Agree

Please explain your response:

Victoria Walks agrees with the concept of a polycentric city with 20-minute walking neighbourhoods and supports clearer definition of what that entails. We understand that the majority of people will not be able to work within a 20 minute walk of their home. However the journey to work is important in determining transport patterns and Plan Melbourne should aspire to a higher percentage of people being able to walk to work, as well as accessing other everyday needs.

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?*

Agree

Please explain your response:

Victoria Walks particularly supports the identification of climate change and people, place and identity as key concepts to be incorporated. There are any number of reasons to include both, but from a walking perspective:

- Climate change is a defining issue of this century and one response to climate change should be the development of a more walkable city, where people are less reliant on private powered vehicles and their attendant greenhouse gas emissions.
- Places that have a sense of identity are more likely to be interesting places to walk and places where people want to be on the street. It goes without saying that people are important, but places that are designed for people, particularly people on the street, are places for walking. Less tangibly, if people feel a sense of identity in their community they are likely to feel safer on the street and be more inclined to walk. This is particularly true of parents and children.

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 Agree

Why?

It seems strange that this question should even be asked. Of course the Principal Public Transport Network should inform land use choices and decisions. It is well established that transport and land use are interdependent and planning of the two should be integrated.

Walking is the primary means of accessing public transport – around 60% of people walk to the train, and more than 90% of people access bus and tram services by walking (SKM cited in DoT 2011). To promote public transport, therefore, is to promote walking. The relationship is mutually beneficial – to achieve optimal use of public transport, high quality walking environments are required around stations/stops.

Increased density of development should be promoted around stops on the PPTN, where this does not compromise heritage values. Research suggests even older adults are prepared to walk 500-1,000 metres to destinations (Garrard 2013). A radius of 800 metres around train stations and at least 400 metres around tram stops would seem appropriate for increased density.

Exactly how this density would be delivered is a matter for implementation but Plan Melbourne

should at least signal the intent of providing higher density around the PPTN and perhaps set out criteria for defining areas.

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?

It is critical that Plan Melbourne establishes the land use patterns that support walking – higher density, mixed use development around activity centres and high quality public transport stops (transit corridors).

The next step is the detailed design of those areas in ways that support walkability. This is not simply a matter of providing footpaths, although that is an important first step. Amongst other things, it means identifying the need for and providing new walking connections; providing regular, safe and convenient road crossing opportunities; creating a pleasant street environment, including street trees; providing amenities such as seating; lowering traffic speed.

The Government has developed the Principal Pedestrian Network methodology to help determine key walking routes. Walkability audits can and should be used to assess the walkability of areas targeted for increased density. Plan Melbourne should support these processes.

A critical issue is managing arterial roads to reduce their barrier effect to walking. Arterial roads are typically designed to facilitate driving, to the effective exclusion of pedestrians. A typical new arterial intersection, for example, gives pedestrians lowest priority in signal phasing; requires crossing of wide roadways while mixing with turning vehicles; includes slip lanes that confuse the give way laws; has no street trees (they are seen as a traffic hazard); and high fences or other surrounding development that offers poor amenity (or alternatively service roads that make the total corridor exceptionally wide). Standard design of arterial roads is actively hostile to pedestrians. Key agencies are only beginning to recognise this as an issue – there has been little apparent improvement in practice as yet.

Plan Melbourne needs to explicitly acknowledge the need to make arterial roads conducive to walking, particularly in and around activity centres and stops on the PPTN.

Walking and cycling networks have different issues and objectives and need to be considered individually.

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 Agree

Why?

Victoria Walks strongly agrees with an ambitious target favouring housing in established areas rather than greenfield areas. In our view, however, a 70:30 target does not go far enough and an 80:20 target should be pursued.

If the intent is to 'lock in' the growth boundary, then development on the fringe needs to be minimized. The discussion document states that "as at May 2015," 72% of building approvals were in established areas and 28% greenfield, although the extent to which this reflects longer trends is unclear. Nonetheless it suggests that a 70:30 target may be delivered without any effort and an 80:20 target is both achievable and desirable if the aspiration is to favour established areas. It is also perhaps essential if the intent is to 'lock down' the growth boundary indefinitely.

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

As noted above, what action is needed to achieve a target depends largely on how you perceive the current development trends, but Plan Melbourne should pursue:

1. Tightly controlled (by government) staging of land release in the growth areas, beyond that proposed by option 36(b).
2. Tying greenfield land release to the provision of all necessary infrastructure including public transport.
3. Increased density targets in growth areas. We understand the Government is contemplating an increased density target of 25 dwellings per hectare. While we strongly support an increased target, evidence suggests densities of between 35-43 net and 32-40 gross dwellings per hectare are required to make local services within walking distance viable, based on dwelling occupancies of 2.6 persons/dwelling (Giles-Corti et al 2014).
4. In existing urban areas, actively facilitating residential development in and around activity centres and stops on the PPTN.
5. Continuing to allow more general residential infill in non-sensitive areas, including consideration of mechanisms to facilitate greyfield development such as reduced permit requirements for dual occupancies.

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 Agree

Why?

While Victoria Walks strongly agrees with a mechanism to manage the sequencing of land in the growth areas, the discussion document itself suggests that controlling the release of Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) that have not already been approved will not be enough:

"There are currently 217,320 lots in approved PSPs which is sufficient to satisfy current demand to at least 2030 and potentially longer. Any government action to control future land release is only likely to influence development patterns in the long term."

We note also that other PSPs will no doubt be approved while the Plan Melbourne Refresh process continues.

Despite supposed policies to control urban growth, Melbourne's urban sprawl continues. The National Land Survey Program has been monitoring greenfield land sales since 2005, and land sales on the urban fringe reaching record highs of 1,900 lots per month in October this year (Keane 2015). If that rate continues more than half of new housing will be greenfield and a 70:30 target will not be achieved, let alone 80:20. Melbourne needs genuine, effective public control of land release on the urban fringe now, not in fifteen years' time.

At \$211,000, the average price of a lot on the urban fringe of Melbourne is less than half that of Sydney (\$485,000). There is no evidence that cheap land on the urban fringe is suppressing the cost of housing in Melbourne generally. While the cost of greenfield lots has remained constant over the last five years (Keane 2015), the average Melbourne house price has increased significantly.

Even after the cost of building a house is accounted for, it is much cheaper to live on the urban fringe than buy in an established suburb where it is likely to be easier to walk, ride a bike, or use public transport. Melbourne needs effective growth management to promote development in and around activity centres and public transport, where people can walk for everyday tasks rather than being forced into their cars. Effective control of land supply would also encourage more efficient use of land in growth areas, with higher densities to facilitate walking.

As noted by the Committee for Melbourne (2015):

"these lots are generally being opened up in outer metropolitan areas where there is a lack of supporting infrastructure and access to jobs. This means many residents are commuting back to inner-city areas for work, on heavily congested road and rail corridors."

Plan Melbourne should identify a more effective sequencing measure and, as discussed above, tie greenfield land release to the provision of all necessary infrastructure. It is better to defer greenfield growth than to continue to do it poorly. In practice the likely outcome of such a policy would be a mixture of deferred greenfield development and improved greenfield development, rather than a halt, as developers would have a strong incentive to contribute to infrastructure in order to advance their projects. The release of land tied to the provision of necessary infrastructure including public transport would also see more realistic and higher prices for land and remove the current economic distortions.

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 Agree

Why?

To deliver a sustainable city it is critical to promote development in and around activity centres

and public transport, where people can walk for everyday tasks rather than being forced into their cars.

Density in key locations allows more people to live and work within walking distance of destinations or walk to public transport, enabling them to access destinations further away.

It should not be left entirely to councils to determine where increased density should go, as it was in implementing (or not implementing) Melbourne 2030. We need a metropolitan response, not an ad hoc response.

It is not necessary to increase density everywhere. It is quite possible to promote a walkable city while allowing the suburbs outside centres and corridors to retain their current character. Until recently, the same controls on medium density housing apply almost uniformly across Melbourne and even regional towns. The random increase in density this has produced is not particularly helpful in creating a walkable city. Melbourne is around 50% more dense than Brisbane, Canberra, Hobart and Darwin, yet all of those cities had a higher level of walking to work in 2006 (Bauman et al, 2012).

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

Why?

We do not see these options as mutually exclusive and Victoria Walks does not oppose a metropolitan housing strategy, although arguably Plan Melbourne itself should perform that function at a high level.

Setting targets at a sub-regional level is likely to provide better direction and focus to local planning than relying on high level policy alone.

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?

In existing urban areas, Plan Melbourne should actively facilitate residential development in and around activity centres and stops on the PPTN. This should include a map identifying these areas, at least at a conceptual level. The map may be part of a subsequent implementation plan, if there was a desire to have fairly clearly defined areas with consideration of constraints such as heritage and character.

The Government should set clear parameters for councils, but perhaps allow them to retain some flexibility. The ultimate outcome however should be that areas for increased density are clearly delineated in the planning scheme and zoned accordingly.

Funding for infrastructure and place making (such as improved public transport, walking infrastructure, and greener, better quality streets and public spaces) should be tagged to areas where density is being increased. People are more likely to support change – especially after the fact – if it includes improvements to the amenity of the area. Councils are more likely to support intensification and its associated political risks if it is linked to funding that enables them to ‘give something back’ to the community.

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?

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

Why?

Victoria Walks supports deleting the action. The figure of 50% appears to be entirely arbitrary and the fact that only 20% is currently covered by this zone suggests that 50% is excessive. The risk of retaining the target is that councils will seek to apply the zone more broadly, not because areas genuinely warrant protection from greater development, but simply to meet the target, perhaps under community pressure. Indeed, the target shapes as a rod that community activists opposed to development can use to beat their local council.

The intent of the zone would seem to be to identify areas that are particularly worthy of protection for their current character and distinguish them from ‘normal’ residential areas. Applying the zone to more than half of residential land would be contrary to that intent. Perversely, if the target was achieved that might lead to pressures to loosen controls in the zone.

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?

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)?

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:

Agree

Why?

Plan Melbourne should promote sustainability in broad terms and environmental aspects are an important dimension of sustainability. There is a symbiotic or virtuous relationship between walking and the natural environment – green environments are more attractive for walking and can have active benefits, such trees providing shade in the street. In turn, walking has zero carbon emissions and can replace short trips by vehicles, or replace long trips by car when combined with public transport.

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, page72) 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:

- Agree

Why?

High priority habitat corridors are likely to double as highly attractive places for recreational walking and to some extent transport walking. Having wildlife in the city helps to create an

interesting and pleasant walking environment and builds a sense of place.

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?*

We support the initiatives mentioned, because a greener urban environment is more conducive to walking. Trees and landscaping in the street are critical in creating an environment that people want to walk in, especially for recreation. The benefits for walkers are both aesthetic and practical, with street trees providing shelter from the sun and, to some extent, rain.

The Heart Foundation has produced a position snapshot that summarises the benefits of urban trees (Heart Foundation 2013). Key points include:

- Trees planted along the kerb define a pedestrian zone separated from traffic, providing both real and perceived safety benefits.
- Trees can reduce the temperatures of the surfaces they shade by as much as 10-25°C.
- The environment and property value benefits have been calculated at \$3.81 for every \$1 spent on tree planting and maintenance.

There is also substantial evidence to indicate that people benefit physically, psychologically, cognitively and socially from interaction with nature (Keniger et al 2013).

An analysis of 2,100 property sales in inner Melbourne found that those houses in the midst of sparse vegetation yielded an average \$135,000 more than those with no street trees, while houses with dense street vegetation sold for approximately \$340,000 more (Walker, Lock and Faelli, 2013). This finding for Melbourne is stronger, but otherwise consistent, with evidence from other international studies including those identified by the Heart Foundation position snapshot, which found street trees add between 2% and 30% to the value of adjacent property.

It is important that Plan Melbourne facilitates retention and establishment of urban trees and particularly street trees.

Plan Melbourne should also consider the factors that lead to an over-provision of hard surfaces that contribute to the heat island effect. In particular:

- Current car parking requirements often create an oversupply of at-grade car parking. An action of Plan Melbourne should be a zero-based review of car parking controls – do we need parking minimum requirements, or can we leave car parking provision to the market?
- Conversations with various stakeholders suggest VicRoads have a tendency to over-design arterial roads based on traditional modelling that assumes continuing high rates of car use, and a desire to provide for traffic growth into the future. There is also arguably over-design in the detail of roads and car parking areas, such as wide traffic lanes, the provision of slip lanes and service roads, and large areas dedicated to on-site vehicle circulation.

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?

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)?

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)?

Car parking review

Plan Melbourne should include an action to undertake a fundamental review of planning scheme car parking requirements, including consideration of removing car parking minimum requirements and applying maximum parking limitations in certain situations.

In 2009 the Department of Transport commissioned an international review of the literature regarding techniques to promote walking and cycling. This review found that the availability of free car parking was one of the key factors that determined the choice between walking and driving (Krizek, Forsyth and Baum 2009).

A more recent review of international literature reached a similar conclusion.

“Minimum parking requirements are the single most significant impediment to a more efficient and durable urban form...” (Donovan and Munro 2013)

The significance of car parking for walking in particular relates to the fact that, in addition to promoting vehicle use, when provided in the form of large scale ground level parking lots, it actively discourages walking.

“Not only does ample and free parking provide an easy excuse for auto travel, vast parking areas are also the bane of pedestrian travel.” (Krizek, Forsyth and Baum 2009)

Victoria Walks is aware of the changes to Victorian parking requirements made in mid-2012. However the terms of reference of the relevant Ministerial Advisory Committee were restricted to consideration of the limited changes already proposed by the Department of Planning and Community Development (Car Parking Advisory Committee 2012). The planning scheme still requires car parking beyond the levels that business would naturally supply and actively promotes vehicle use at the expense of other transport modes.

A fundamental review is required that considers whether car parking requirements should be removed, or at least revised to avoid the starting premise that high levels of car parking should be provided in all development.

Targets

As walking is a fundamental part of life, not only a mode of transport, it does not necessarily lend itself to easy measurement. However, if the Government seeks to promote walking as a means of transport it should set targets by which to assess practical success in facilitating walking.

The Government should develop a mode share target for walking (and potentially cycling and public transport). An example of a possible target would be to increase walking from 3.4% of journey to work in 2011 to 7% by 2021.

Victoria Walks recommends adopting a target for walking to school. Clearly the journey to work is focused on adults. Walking to school provides a measure of success in adoption of walking by the next generation. A possible target would be 35% of primary school students (currently around 24% - DoT 2010) and 25% of secondary school students (currently about 19%) walking to school by 2021.

The walking targets should be key performance indicators for relevant government agencies, such as VicRoads and the Departments of Transport, Education, Health and Planning and Community Development.

Learning from past mistakes

Finally, Victoria Walks encourages the Department to question the practical obstacles that have frustrated the achievement of high level policy, which has been fairly consistent for a number of years. We need to ask the question – where have previous strategies failed, and why? Why do we have poor quality, car-oriented growth areas? We have identified some key factors in this submission, car parking requirements for example. However we would encourage a methodical analysis of key barriers, including consultation with the planning industry. There is no reason to believe that Plan Melbourne will be more successful than previous strategies unless practical barriers to implementation are critically explored.

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