



# Melbourne 2030

planning for sustainable growth



Implementation Plan 4

## Activity Centres

October 2002

# Draft

Department of Infrastructure

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# The implementation plans explained

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Six draft Implementation Plans support *Melbourne 2030 – planning for sustainable growth*.

The plans cover these topics:

- urban growth boundary
- growth areas
- housing
- activity centres
- green wedges
- integrated transport.

An advisory note on implementation of *Melbourne 2030* in the planning system from the date of release will be separately available.

The draft Implementation Plans have been developed to build on sections of *Melbourne 2030* where new or different actions are proposed and to provide further detail on some – but not all – of its initiatives. Despite the 30-year time frame for *Melbourne 2030*, many of its most important initiatives will need to be introduced in the next five years.

The draft Implementation Plans aim to provide local government, the planning profession, the development industry and interested members of the community with guidance and additional information. Presently draft documents, they will serve as a basis for dialogue over the consultation period. When finalised, they will be a springboard for action.

Each plan brings together the policies and initiatives from *Melbourne 2030* relevant to its particular topic, and outlines a preferred approach to implementing them.

Each plan also reinforces the new approach proposed by *Melbourne 2030*. This far-reaching document examines urban management issues in metropolitan Melbourne and its surrounding region, and explores the ways in which the new urban fabric will be laid down for future generations.

You are urged to refer to *Melbourne 2030* as the context for the draft Implementation Plans. Issues in it that have general relevance to the topic of activity centres include:

- concentrating activity in centres
- directing growth to areas best able to be supplied with infrastructure and services
- improving accessibility to services and facilities, particularly by public transport
- improving housing choice.

These draft Implementation Plans do not cover all actions proposed in *Melbourne 2030*. Additional implementation plans will be developed as the need arises.

# Melbourne 2030 in summary

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*Melbourne 2030* is a strategic plan prepared to manage growth and change across metropolitan Melbourne and its surrounding region.

Its prime focus is the area covered by the 31 Melbourne metropolitan municipal councils (including the nine 'interface councils' which cover both urban and rural areas at the fringes of metropolitan Melbourne). It also raises important issues that affect local councils outside the metropolitan area, particularly those astride the regional transport corridors between metropolitan Melbourne and the closest regional cities within current and potential commuting range.

In establishing and articulating a long-term vision for metropolitan Melbourne, built up from many contributions across the community, *Melbourne 2030* provides a framework for governments at all levels to respond to the diverse needs of those who live and work in and near Melbourne, and who visit it.

The substance of *Melbourne 2030* is contained in nine 'directions' that embody the Government's aims of sustainability and of providing a better future for all. They are:

- a more compact city
- better management of metropolitan growth
- networks with the regional cities
- a more prosperous city
- a great place to be
- a fairer city
- a greener city
- better transport links
- better planning decisions, careful management.

Each of these directions is supported by specific policies that will be incorporated into the planning system. The policies will be implemented through a range of initiatives undertaken through joint action by local government, the Government and the wider community.

As *Melbourne 2030* is a statement of government policy intent only, some of the initiatives will be subject to the availability of budget funding. That is, such initiatives will need to await assessment and prioritisation through normal State budget processes in future periods. It is not intended that all initiatives should begin at once, nor that all should be completed within the five-year time frame. Many will lead to follow-on work. Others may change or be reviewed over the 30-year life of *Melbourne 2030*.

## Vision

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In the next 30 years Melbourne will grow by up to one million people and will consolidate its reputation as one of the most liveable, attractive and prosperous areas in the world for residents, business and visitors.

# Activity centres

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## What are they?

Activity centres provide the focus for services, employment and social interaction in cities and towns. They are where people shop, work, meet, relax and live. Usually well-served by public transport, they range in size and intensity of use from local neighbourhood strip centres to traditional universities and major regional malls. They are not just shopping centres, they are multifunctional.

Activity centres attract high numbers of people, and generate a significant volume of trips in metropolitan Melbourne. Because of the vital role played by activity centres in everyday urban life, their planning is always important.

Since the 1950s, activity centre policy has been a feature of urban planning in Victoria. Essentially, this is a matter of clustering – rather than dispersing – uses and activities to derive social, environmental and economic benefits for the community and business generally. These benefits include:

- providing a strong basis for economic growth
- creating opportunities for the more efficient and balanced concentration of goods and services
- increasing the potential for the exchange of ideas and other synergies among businesses, and for new job creation
- providing an important focus for communities by increasing opportunities for social interaction
- making the most of the community's investment in physical and social infrastructure
- providing greater opportunities for integrating land use and transport, particularly public transport and walking.

Stand-alone single uses do not constitute activity centres, nor do industrial estates. In fact, *Melbourne 2030* seeks to restrict out-of-centre development and contains separate policies for industrial land.

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## Where are they?

Metropolitan Melbourne has a network of around 1,000 activity centres of various types and sizes. They are focal points for the community and meet a wide range of needs.

They are classified into five types:

- Central Activities District
- Principal Activity Centres
- Major Activity Centres
- Specialised Activity Centres
- Neighbourhood Activity Centres.

Melbourne's Central Activities District (CAD) performs a critical capital city role and is Victoria's dominant retail, commercial, cultural, administrative and civic centre.

Supporting the CAD are more than 100 Principal, Major and Specialised Activity Centres. These are distributed across metropolitan Melbourne and fulfil a significant economic, commercial and retail function. Some are much larger and more complex than others; some have specialist roles. Most are well-linked to public transport.

In addition, more than 900 small-scale Neighbourhood Activity Centres also play an important community role, offering access to local convenience needs and transport services.

## What are the main issues that affect activity centres?

Because activity centres across metropolitan Melbourne differ in terms of distribution, quality and type, it is difficult to generalise about how they should be planned. In developing them to accommodate future growth and improve the way Melbourne operates, we must take account of issues such as:

- **inequitable distribution.** The inner and middle suburbs generally comprise a dense network of mixed-use, public transport-oriented activity centres complemented by a dense configuration of neighbourhood centres. In the outer suburbs and newer growth areas, activity centres are more sparsely distributed, lacking in public transport services, and often poorly connected with each other. There are fewer neighbourhood centres to meet day-to-day needs.
- **poor integration with public transport.** Some specialised employment clusters such as tertiary institutions, hospitals and office parks have been established in relative isolation, as have some major shopping and entertainment clusters. This reduces the potential for integrating transport facilities and for encouraging people to travel to them by means other than car.
- **competition with out-of-centre development.** The viability of many existing activity centres is threatened by retail and commercial developments that are set up some distance from them, particularly stand-alone developments such as corporate offices, strings of super-stores along main roads, or clusters of highway convenience retail outlets. Often these have poor accessibility to public transport and rely on car-based transport.
- **under-utilised opportunities for housing.** Significant recent increases in higher-density housing have been mostly confined to Central Melbourne and the inner suburbs. Many middle and outer suburban activity centres could also accommodate this type of development, which would maximise access to public transport, jobs and services.
- **limited planning.** In aiming to maintain a hierarchy of centres, activity centre policy has given clear direction for a number of larger activity centres but limited direction for mid-sized and neighbourhood centres.

## How will they change?

Metropolitan Melbourne's projected growth in population and households, allied to our changing lifestyle, will require better planned and more accessible places to shop, work, visit, do business, and also to live. Because activity centres are uniquely placed to accommodate much of this anticipated growth, they will be the focus of major change in metropolitan Melbourne over the next 30 years.

Linked by an improved and expanded public transport network, activity centres will accommodate a broader mix of housing, shops and services to create vibrant, well-connected communities. They are an integral part of *Melbourne 2030's* 'direction' of a more compact city, and they will be the preferred location for much of the projected growth in household numbers.

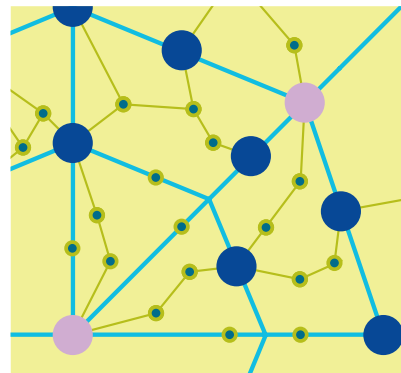
Key objectives for their future development are:

- reducing the number of private motorised vehicle trips to and from activity centres by concentrating activities that generate high numbers of (non-freight) trips in highly accessible locations
- encouraging economic activity and business synergies
- broadening the mix of uses appropriate to the type of centre and needs of the population served
- providing focal points for the community at different geographic scales
- improving access by walking, cycling and public transport to services and facilities for local and regional populations
- supporting the development of the Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN).

The changes that will affect activity centres focus on identifying a network of centres, ensuring a mix of uses in centres, providing for new housing, controlling development outside centres, integrating transport and emphasising urban design.

## The identification of a comprehensive network

To overcome some of the challenges of previous activity centre development, *Melbourne 2030* identifies a comprehensive network of activity centres. This network will comprise a range of centres of varying size and function that are linked with a strategic public transport network (see Figures 1 and 2).



- Principal Activity Centre
- Major Activity Centre
- Neighbourhood Activity Centre
- Principal Public Transport Network
- Local network

Figure 1. Bringing land use and transport together

Confirming and developing the network will bring broad benefits. Access to activities, infrastructure and services will be more equitable across metropolitan Melbourne. The overlapping catchments of the network will allow choice, diversity and flexibility in employment, services and social interaction. With more than 100 activity centres identified as locations of major change, there will be increased options for investment and for locating all types of activities.

The challenges will include:

- planning for the whole network of activity centres, including putting in place a decision-making framework to help do this
- planning for individual centres
- ongoing policy implementation through consistent decision-making.

*Melbourne 2030's* classification system for activity centres is set out in Table 1. The table gives an overview of the key characteristics, the types of uses to be encouraged, and the future strategic objectives for each category of centre. The system provides a framework for planning and managing the network of activity centres, including their relationship with the PPTN.



Figure 2. Network of activity centres

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #c8e6c9; border: 1px solid #81c784; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Existing urban area</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid #81c784; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Urban growth boundary</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid #ccc; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Major road</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 50%; background: white; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Central Activities District</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: #f44336; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Principal Activity Centre</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px; background-color: #3f51b5; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Major Activity Centre</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid #ccc; border-radius: 50%; background: white; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Specialised Activity Centre</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid #9c27b0; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Principal Public Transport Network</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid #3f51b5; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Bus and tram network (existing and proposed)</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; border-bottom: 2px solid #00bcd4; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Melbourne metropolitan rail network</li> </ul> |
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Source: Department of Infrastructure, 2001

The Government has selected Principal, Major and Specialised Activity Centres (see Appendix 1). *Melbourne 2030* identifies them by their recognised name and by indicating their general location on a map. In their strategic planning work, local councils will need to confirm the extent of each centre, including areas suitable for higher-density housing. They will also have to identify Neighbourhood Activity Centres as part of their strategic review of centres (see 'What are the implications for local government?').

The list of Principal, Major, Specialised and Neighbourhood Activity Centres will be given statutory effect in planning schemes. This will give decision-makers certainty about where future growth and change will take place in metropolitan Melbourne.

The network of activity centres will not be static - centres can move between categories and new centres will emerge, particularly in growth areas.

**Table 1. Classification system for activity centres**

Classification	Key characteristics	Future strategic development objectives
<b>Central Activities District</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metropolitan Melbourne's largest centre of activity with the greatest variety of uses and functions, and the most intense concentration of development</li> <li>• Provides services and functions such as commercial, retail, highly specialised personal services, education, government and tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preferred location for activities of State or national significance</li> <li>• Location for activities that have a significant impact as trip generators, drawing users from around the metropolitan area and beyond, and hence benefiting from being at the centre of the PPTN</li> <li>• Planned and managed to retain its position as the prime office and retailing centre for the metropolitan area as well as a major destination for visitors</li> </ul>
<b>Principal Activity Centre</b> (includes Melbourne's largest and best-known activity centres)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A mix of activities that generate high numbers of trips, including business, retail, services and entertainment</li> <li>• Being generally well served by multiple public transport routes (some being on the rail network), and on the PPTN or capable of being linked to that network</li> <li>• A large catchment covering several suburbs, and attracting activities that meet metropolitan needs</li> <li>• Having potential to grow and support intensive housing developments without conflicting with surrounding land uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforce the network of centres by connecting all Principal Activity Centres to the PPTN</li> <li>• Encourage more mixed-use development in appropriately located centres</li> <li>• If a new Principal Activity Centre, will have to be on the PPTN or be linked to it as part of the cost of developing the site</li> <li>• Has an especially important role as a focus for community activity, services and investment</li> <li>• Location for priority government investment and support</li> <li>• Focus for a range of government and community facilities and services</li> <li>• If a town centre (see <i>Melbourne 2030</i>, Policy 1.1) – manage growth carefully, in order to achieve more sustainable transport and to give nearby residents access to many of the benefits at present enjoyed only by residents in inner suburban areas</li> <li>• If a stand-alone centre (see <i>Melbourne 2030</i>, Policy 1.1) – broaden the role, achieve a greater mix of uses, and improve accessibility by public transport through links to the PPTN</li> <li>• Receives priority for investment and location of significant land uses where catchments overlap in any part of the network of centres</li> <li>• Encourage a wider range of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities</li> <li>• Location for higher-density housing</li> </ul>

Table 1 continued. Classification system for activity centres

Classification	Key characteristics	Future strategic development objectives
<b>Major Activities Centre</b> (takes in most of Melbourne's largest activity centres)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Similar characteristics to Principal Activity Centres but serves a smaller catchment area</li> <li>• Supplements the network of Principal Activity Centres</li> <li>• Provides additional scope to accommodate ongoing investment and change in retail, office, service and residential markets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage more mixed-use development in appropriately located sites</li> <li>• Continue broadening the range of uses</li> <li>• Encourage a wider range of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities</li> <li>• Location for higher-density housing</li> <li>• Upgrade public transport services</li> <li>• Reinforce the network of centres by connection into the PPTN</li> <li>• If a new Major Activity Centre, will have to be on the PPTN or be linked to it as part of the cost of developing the site</li> <li>• If an existing Major Activity Centre that lacks good public transport links, will not be allowed to grow substantially at the expense of better-located centres serving the same catchment</li> </ul>
<b>Specialised Activity Centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important economic precinct that plays a vital role in metropolitan Melbourne's economy</li> <li>• Provides a mix of economic activities that generates much work and many visitor trips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and development should reinforce its specialised economic function</li> <li>• Should only contain uses that support and are consistent with continued growth in their primary function</li> <li>• Mixed uses that complement the role of these centres are encouraged, but should not compete with nearby Principal and Major Activity Centres, nor should it attract mixed uses that serve a wider catchment and might inhibit its specialised role</li> <li>• Must be located on the PPTN</li> <li>• Requires similar transport management responses to other types of large centres</li> <li>• If a research precinct, future planning and development should emphasise its ability to foster interaction between researchers and industry. Space is required so that new and emerging applications can benefit from co-location.</li> </ul>
<b>Neighbourhood Activity Centre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally, a limited mix of uses meeting local convenience needs</li> <li>• Generally less than 10,000 square metres of retail floor space</li> <li>• Accessibility to a viable user population by walking/cycling</li> <li>• Accessibility by local bus services, and public transport links to one or more Principal or Major Activity Centre</li> <li>• Important community focal point, ideally close to schools, libraries, child care, health services, police stations and other facilities that benefit from good public transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage walking, cycling and local public transport use</li> <li>• Redevelopment in middle and outer suburbs and development of new growth areas should provide viable locations for Neighbourhood Activity Centres in areas where their distribution is inadequate</li> <li>• Location should be planned in conjunction with the design of local public transport services</li> <li>• Encourage higher-density housing in and around Neighbourhood Activity Centres, designing this to fit the context and enhance the character of the area while providing a variety of options for different types of households</li> </ul>

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## Ensuring a mix of uses

Fostering a rich mix of uses in activity centres brings significant social, environmental and economic benefits.

Activity centres that offer a good blend of uses and transit arrangements generally support higher levels of business and other activities, resulting in lower car usage and enabling multipurpose trips. Such centres make it easier for people to gain access to a wider range of goods and services, employment opportunities, entertainment and community facilities.

*Melbourne 2030* contains important policies and initiatives that aim to broaden the base of activity in activity centres and to enable concentration of uses. A wider range of services, operating over longer hours, is encouraged at centres dominated by shopping.

All levels of government, including government agencies, are encouraged to reinforce activity centres by locating public facilities in or on the edge of activity centres at a scale appropriate to the centre. These could include health, education, justice, emergency services, community, and administrative facilities. Integrating new housing into activity centres further broadens the mix and helps to contain urban sprawl, strengthen the role of activity centres and better utilise existing physical and social infrastructure, including public transport.

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## More opportunities for new housing

New housing at activity centres can bring benefits such as:

- establishing a population base to support viable activity centres – these in turn provide the local population with a wider range of services, facilities and employment opportunities
- increasing the population within walking distance of the activity centre
- stimulating local employment in the surrounding area
- enabling greater access to services, facilities and public transport
- increasing the range of available housing types (particularly in the middle and outer suburbs) and thus creating more opportunity for people to stay in their community.

Over the next 30 years, the prospects for Victoria's growth are strong, due to continued natural increase of the population and migration from overseas and interstate. Metropolitan Melbourne will have to accommodate in the order of 925,000 additional people, or 620,000 new households. These people will need somewhere to live, consequently increasing pressure on land for industry and commerce and on the transport system.

In middle and outer suburbs in particular, few opportunities have been taken up to develop higher-density housing at or adjacent to activity centres. Of the 620,000 additional households that will be required, strategic redevelopment sites could accommodate up to 255,000 (see Figure 3).

Success in providing housing in activity centres will depend partly on the quality of design and how the housing is integrated; activity centres will need to be designed with residents in mind rather than being planned solely as commercial areas.

Issues in relation to housing are discussed in greater detail in draft Implementation Plan 3, 'Housing'.

## Controlling out-of-centre development

Most developments in metropolitan Melbourne that are out-of-centre – outside activity centres – are purpose-built on stand-alone sites, are targeted to a specialised niche market and generate many individual trips. Given their stand-alone nature, they are often poorly served by public transport and depend on high levels of car access. Their isolated location means they achieve low levels of sustainability.

Consistent control of out-of-centre development means we can strengthen activity centres and maximise the community's investment in physical and social infrastructure.

*Melbourne 2030* discourages out-of-centre development by giving preference to in-centre and edge-of-centre locations for new development. Such out-of-centre proposals will only be considered where it can be convincingly demonstrated that the proposed use or development is of net benefit to the community in the region served by the proposal. This is important if we are to create a more mixed-use environment in activity centres.

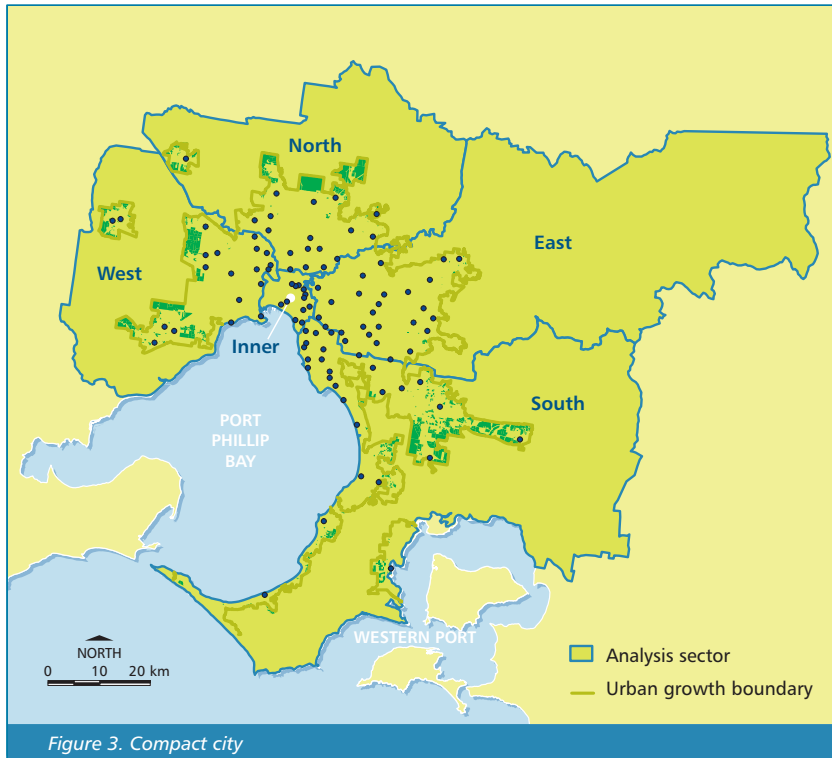


Figure 3. Compact city

WEST			NORTH			EAST			SOUTH						
Average annual dwelling starts 1996-97		Proposed household distribution 2001-30		Average annual dwelling starts 1996-97		Proposed household distribution 2001-30		Average annual dwelling starts 1996-97		Proposed household distribution 2001-30					
%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.				
55	46	46	60,000	50	45	50,000	15	5	5,000	60	44	80,000			
15	31	31	40,000	20	32	35,000	20	50	55,000	10	25	45,000			
30	23	23	30,000	30	23	25,000	65	45	50,000	30	31	55,000			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>110,000</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>180,000</b>				
Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley, Wyndham			Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Moreland, Nillumbik, Whittlesea			Boroondara, Manningham, Knox, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse, Yarra Ranges, Stonnington (part)			Bayside, Cardinia, Casey, Frankston, Glen Eira, Greater Dandenong, Kingston, Mornington Peninsula						
INNER			METROPOLITAN TOTAL			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: green;">■</span> Greenfield development</li> <li><span style="color: blue;">●</span> Strategic redevelopment sites (Principal and Major Activity Centres only depicted)</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Dispersed urban and non-urban development</li> </ul> <p>NOTE. Non-urban development is generally located in and around small townships. It currently accounts for 3 per cent of development and is proposed to account for 1.5 per cent of all additional households by 2030. This equates to 9,500 households.</p>									
Average annual dwelling starts 1996-97		Proposed household distribution 2001-30		Average annual dwelling starts 1996-97								Proposed household distribution 2001-30			
%	No.	%	No.	%	No.							%	No.		
0	0	0	0	38	31							195,000	38	31	195,000
70	89	89	80,000	24	41							255,000	24	41	255,000
30	11	11	10,000	38	28	170,000	38	28	170,000						
<b>Totals</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>620,000</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>620,000</b>						
Melbourne, Port Phillip, Stonnington (part), Yarra															



Figure 4. Melbourne's Principal Public Transport Network

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><i>Principal Public Transport Network</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Tram and principal bus network (existing and proposed)</li> <li>— Melbourne metropolitan rail network</li> <li>■ Potential new rail station</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Proposed network extension</li> <li>— Potential network option</li> <li>— Regional fast rail</li> <li>■ Urban area – public transport access improvements (local bus, cycling and walking facilities)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CAD, Principal, Major and Specialised Activity Centre</li> <li>— Urban growth boundary</li> <li>— Rail network</li> <li>— Major road network (existing and proposed)</li> </ul> |
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## Improved integration of transport

Activity centres and their future planning will play an important role in achieving the Government's target of 20 per cent of motorised trips on public transport by 2020. It will not be enough to focus on a small number of larger trip-generating activity centres, because even the top 100 activity centres (in terms of floor space) in metropolitan Melbourne account for less than 28 per cent of all trips. Our approach will need to cover the whole network of centres.

The transport-related benefits of concentrating activities and providing a mix of uses in activity centres include reduced reliance on private motoring and higher use of more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. An important social outcome is improved accessibility to activities (and employment) by public transport. A good mix of uses also leads to more efficient design of public transport services and a spread of travel demand throughout the day.

To help coordinate land-use and transport planning with activity centre development, *Melbourne 2030* proposes to extend and improve public transport services through the PPTN (see Figure 4). This network consists of existing rail and tram routes, complemented by a new network of high-quality, cross-town services. Typically, these will be provided by buses operating faster, more directly and more often than is common practice, but, in some cases, tram or light rail will be considered for cross-town routes with high demand.

The network has been designed using principles of:

- **proven demand** – using current high-demand corridors, including all rail lines, all tram lines and selected high-use bus routes
- **coordination with land use** – all Principal and Major Activity Centres should be located on the PPTN
- **distribution** – the network should cover metropolitan Melbourne in such a way that everyone can access it.

The PPTN provides a focal point for the ongoing development of activity centres as well as making public transport seem more attractive for longer distance travel that is not oriented to the CBD. It gives all stakeholders involved in activity centre development a basis for coordinating with the public transport system.

It is complemented by local bus services that serve Neighbourhood Activity Centres as well as providing feeder services to the PPTN. These local networks, that already exist in most areas, will be developed in response to local needs and improvements to increase the overall use of public transport. In new areas, or areas undergoing significant urban change, creation of these local networks must be addressed as an integral part of the land-use planning process.

## More emphasis on urban design

Melbourne’s activity centres vary in aesthetic quality as well as in size, function and accessibility. While some have a distinctive sense of place and are attractive, comfortable and safe, others are less welcoming.

A survey conducted for the Department of Infrastructure (DOI) as part of the Activity Centres Review (*Technical Report 8, Final Report, June 2001*) concluded that attention should be paid to:

- improvements for pedestrians
- streetscape design
- integration of street layout, definition and safety of public open space areas
- design of car parking areas
- integration of transit interchanges
- compatibility between existing and new uses, transitions in scale between new development and existing fabric, and impacts on the existing physical character of the surrounding area.

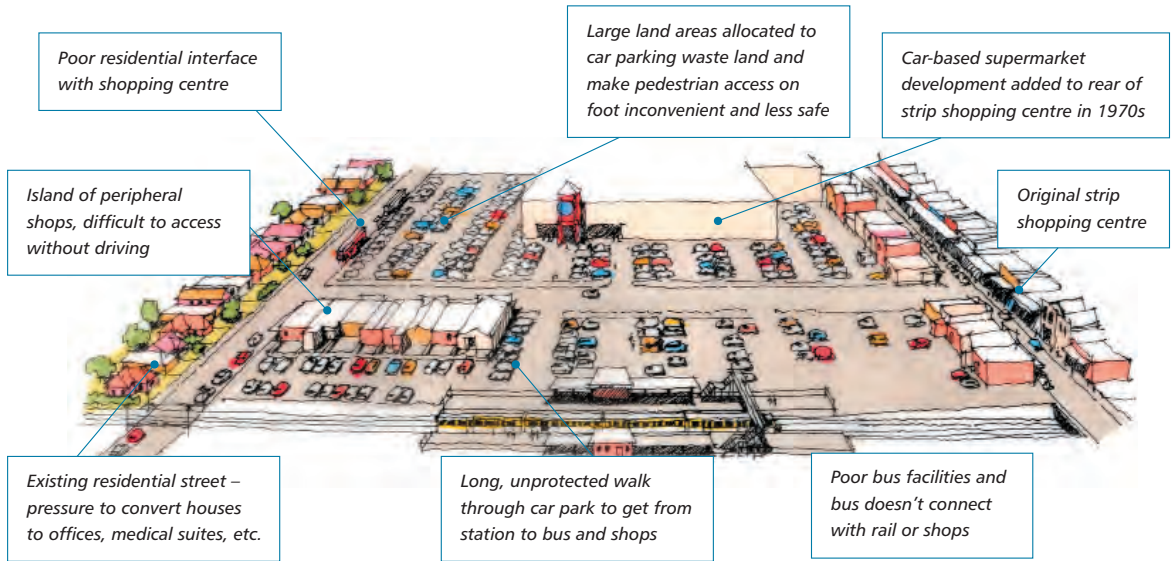
*Melbourne 2030* promotes greater consideration of design issues and includes design elements in its performance criteria for activity centres. Activity centres must provide a high-quality environment if they are to attract visitors and users. Important facets of their design include energy efficiency, designing for climate (sun, shade and wind), noise control, providing meeting places, enhancing cultural and heritage values, creating a sense of place, visitor comfort and reducing the dominance of the car. Figure 6 illustrates how a typical car-based activity centre could become more integrated.

The Neighbourhood Principles (see Appendix 2) incorporate matters of design in their aim to create better, more liveable neighbourhoods across metropolitan Melbourne. They should be adopted in work carried out at all activity centres, particularly Neighbourhood Activity Centres that serve day-to-day convenience needs. Figure 5 demonstrates how the Neighbourhood Principles can be applied.

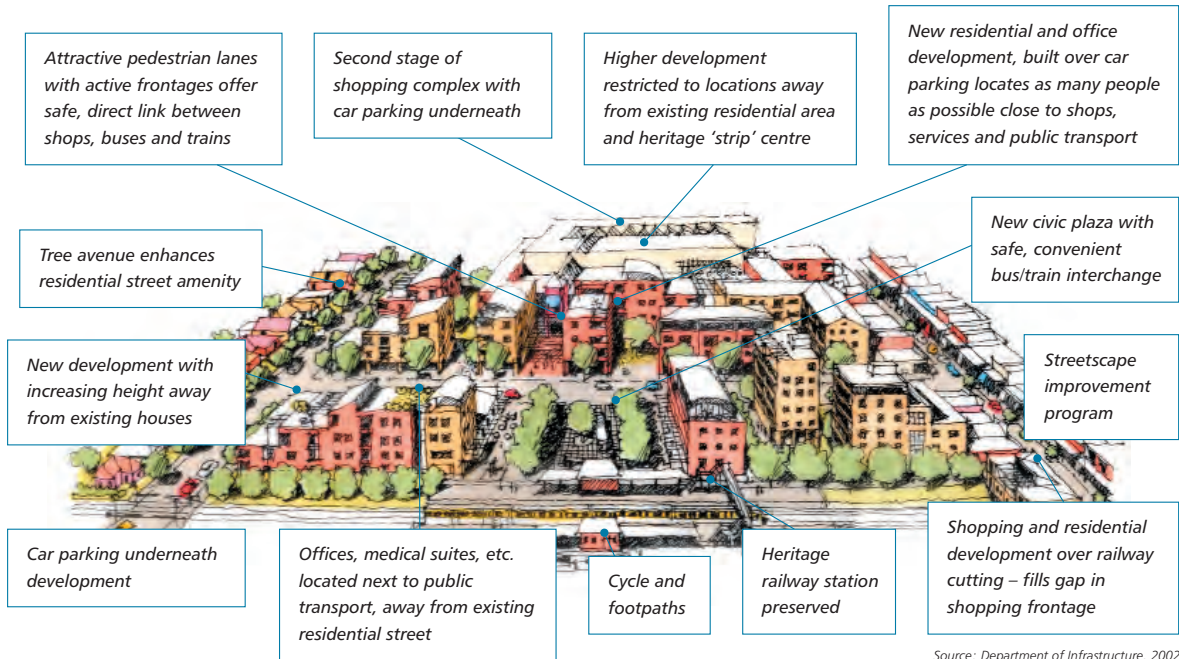


Figure 5. Sustainable neighbourhood structure

### TYPICAL CAR-BASED CENTRE



### THE SAME CENTRE AS IT COULD BE



Source: Department of Infrastructure, 2002

Figure 6. Making car-based centres work better

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## What does this plan aim to achieve?

The plan indicates how the Government, local government and industry can work together so that activity centres will:

- provide a stable investment environment and improved synergies between private and public investment
- offer fair access for all to jobs, goods and services
- reduce car dependency
- make neighbourhoods more liveable
- become more vibrant, interesting destinations.

## What are the implications for local government?

In many respects, the success of *Melbourne 2030* rests on how effective we are in planning for our network of activity centres as the major focus for change. Significant effort needs to be put into planning for individual centres and for the network of activity centres as a whole.

Local government will play a key role in advancing change in activity centres in a coordinated and positive way, particularly given their local focus and knowledge. DOI is committed to working in partnership with all stakeholders, particularly local government, to implement the initiatives for activity centres.

In the short to medium term, councils will need to review and understand all their activity centres within the context of *Melbourne 2030*. Within the consultation period they can make a submission about the Government's selection of activity centres in the three major categories - Principal, Major and Specialised Activity Centres. Their longer-term work program will include undertaking detailed strategic planning for Principal and Major Activity Centres, as well as any other local priorities they may wish to pursue.

DOI recognises that many councils have already done a significant amount of strategic planning work for their activity centres, particularly in the preparation and ongoing monitoring of their new-format planning schemes. For some councils, the necessary review process will build on work already completed. Other councils will need to undertake more detailed research.

DOI will work with councils by providing advice, assistance and support and will also review the planning system to give effect to *Melbourne 2030's* activity centre policy.

The Government will take the lead and support local government by promoting mixed-use, high-intensity hubs through its Transit Cities program, a key government initiative demonstrating how this type of planning can be achieved.

# Actions

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## How does this plan relate to *Melbourne 2030*?

Above all, the actions outlined in this draft Implementation Plan reinforce Direction 1 of *Melbourne 2030* – ‘a more compact city’.

This direction establishes policies that build up activity centres as a focus for high-quality development, activity and living for the whole community (Policy 1.1), that broaden and extend activities in centres currently dominated by shopping (Policy 1.2), and that locate new housing in or close to activity centres or strategic redevelopment sites offering good access to services and transport (Policy 1.3). Other key policies relate to strengthening Melbourne’s capital city and ‘hub’ functions (Policy 4.2), and upgrading and extending the PPTN and local transport services to connect activity centres and link Melbourne to the regional cities (Policy 8.1).

Other *Melbourne 2030* directions relevant to activity centres include Direction 4 – ‘a more prosperous city’, Direction 5 – ‘a great place to be’, Direction 6 – ‘a fairer city’, Direction 7 – ‘a greener city’, and Direction 8 – ‘better transport links’.

Policies within these directions support the development of activity centres across metropolitan Melbourne by creating opportunities for innovation, promoting good urban and neighbourhood design, improving community safety, increasing the supply of affordable housing, creating a strong cultural environment, and distributing social infrastructure more equally. Other policies cover urban development that makes jobs and community services more accessible, give priority to cycling and walking and sustainable personal transport options, and ensure that planning and infrastructure provision contribute to improved air quality.

## What are the recommended actions?

Actions designed to address the key issues outlined above and to achieve the directions of *Melbourne 2030* are grouped as follows:

- plan for growth and change in our activity centres
- establish a clear decision-making framework for activity centres
- integrate activity centres and transport
- lead by example
- ongoing monitoring and review.

These are summarised for easy reference in the following table.

## Activity Centre Actions

Action 1. Plan for growth and change in our activity centres					
Action area	Task	Time frame (short, medium, long)*	Lead agency	Involved	Relevant initiatives
<b>Undertake a strategic review of activity centres</b>	review activity centres and identify direction of change	short	local government	DOI, community, landowners and industry	1.1.1
	identify Neighbourhood Activity Centres	short	local government	community, landowners and industry	1.1.1
	review existing activity centre/retail policies in local planning schemes	medium	local government	DOI, community, landowners and industry	1.1.1
	prepare a planning scheme amendment to reflect new classification of activity centres and direction of change	medium	local government	community, landowners and industry	1.1.1
<b>Undertake structure planning</b>	prepare planning Practice Note for structure planning	short	DOI		1.1.2
	develop program to undertake structure planning for all activity centres in a municipality	short	local government	community, landowners and industry	1.1.2
	undertake structure planning	long	local government		1.1.2
	consult on and finalise the draft activity centre design guidelines	short	DOI	local government	1.1.2
<b>Plan for Central Melbourne</b>	review existing central city policies and develop action plan	medium	DOI and relevant local governments	community, landowners and industry	4.2.1

- \* Short – start within 12 months  
 Medium – start in 1–2 years  
 Long – start in 2–5 years

<b>Action 2. Establish a clear decision-making framework for activity centres</b>					
<b>Action area</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Time frame (short, medium, long)*</b>	<b>Lead agency</b>	<b>Involved</b>	<b>Relevant initiatives</b>
<b>Concentrate activity within centres</b>	review existing business zones with a view to creating specific zones to implement activity centre policy	short	DOI	local government	1.1.5
<b>Develop new out-of-centre assessment criteria</b>	develop out-of-centre assessment criteria	short	DOI	local government, community, landowners and industry	1.2.3
<b>Apply integrated performance criteria to decision-making</b>	set up working group to establish standards and guidelines based on performance criteria	short	DOI	local government, community, landowners and industry	1.2.3
	develop performance standards and guidelines, supporting information and statutory mechanisms	short	working group		1.2.3
	undertake assessment of all activity centres against performance standards and guidelines	medium - long	local government	State Government, community, landowners and industry	1.2.3

<b>Action 3. Integrate activity centres and transport</b>					
<b>Action area</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Time frame (short, medium, long)*</b>	<b>Lead agency</b>	<b>Involved</b>	<b>Relevant initiatives</b>
<b>Connect activity centres</b>	prepare transport service development and management plan for Melbourne	short	DOI	local government	8.1.1
<b>Encourage pedestrian and cycling access</b>	develop performance standards for safer pedestrian and cycling access to activity centres and other strategic redevelopment sites	medium	DOI	local government	8.3.3
	continue to develop the Principal Bicycle Network	long	DOI (VicRoads)	local government	8.7.1
<b>Review car-parking policies</b>	review car parking policies and management in Central Melbourne and at Principal and Major Activity Centres	short	DOI	local government	8.8.5

<b>Action 4. Lead by example</b>					
<b>Action area</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Time frame (short, medium, long)*</b>	<b>Lead agency</b>	<b>Involved</b>	<b>Relevant initiatives</b>
<b>Demonstrate the benefits of transit-oriented development</b>	implement demonstration projects at the metropolitan Transit Cities of Dandenong, Frankston, Ringwood, Footscray and Sydenham	ongoing	DOI	local government, community, landowners and industry	1.1.4
<b>Work with the Urban and Regional Land Corporation (URLC)</b>	identify opportunities for the URLC to assist in site assembly, master planning and so on	short	DOI	local government, private developers	1.1.5
<b>Locate government facilities in activity centres</b>	review government policies on the location of new facilities	short	State Government and agencies		1.2.1
	review local government policies on the location of new facilities	Short	Local government		1.2.2

<b>Action 5. Ongoing monitoring and review</b>					
<b>Action area</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Time frame (short, medium, long)*</b>	<b>Lead agency</b>	<b>Involved</b>	<b>Relevant initiatives</b>
<b>Monitor activity centres in relation to Melbourne 2030</b>	develop program for ongoing monitoring and review of activity centres	short	DOI	local government	9.3.4

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# Action 1

## Plan for growth and change in our activity centres

### Undertake a strategic review of activity centres

**Lead agent: local government in partnership with DOI**

In the short to medium term, councils will be required to review each of their activity centres and its direction for growth and change. Although many councils already have existing activity centre/retail policies in their planning schemes, the review will ensure that strategic objectives at local level are consistent with the key directions and policies in *Melbourne 2030*.

This exercise will also help councils identify priorities in planning for their activity centres and will form the basis of a longer term strategic planning work program.

Some councils may not have been through this process for their lower order centres, so the process includes identifying Neighbourhood Activity Centres. The identification by councils and their communities of Neighbourhood Activity Centres, using the criteria in *Melbourne 2030*, will provide clarity about future expectations for the development of these centres.

If necessary, working groups may be established to scope and implement this process at subregional level. The groups could comprise representatives from local government, DOI and other stakeholders.

Following this, councils should prepare a planning scheme amendment which articulates in general terms the direction for change for each centre. The amendment may also specify future implementation measures such as structure planning.

### Undertake structure planning

**Lead agent: local government in partnership with DOI**

*Melbourne 2030* reinforces the importance of structure plans for activity centres and supports their preparation. Councils will be encouraged to take the lead in developing structure plans for all their activity centres.

Structure plans are a valuable tool in future planning and in shaping activity centres, and form the basis for a cohesive place management approach. They should:

- set the strategic framework for the use and development of land in and around the centre, and give clear direction to investors about preferred locations for investment
- support the role and function of the centre given its classification, the policies for housing intensification, and development of the public transport network
- show the scale and direction of development that will be needed to reflect the needs of the community, now and in the future
- reflect *Melbourne 2030*'s performance criteria.

It is acknowledged that the structure planning process takes time and can be resource-intensive. Many councils have successfully undertaken structure planning for areas within their municipality, including activity centres. All councils will be encouraged to develop a five-year program of structure planning, giving priority to Principal and Major Activity Centres that have good public transport access and will be essential to the development of the PPTN. Apart from any structure planning associated with demonstration projects at the selected Transit City locations (see Action 4), the Government will give priority to Sunshine, Knox City/Towerpoint, Cranbourne, Doncaster and Narre Warren/Fountain Gate.

DOI will develop guidance notes for local government on structure planning based on the information in 'Scope of structure plans'.

## Scope of structure plans

Structure plans for activity centres should:

- assess the role and function of the activity centre and the scope for change, renewal and diversification
- identify the boundaries of the centre, or where necessary, redefine them to provide for new and expanded activity
- cover the form of development, land use, higher-density housing, roads and public transport, services and community infrastructure
- identify opportunities for a range of housing, office, large format retailing and entertainment uses – particularly in mixed-use developments
- identify opportunities for expansion, improvement or redevelopment in land uses and business mix
- consider the existing provision of and opportunities for large development sites, particularly for retail, commercial, higher-density housing and hospital or tertiary education facilities requiring a large land area – where site assembly is required, the plan should indicate what action the council or other stakeholders will take to facilitate the process
- address the interface with the surrounding area (for example, abutting residential development)
- establish design parameters for the centre
- evaluate existing accessibility, traffic arrangements, controls and car-parking demand, the availability of public transport, and the changes required to improve the transport infrastructure, particularly public transport services, walking and cycling
- address needs for non-motorised travel including access by walking and cycling, facilities within the centre for cyclists, and the internal circulation of pedestrians and cyclists
- identify the means of providing future physical infrastructure and community facilities
- provide for marketing and centre management.

## Provide for growth and change

The structure planning process should include recognition of opportunities for growth and change in centres.

Precincts should be identified, to help with future planning of activity centres and their relationship with the surrounding area. Typical precincts may include the core retail precinct, land for large-format uses, areas for higher-density housing and potential locations for expansion of the centre.

Defining the boundaries of activity centres will assist their planning as integrated mixed-use centres, and will guard against tendencies like elongated development along main roads and away from the retail core or railway station. This gives clear direction to the market and the community about proposed future development.

## Promote urban design

The structure planning process should aim to improve standards of urban design. Place-specific guidelines can help with planning permit applications and land-use changes, such as streetscape works.

DOI's urban design principles (see 'Design Principles for Activity Centres') should be applied in the structure planning process, when developing urban design frameworks for activity centres, and in assessing planning permit applications.

DOI has developed draft urban design guidelines for activity centres by applying these design principles to common development scenarios (see Appendix 3). The draft guidelines will form the basis of discussions with local government, developers and the community before being finalised in the form of an urban design Practice Note. If there is no structure plan for an activity centre, local government may use the guidelines as an interim measure in assessing development applications.

DOI will continue to provide leadership in sustainable urban design and integrated place management through:

- awards, advice and training programs, including existing programs such as Pride of Place
- its own projects, such as the Yarra Plan
- continued work on urban design guidelines that provide practical advice to local government, developers and the community.

## Design principles for activity centres\*

- improve community safety by promoting surveillance of public space, 'active' ground floors facing public spaces, and clearly identifying public and private space
- encourage development that supports convenient pedestrian access and amenity
- offer compatible land uses that are mixed to promote vitality and variety
- develop centres that are open, accessible and welcoming to all, and that are integrated with the surrounding area
- promote a focus on public transport, with developments demonstrating ease of access and community safety.

\* based on *Melbourne 2030's* principles for the development of urban design guidelines.

## Plan for Central Melbourne

### Lead agent: DOI, local government authorities and other stakeholders

Policies for Central Melbourne must be revisited, taking an integrated approach that involves the full range of stakeholders. We must find ways to strengthen the capital city functions of Central Melbourne, with a focus on strategic locations of State significance such as the CAD, Station Pier and Fishermans Bend.

DOI will lead this project by reactivating partnerships with the area's local governments, including Melbourne City Council, and with business organisations. Broad-based policies will be reviewed, and an action plan produced, to build up Melbourne's attractiveness to all major sectors and its role as a regional hub for globally competitive business and tourism.

## Implement structure plans

Once prepared, structure plans should be integrated into the planning scheme through inclusion in a council's Municipal Strategic Statement, as a local planning policy and/or by translation into zone and overlay provisions.

The Government will also encourage councils and other stakeholders to implement structure plans and provide for growth and change in activity centres by taking advantage of land assembly opportunities, pursuing economic development initiatives, and seeking funding for studies that might solve specific local issues or for on-ground works.

## Funding program

DOI will administer a structure planning funding program, with priority given to Principal and Major Activity Centres. Councils whose policies complement the directions of *Melbourne 2030* will receive priority.

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## Action 2

# Establish a clear decision-making framework for activity centres

Providing greater certainty and clarity in decision-making is important if we are to achieve our aims for activity centres.

The present decision-making framework will be modified to give greater consideration to the concentration of activity in centres, and to improve the performance of activity centres.

### Concentrate activity within centres

**Lead agent: DOI**

Concentrating activity within centres has been a significant component of metropolitan activity centre policy for many years, largely administered through the application of general policy on a case-by-case basis. *Melbourne 2030* reinforces this position, but aims to provide greater clarity about how out-of-centre proposals should be considered.

The State Planning Policy Framework will be revised to give greater emphasis to concentrating uses, particularly those that generate high numbers of trips, within or on the edge of defined activity centres. DOI has released a draft Clause 12 to the State Planning Policy Framework and is seeking comment and advice from local government, industry and the community as part of the consultation process on *Melbourne 2030*.

To supplement this, in the medium term DOI will review the existing business zones with a view to creating specific zones to implement activity centre policy. Existing industrial zones will also be reviewed to ensure consistency with *Melbourne 2030*'s policy directions for activity centres and industry.

To support the approval process, the review will also investigate streamlining the assessment of development applications for proposals that are clearly consistent with activity centre structure plans.

### Develop new out-of-centre assessment criteria

**Lead agent: DOI**

*Melbourne 2030* strongly discourages proposals for out-of-centre development or expansion. New assessment criteria will be developed to give increased and much-needed direction on assessing proposals for developments outside activity centres, thus helping concentrate activity in activity centres. DOI, in consultation with stakeholders, will begin work on this project within 12 months.

The criteria will establish the tests appropriate for such proposals, and the types of uses and developments affected. Guidelines will be written to help proponents and planning authorities to prepare and evaluate proposals and to provide details of the required documentation.

The statutory implementation of the criteria is likely to include a Ministerial Direction. This will give clear and consistent guidance for planning authorities preparing planning scheme amendments for out-of-centre developments.

Application of the criteria will seek to achieve all of the following:

- avoidance of unreasonable impacts on the economic viability or social and cultural vitality of existing or proposed centres in the network
- a location on and accessible to the PPTN
- a proportion of work and visitor trips by public transport comparable to that achieved by similar uses located in activity centres
- a location in an existing cluster of out-of-centre developments (or adjacent to such an existing cluster if the site is already used for non-residential purposes), and improvement to the economic, social and environmental performance of that cluster (see 'Performance criteria').

These outcomes, which are set out in *Melbourne 2030*, should be considered in decision-making by government departments, planning and responsible authorities, developers and the community while the criteria are being developed.

## Apply integrated performance criteria to decision-making

**Lead agent: DOI in partnership with key stakeholders**

Improving the performance of activity centres is an important component of *Melbourne 2030*. Each centre is different and will require different levels of planning and investment to improve its performance within the network. Over time, each centre's performance will be assessed in terms of its own ability to achieve sustainability, and of its contribution to the network of activity centres.

*Melbourne 2030* specifies integrated performance criteria that articulate the social, economic and environmental aims for activity centres. These broad criteria have been derived from the core objectives of the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development.

A more robust set of standards and guidelines based on the performance criteria will be developed to provide a practical tool for councils to use in assessing the performance of their activity centres. This will be undertaken by a working group that includes representation from State and local government, business and the community. It will be set up within 12 months of the release of *Melbourne 2030*. The working group will also look at the operation of the standards within the planning system.

The performance criteria and standards will also be used by planning authorities and local councils to develop a performance baseline for evaluation of development proposals. This information will be a valuable strategic planning tool for councils. It should influence all public investment decisions that affect an activity centre (such as social and physical infrastructure), policy development and structure planning.

The integrated performance criteria will be included in appropriate statutory mechanisms to provide the basis for decision-making in activity centres.

## Performance criteria for activity centres

Activity centres best meet *Melbourne 2030*'s vision, principles and key directions when they fulfil integrated performance criteria, as follows:

### Social

- improve the liveability (safety, convenience, comfort, aesthetics) of the area
- increase opportunities for social interaction and provide a focus for the community
- contribute to the area's natural, cultural and historical heritage
- make a wide range of services and facilities more accessible to all
- relate well to surrounding development, land uses and landscapes
- meet the needs of all segments of the population
- maintain or improve transport choice for all
- maintain or improve public health

### Economic

- contribute to economic competitiveness that provides wide community benefit
- promote urban forms that minimise overall land and transport requirements
- improve the efficiency of land uses and infrastructure provision
- improve freight movement and business logistics
- improve business and employment opportunities

### Environmental

- encourage the development of urban transport systems that will limit pollution from fossil fuels and reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- improve energy-efficient building design and layout
- retain natural ecosystems within urban areas and protect the integrity of the natural environment
- limit the amount of waste generated for disposal off-site
- increase water conservation, including water-sensitive urban design
- control noise emissions to achieve reasonable levels near sensitive uses.

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# Action 3

## Integrate activity centres and transport

### Connect activity centres

Lead agent: DOI

Major improvement is planned to link the network of activity centres to the PPTN. In addition to some rail improvement, many of the gaps in the system will be met by new strategic cross-town public transport routes.

In 2003, DOI will produce a service development and management plan for Melbourne that sets priorities and identifies the actions required to achieve the public transport use target of 20 per cent of motorised trips to be by public transport by 2020. This will include:

- improvements to the PPTN and a focus for local public transport services on transport interchanges at Principal and Major Activity Centres
- completion of the fast rail upgrade projects linking Melbourne to Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and the Latrobe Valley
- complementary activities, such as education and pricing policy, aimed at reducing travel demand.

### Encourage pedestrian and cycling access

Lead agent: DOI

Walking and cycling, particularly to Neighbourhood Activity Centres, is an important mode of non-motorised transport. DOI will develop performance standards for safer pedestrian and cycling access to activity centres and other strategic redevelopment sites. *Melbourne 2030* commits to the completion of the Principal Bicycle Network by 2015, availability of resources permitting, giving priority to sections that are linked to activity centres.

### Review car parking policies

Lead agent: DOI

Understanding the provision and location of car parking is an important element in changing travel behaviour.

*Melbourne 2030* commits to reviewing car-parking policies and management in Central Melbourne and at Principal and Major Activity Centres. This review will consider the needs of shoppers and short-term visitors and may encourage more people to switch to public transport.

DOI will undertake this work in consultation with relevant stakeholders in the short term.

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# Action 4

## Lead by example

The Government will lead by example in its involvement in planning for activity centres and in ensuring that activity centres deliver the results sought by *Melbourne 2030*. It will do so in a number of ways.

### Demonstrate the benefits of transit-oriented development

**Lead agent: DOI**

*Melbourne 2030* aims to promote transit-oriented development. The Transit Cities program, which designs and develops urban precincts around key transport nodes to improve the interaction between land use and transport, will support *Melbourne 2030* by more efficient use of urban infrastructure. At selected locations it will promote higher density development, integrating public and private-sector investment and building partnerships within government, with the private sector and the community.

The Transit Cities program aims to:

- improve public transport usage and the integration of transport services
- provide opportunities for increased private investment and business innovation
- improve the overall quality of places and encourage sustainable city development
- develop high-density housing at strategic locations near transit centres
- build communities that offer fair access for all to services and employment opportunities.

The Government will implement demonstration projects at the metropolitan Transit Cities of Dandenong, Frankston, Ringwood, Footscray and Sydenham and examine new opportunities to undertake Transit City-style projects starting at Box Hill, Epping, Broadmeadows and Werribee. These centres have been selected for their accessibility and transit orientation, capacity for growth and change, and commitment and capacity to deliver the objectives of *Melbourne 2030*. They also offer willing public and private-sector partners, and the opportunity to address imbalances in access to jobs, goods and services.

Two million dollars has been committed over four years for master planning of selected Transit City locations. The plans will evaluate existing conditions and identify opportunities for growth and change. Techniques applied to facilitate development at Transit City locations may include site assembly and site preparation, public works, the closure of redundant roads, master planning, and identification of an appropriate mix of uses and development, including a range of housing.

In response to indications from major land developers, the Government will take a lead role in initiating strategic change. It will:

- take a proactive role in land assembly – with small and fragmented land ownership around rail stations, land assembly is crucial, while current leasing arrangements can impede development
- set up bodies to coordinate or facilitate development in nominated Transit Cities, such as the Dandenong Development Board, which will undertake planning and feasibility studies
- appoint bodies like the URLC to act as a master developer on its behalf; this role is further enhanced by recent legislation that extends the URLC's functions to become more active in urban renewal.

To obtain maximum benefits from the Transit Cities program, it is essential to integrate public and private sector investment. Potential opportunities for business development will be identified during the master planning stage.

## Dandenong Transit Cities project

In partnership with City of Greater Dandenong and working closely with the community and local business, DOI is undertaking a detailed master plan as the first step in the Transit Cities project for Dandenong.

The plan will evaluate the area's strengths and weaknesses and provide a clear vision and detailed framework for action to improve Dandenong. It will also explore options for creating stronger links between the Dandenong activity centre and the railway station, making the area safer through links with the Department of Justice's Crime and Violence Protection Strategy and capitalising on transport initiatives such as the Scoresby Integrated Transport Corridor and the Regional Fast Rail service.

A place-based approach will enable government and stakeholders to work together to integrate planning and investment decisions. Through the Transit Cities program, Dandenong will become an integrated sustainable city for residents, businesses and visitors and will demonstrate how other activity centres can benefit from comprehensive planning and decision-making.

Key achievements to date include:

- the start of a comprehensive master planning process for Dandenong activity centre and surrounds
- the establishment and staffing of the Dandenong Development Board to coordinate, market and facilitate development in the Dandenong region, and its funding from government of \$1 million over four years
- a commitment by the URLC, starting in 2003, to develop the 26.5 hectare saleyards site to create up to 1,400 new mixed density homes – most will be no more than 800 metres from the railway station, giving residents easy access to a wide range of public transport options
- the establishment of Dandenong as a 'fast rail stop'
- the relocation of Freight Australia to a more suitable location in Dandenong to establish an intermodal freight hub – a move that has enabled the saleyards site to be integrated into the activity centre development.



*Dandenong railway station*



*Outline of redevelopment area*

## Work with the Urban and Regional Land Corporation

**Lead agent: URLC**

The URLC now plays a broader and more active role in urban development and regeneration. Recent legislative changes enable it to buy, consolidate, transfer or otherwise acquire land in metropolitan and regional areas for development. In addition, it can carry out land assembly and facilitate development, including entering into partnerships and agreements.

Given this change and its skills and experience, the URLC is well positioned to assist the Government and private developers in site assembly, master planning and preliminary infrastructure development in Principal and Major Activity Centres.

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## Locate government facilities in activity centres

**Lead agent:** State and local government

Government facilities in areas such as health, education, justice, community and administrative services add vitality to activity centres, provide a ready market and can ultimately define an activity centre's role. Because they often generate high numbers of trips, their location in activity centres can encourage co-location and transit benefits.

State government departments and agencies will lead by example on the location of new government facilities for consistency with *Melbourne 2030*. Such new facilities should be located in and around activity centres within the service catchment of the facility, and in a type of centre appropriate to the intensity of service, measured by trip generation and to the primary function of the facility (such as research and development or user services).

Local government is an important provider of local community services. Councils should review their policies on the location of community and administration facilities.

When undertaking strategic planning for new activity centres or expanding or improving the mix of uses in existing centres, local councils and developers should consider options for the location or relocation of community facilities. DOI will work with government departments to help achieve this.

# Action 5 Ongoing monitoring and review

## Monitor activity centres in relation to *Melbourne 2030*

**Lead agent:** DOI

While *Melbourne 2030* is a long-term plan, it is important that it be continually monitored to ensure that its initiatives and directions are being met and remain relevant.

DOI will establish a process for monitoring the performance and development of activity centres and other key policy areas linked to activity centre planning, such as housing. This may include:

- regular assessment of the performance of each centre in the network against the integrated performance criteria
- regular assessment of the performance of the whole network, including the PPTN
- successful control of out-of-centre development
- the performance of the Transit Cities in achieving *Melbourne 2030*'s policy directions, particularly in the housing area.

Initial steps will include a scoping exercise to determine the span of research and monitoring required.

# Next steps – what do we need to do?

The Government is releasing *Melbourne 2030* and the draft Implementation Plans for a period of public review and comment. The initial comment period, up to 14 February 2003, is to give all interested parties the chance to comment on how *Melbourne 2030* works overall, whether the draft Implementation Plans are workable, and whether there are any unforeseen issues that need further consideration.

Public information sessions will be held at various venues around the metropolitan area following the release. Public displays will be held at the Melbourne Museum in Carlton and at other venues. Workshops will be held with key stakeholder groups about particular topics. They will focus on what needs to be done, and when.

General comments on *Melbourne 2030* and specific feedback on its implementation should be submitted by 14 February 2003 to:

Metropolitan Strategy Project  
Department of Infrastructure  
GPO Box 2797Y  
Melbourne VIC 3001

or

[melbourne2030@doi.vic.gov.au](mailto:melbourne2030@doi.vic.gov.au)

Information is available by calling 1300 366 356

Details of our consultation process will be advertised widely and will be available on DOI's web site. We value your comments and involvement.

For further information on the Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy process and *Melbourne 2030*, go to [www.melbourne2030.vic.gov.au](http://www.melbourne2030.vic.gov.au)

## Submissions

In order to ensure the integrity of the consultation process, you are asked to provide your name and address with your submission. Unfortunately we will not be able to accept submissions which do not include this information. However, all personal identifying information could be removed after it is received if that is your request. If this is the case, or there are any other parts of your submission that you wish treated confidentially, please make this clear in your submission.

# Appendix 1

## List of Principal, Major and Specialised Activity Centres

### Principal Activity Centres by municipality

#### Banyule

- Greensborough

#### Boroondara

- Camberwell Junction

#### Brimbank

- Sunshine
- Sydenham

#### Casey

- Cranbourne
- Narre Warren – Fountain Gate

#### Darebin

- Preston – Northland

#### Frankston

- Frankston

#### Greater Dandenong

- Dandenong

#### Hume

- Broadmeadows

#### Kingston

- Cheltenham – Southland

#### Knox

- Wantirna South – Knox City and Towerpoint

#### Manningham

- Doncaster

#### Maribyrnong

- Footscray
- Maribyrnong – Highpoint

#### Maroondah

- Ringwood

#### Monash

- Glen Waverley

#### Moonee Valley

- Airport West
- Moonee Ponds

#### Moreland

- Coburg

#### Stonnington

- Chadstone
- Prahran/South Yarra

#### Whitehorse

- Box Hill

#### Whittlesea

- Epping

#### Wyndham

- Werribee

# Major Activity Centres by municipality

## Banyule

- Heidelberg
- Ivanhoe

## Bayside

- Brighton – Bay Street
- Brighton – Church Street
- Hampton
- Sandringham

## Boroondara

- Kew Junction

## Brimbank

- Deer Park Central
- Deer Park – Brimbank Central
- St Albans

## Cardinia

- Pakenham

## Casey

- Endeavour Hills

## Darebin

- Northcote
- Preston – High Street
- Reservoir

## Frankston

- Karingal

## Glen Eira

- Bentleigh
- Carnegie
- Caulfield
- Elsternwick
- Glenhuntly

## Greater Dandenong

- Chelsea
- Parkmore - Keysborough
- Springvale

## Hobsons Bay

- Altona
- Altona North
- Williamstown

## Hume

- Gladstone Park
- Roxburgh Park
- Sunbury

## Kingston

- Cheltenham
- Mentone
- Moorabbin
- Mordialloc

## Knox

- Bayswater
- Boronia
- Mountain Gate
- Rowville – Stud Park

## Manningham

- Doncaster East – The Pines

## Maroondah

- Croydon

## Melbourne

- Carlton – Lygon Street

**Melton**

- Melton
- Melton – Woodgrove and Coburns Road

**Monash**

- Clayton
- Mount Waverley
- Mount Waverley – Pinewood Centreway
- Mulgrave – Waverley Gardens
- Oakleigh
- Wheelers Hill Park

**Moonee Valley**

- Ascot Vale – Union Road
- Niddrie – Keilor Road
- North Essendon

**Moreland**

- Brunswick
- Glenroy

**Mornington Peninsula**

- Hastings
- Mornington
- Rosebud

**Nillumbik**

- Diamond Creek
- Eltham

**Port Phillip**

- Balaclava
- Port Melbourne – Bay Street
- South Melbourne
- St Kilda

**Stonnington**

- Malvern/Armadale
- Toorak Village

**Whitehorse**

- Burwood East – Kmart Plaza
- Burwood East – Tally Ho Business Park
- Forest Hill Chase
- Nunawading

**Whittlesea**

- South Morang

**Wyndham**

- Hoppers Crossing
- Werribee Plaza

**Yarra**

- Fitzroy – Brunswick Street
- Fitzroy – Smith Street
- Richmond – Swan Street
- Richmond – Bridge Road
- Richmond – Victoria Street

**Yarra Ranges**

- Chirnside Park
- Lilydale

# Specialised Activity Centres by municipality

## **Banyule**

- Austin Biomedical Alliance Precinct – Heidelberg

## **Darebin**

- La Trobe Technology Park – Bundoora

## **Hume**

- Melbourne Airport

## **Maribyrnong**

- Victoria University – Footscray

## **Melbourne**

- Alfred Medical Research and Education Precinct – Prahran
- Parkville Medical and Bioscience Precinct

## **Monash**

- Monash University/Health Research Precinct – Clayton

## **Whitehorse**

- Deakin University – Burwood

## **Whittlesea**

- RMIT Technology Park – Bundoora

## **Wyndham**

- Werribee Animal and Food Research Precinct

# Appendix 2

## Neighbourhood Principles

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The Neighbourhood Principles included within *Melbourne 2030* aim to create more liveable neighbourhoods that demonstrate the following characteristics:

- an urban structure where networks of neighbourhoods are clustered to support larger activity centres on the PPTN
- compact neighbourhoods that are oriented around 'walkable' distances between activities and where neighbourhood centres provide access to services and facilities to meet day-to-day needs
- reduced dependence on car use because public transport is easy to use, there are safe and attractive spaces for walking and cycling, and subdivision layouts allow easy movement through and between neighbourhoods
- a range of lot sizes and housing types to satisfy the needs and aspirations of different groups of people
- integration of housing, workplaces, shopping, recreation, and community services to provide a mix and level of activity that attracts people, creates a safe environment, stimulates interaction and provides a lively community focus
- a range of open spaces to meet a variety of needs, with links to open space networks and regional parks where possible
- a strong sense of place because neighbourhood development emphasises existing cultural heritage values, attractive built form and landscape character
- environmentally friendly development that includes improved energy efficiency, water conservation, local management of stormwater and waste water treatment, less waste and reduced air pollution
- protection and enhancement of native habitat and discouragement of the spread and planting of noxious weeds.

# Appendix 3

## Activity Centre Design Guidelines

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**Note:** these guidelines are proposed to be the basis of a future general planning Practice Note in the urban design series produced by DOI. Your comments on the guidelines are sought.

How should activity centres be designed? In future, they will need to accommodate more intense development and a greater range of uses, particularly higher-density residential development. At the same time, they will be expected to create more attractive environments and minimise adverse impacts.

The illustration on the next page shows the scenarios that could occur in a typical activity centre as a result of these expectations.

Of course, the future form of activity centres will vary with local circumstances. Every activity centre has its own characteristics, and part of the aim of an urban design approach is to reveal and highlight these attributes.

### Activity centres and sustainable urban form

Many planners and designers argue that internalised (inward-looking), stand-alone, mall-based developments are inconsistent with a sustainable urban form, and that, henceforth, activity centres should be street-based. It is the disconnection of many of these stand-alone centres from their surrounds that is seen as a major problem. A development sited in the middle of a large car park, with poor public transport services, inconveniently located bus stops and poor walking and cycling connections to the surrounding community, is designed primarily to serve car users. Activity centres should be located and laid out to make public transport, walking or cycling the easiest and the most convenient modes of access.

Another major shortcoming of stand-alone, mall-based centres is the poor quality of the public and pedestrian environment that lies between each 'parcel' of development. Each parcel looks inward, which means the building presents blank walls to the outside while sitting in a sea of parking (and possibly some landscaping). There is little or no safe, direct and convenient foot access between each parcel, or even to adjoining residential areas. Even the street systems fail to connect, so that it is necessary to drive from one activity to another on the main highway. Centres such as these may be successful as a collection of individual trading entities, but they fail to contribute to a sustainable urban form. In future, we must avoid the 'gated community' approach to activity centre design.

To reduce the need to travel, it helps to concentrate most services (for example, community services, municipal service centres, parks and other public facilities such as medical centres, shops and restaurants) into consolidated centres of activity. This means only one trip is needed to fulfil multiple purposes, so, activity centres should accommodate a wide range of uses, including larger format uses such as supermarkets and office developments.

### The case for street-based centres

How should different activities be integrated into a coherent, compact, walkable centre? Most urban designers would argue that the street should be the structural principle that fulfils this function. Streets are multifunctional public spaces that connect most activity within our towns and cities. In addition to the existing urban fabric, which is street-based, the obvious starting point for any activity centre should be an extension of the street system. People gain access to a centre along streets, and walk around it along streets and lanes. Activity centre design that is based on the street system may make it easier to integrate with the local community's sense of place, which often incorporates the local street pattern. Activity that adjoins streets and traffic along a roadway tends to make sidewalk footpaths feel safer than segregated pedestrian malls, particularly out of hours.

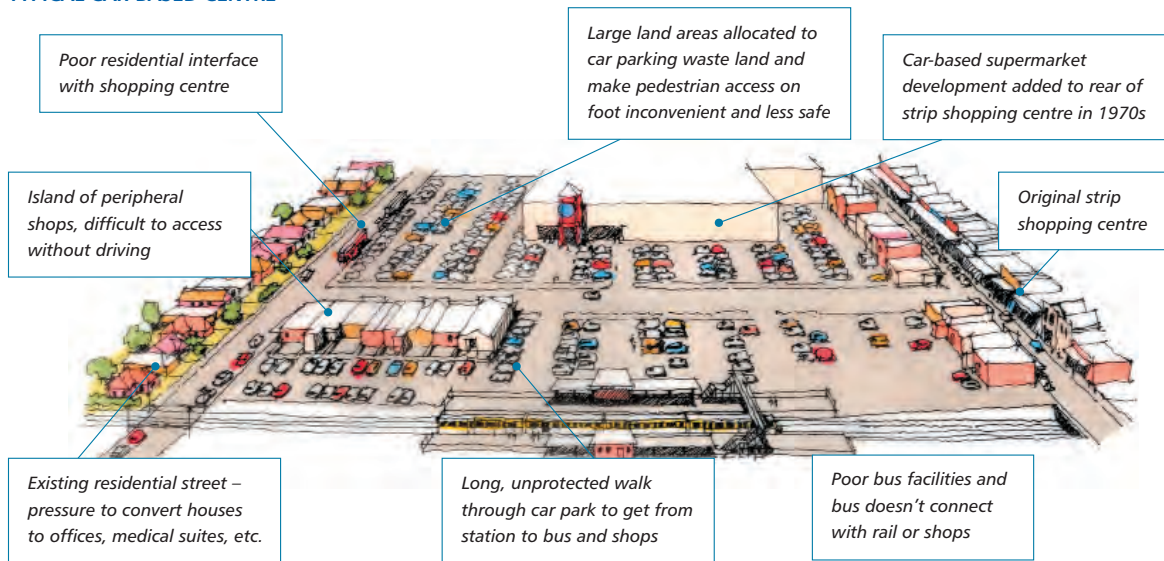
### Principles for the design of activity centres

Activity centres should be the focal points of the local community and they are essential to local identity. They should be the places in which local services are concentrated and at which public transport interchange occurs. Their design and appearance should express public and civic values. Their proper planning is the key to reducing car dependence in Melbourne and other urban centres. The principles that should guide the design of every activity centre are contained in Action 1 of this draft Implementation Plan.

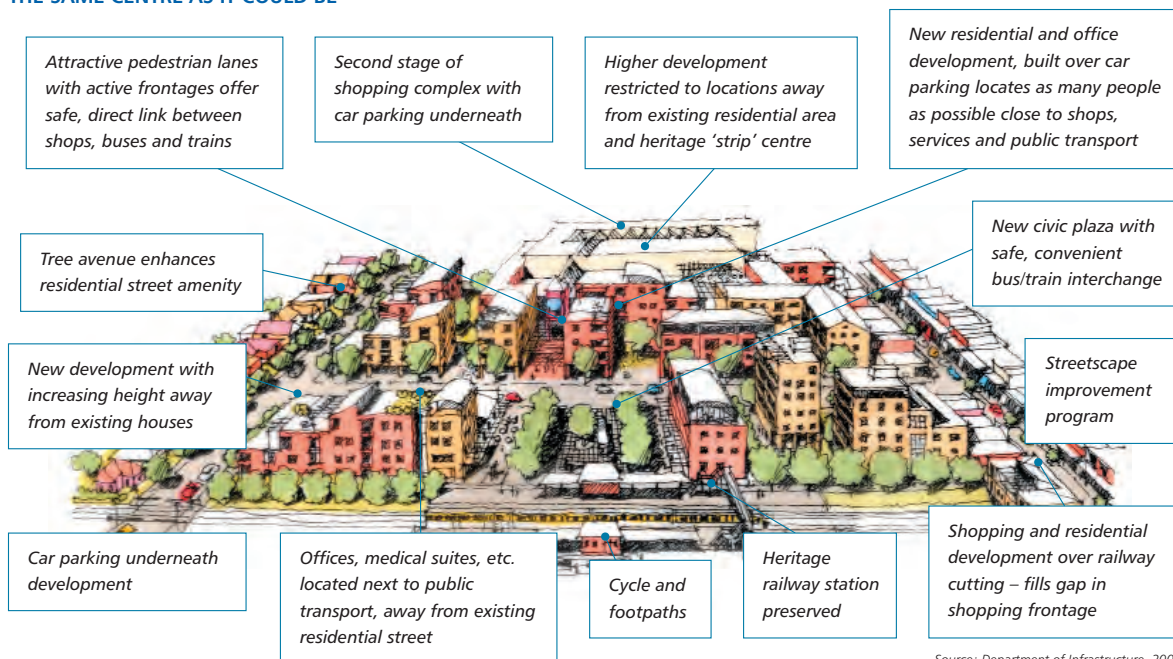
These guidelines demonstrate how these principles can be applied to activity centres. They focus on six main topics: existing street-based activity centres; mall-based centres and large stores; integrating transit shops, stations and interchanges; residential use in and around the centre; layout and structure of activity centres in new areas; and building design and environmental sustainability.

# Making car-based centres work better

## TYPICAL CAR-BASED CENTRE



## THE SAME CENTRE AS IT COULD BE



Source: Department of Infrastructure, 2002

# Existing street-based activity centres

For activity centres to fulfil their role as community identity points, they must be attractive and convenient for all visitors. A key to developing vibrant and attractive centres is to provide a strong identity that builds on local character. Street environments need to be welcoming and provide variety and interest.

## Overall planning of activity centres

### Guidelines

Redesign centres to focus on transit stops or interchanges.

Redesign centres to address the surrounding streets by bringing development out to the streets as far as is practical.

Reconnect surrounding residential areas by making car-parking areas more compact or putting them underground, and by introducing new uses such as higher-density housing or other activity centre uses.

Develop a public domain of new streets that connect with each other and have traditional footpaths, and refocus development to address these streets.

Introduce a full range of compatible activity centre uses which are intermixed and well-connected.

### Avoid

*Dispersing community facilities into locations that are hard to access on foot or by public transport.*

*Extensive ground-level car parks separating the centre from surrounding uses.*

*Inconveniently located bus stops, lack of weather protection and poor interchange facilities.*

*'Place-less' development that destroys or detracts from the valued character of the centre.*

*Disconnected footpaths interrupted by features such as car parks or changes in level.*

*Level changes and physical barriers along key pedestrian routes.*

## Sense of place and community

### Guidelines

Design the centre to provide a focus for the local community and to reinforce a local sense of place or identity.

Incorporate locally relevant urban art into the centre as an integral part of its urban design.

### Avoid

*Centres which lack a strong sense of identity.*

*'Afterthought' art works which do not relate to the character and culture of the local community.*

## Streets and circulation

### Guidelines

Use streets to join activity rather than as boundaries between uses and different densities.

Provide a connected, public, local circulation system within larger centres (usually best achieved by a traditional arrangement of streets and footpaths).

Develop streets that are safe, convenient and visually interesting for pedestrians.

Provide secure bicycle parking.

Include islands, medians and crossings to help pedestrians cross roads, and widened footpaths to improve pedestrian conditions.

Use traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds.

Clearly signpost off-street car parks.

### Avoid

*Using streets as boundaries between different uses and activities.*

*Internalised or privatised pedestrian links.*

*Car-dominated streets and footpaths lined with blank walls.*

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## Promoting street life and safety

### Guidelines

Enhance the sense of safety within the centre by ensuring that public spaces are overlooked by people (including from within buildings) for as long as possible every day.

Organise uses within buildings abutting public spaces so that 'active' ground floor uses foster natural surveillance.

Design buildings so that the occupants can maintain eye contact with people in the street (for example, from balconies or windows that overlook the public space).

Provide well-lit streets and other public spaces to enhance public safety and to contribute to the lively character of the centre.

### Avoid

*Poor street and public space lighting with an emphasis on advertising and promotional lighting.*

*Large areas or wide building frontages with a single use, particularly if the hours of occupation are limited.*

*Extensive blank-walled facades lacking in visual interest; use of glass that hides the presence within the building of people and activity.*

*Infrequently occupied ground floors, and blank ground-floor walls fronting streets, footpaths and other public spaces.*

## Public domain design

### Guidelines

Develop an urban character and landscape theme that reflects the valued urban, cultural or landscape character of the area, and apply this consistently (including to street furniture).

Use finishes to buildings and public spaces that are robust and of high quality.

Clearly define the boundary between the public and private spaces, and define these through techniques such as use of materials.

Locate public spaces to maximise solar access particularly during the cooler times of the year, and provide shade in summer.

Provide attractive, well-located spaces for meeting and resting.

Maintain and extend tree planting, to provide shade and improve the environment.

### Avoid

*Urban design character which does not relate to the local area; sporadic and piecemeal landscape works; one-off, featuristic design elements.*

*Materials and finishes of low durability, or susceptible to vandalism.*

*Piecemeal approach to the introduction and management of street furniture.*

*'Gated' community or semi-public areas, or other forms of semi-private enclosed spaces.*

*Key public spaces that are shaded in winter.*

*Creating 'afterthought' spaces in locations that will not be used.*

# Mall-based centres and large stores

Car-based mall developments that look inwards rather than out can be retro-fitted to incorporate many of the principles referred to in these guidelines. Large stores such as supermarkets are essential to the vitality of many activity centres, but their large expanse, blank rear and side walls and sheeted roofs can create visual and functional blight within an activity centre and its surrounding area. Poor integration of large stores can also adversely affect an activity centre's economic and social performance.

## Retro-fitting stand-alone, car-based mall centres

### Guidelines

Redesign centres to focus on transit stops or interchanges.

Redesign centres to address the surrounding streets by bringing development out to the streets as far as is practical.

Reconnect surrounding residential areas by making car-parking areas more compact or putting them underground, and by introducing new uses such as higher-density housing or other activity centre uses.

Develop a public domain of new streets that connect with each other and have traditional footpaths, and refocus development to address these streets.

Introduce a full range of compatible activity centre uses which are intermixed and well-connected.

### Avoid

*Inconveniently located bus stops and absence of interchange facilities.*

*Gap sites, and long frontages occupied by blank walls, parking or service bays.*

*Extensive ground-level car parks separating the centre from surrounding uses.*

*Public domain that consists only of the backs and edges of separately designed developments, with poor standard, disconnected footpath networks.*

*Separation of activity into single-use developments.*

## Integrating internalised mall developments into activity centres

### Guidelines

Ensure any future internalised mall developments observe urban design principles and contribute to the sustainability of the centre as a whole.

Make use of natural light in internal public spaces (for example, use arcade-style glazed roofs).

Design the redevelopment so that people can walk easily between the mall, the rest of the centre and public transport stops.

Locate car parks in a way that maintains pedestrian connections with the rest of the centre (that is, above or below the large store).

Use higher-density residential development as a transition to adjacent existing residential areas to reduce the apparent scale and impact of large store buildings.

Integrate with the rhythm and scale of existing frontages in the streetscape.

Utilise the roof space of large stores for residential development or other smaller-scale uses.

Provide a scale transition to surrounding streets and residential areas.

Provide openings in the store façade, or active frontages where the store abuts adjoining streets.

'Wrap' the edges of large stores with smaller scale uses that have active frontages (such as speciality shops, or small offices with frontages to the surrounding streets).

### Avoid

*Creating internal public spaces without access to natural light.*

*Locating sensitive uses, such as residential, near sources of noise such as plant rooms, entertainment venues, exhaust stacks or other plant and service areas, or without adequate soundproofing.*

*Large stores that are physically separated from the rest of the activity centre, and that fail to integrate with the layout and structure of the centre.*

*Ground-level car parks separating the store from other uses.*

*Blank walls, car parks or service bays facing onto residential streets, or onto public streets and spaces in the activity centre.*

*Single-level development of large stores.*

*Large unarticulated buildings of box-like appearance adjacent to existing residential areas or with frontages to streets.*

# Integrating transit stops, stations and interchanges

For activity centres to fulfil the promise of increased sustainability, they need to attract more public transport users. Public transport stops must become a central feature of activity centres, offering more convenient access than car parks. Different routes and modes of public transport need to be connected into well-located interchanges that are integrated with the fabric of centres.

Railway stations should function as gateways to activity centres, with convenient interchange to other modes of transport. This integration poses difficult design challenges. Railway lines have the potential to divide activity centres and their communities, while the parking areas associated with stations can blight adjacent residential and retail areas.

## Location and planning context

### Guidelines

Maximise the role and efficiency of railway stations as transport interchanges.

Integrate railway stations and rail corridors into their surrounding neighbourhood, enabling discontinuities in the street network to be rectified.

Integrate transit stops and interchanges into the urban design concept for the activity centre, and locate them centrally.

Focus pedestrian paths on the station, stop or interchange to provide direct, convenient and attractive routes.

Lease unused parts of railway stations for commercial uses that attract a steady stream of customers and activity (such as cafés).

### Avoid

*Transit stops and interchanges that are an afterthought in the design process.*

*Development that increases walking distances to transit stops or between different modes of travel.*

*Transit stop locations at the edge of the activity centre, particularly if they are separated from the centre by a main road or other physical barrier.*

*Paths to stops that are unsafe or inconvenient (for example, passing through car parks, crossing major roads, or having no weather protection).*

## Use and development near interchanges and stations

### Guidelines

Use development to fill gaps in and around railway stations.

Develop the entrances and approaches to stations and interchanges in a way that enhances their appearance and their function as arrival points in the activity centre.

Surround railway stations, transit stops and interchanges with active ground-level uses (particularly convenience shops and other day-to-day services) to enhance safety and contribute to the feeling of a lively place.

### Avoid

*Underutilised or ugly railway reservations, or allowing rail corridors to act as barriers.*

*Development that backs onto the main public spaces of railway stations.*

*Unattractive entrance points, such as dark or narrow pedestrian subways, or narrow elevated walkways with blind spots.*

*Blank walls or low-activity uses around stops.*

*Uses that do not relate to the immediate needs of the transport user.*

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## Access and design considerations

### Guidelines

Provide comfortable weather-protected stops, integrated into the architecture of the activity centre.

Provide cyclists with good access and secure bicycle storage.

Ensure that safe and convenient access is provided for people with special mobility requirements (such as prams, shopping jeeps, people with a disability).

Provide local travel information (such as maps or timetables) and clear signage to key destinations.

### Avoid

*Shelter structures located on inhospitable sites and not integrated into the built form and streetscape of the activity centre.*

*Overlooking the potential of bicycle travel to extend the catchment areas of public transport routes.*

*Indirect access routes for people with special needs.*

## Rail corridor development

### Guidelines

Look for opportunities to develop under-used railway land and above railway lines and stations, particularly above cuttings.

Respect the existing character and heritage values of railway stations, where applicable.

Landscape existing vegetated land beside railway lines, as a positive contribution to environment and air quality.

### Avoid

*Rail tracks that divide the activity centre or separate it from its surrounds.*

*Overwhelming the heritage aspects of station buildings with out-of-scale or inappropriate development.*

*Destroying significant trees and other planting in areas of existing railway corridor landscaping.*

# Residential use in and around activity centres

The boundary between activity centres and their residential hinterland often appears as a collection of left-over spaces, containing backs of buildings, delivery bays and car parks. The visual impact of this peripheral development on adjoining residential areas is often addressed in piecemeal fashion – yet this is a most important local planning issue. Many activity centres could be better used and developed at the point where they merge with residential areas. A positive approach to this issue is needed.

With changing demographic requirements more people want to live close to or within activity centres, a trend that can reduce the necessity for car travel. Higher-density housing could be provided as part of mixed-use developments, or above other uses such as shops or car parks. But as new residential developments tend to demand increased density and height, there will be design challenges in making a transition in scale between larger new developments and existing built form.

## Planning the residential interface

### Guidelines

Take steps to plan, design and manage the interface with residential areas comprehensively, to ensure that built form and linkages (particularly at-grade pedestrian links) are contiguous with the centre.

Incorporate residential use into new developments that adjoin a residential neighbourhood, to provide a transition from activity centre uses.

### Avoid

*The incremental process of demolition, conversion to parking lots and creation of underutilised or undeveloped parcels of land that can blight the edges of activity centres.*

*Uses immediately adjoining a residential area that will generate high volumes of vehicular traffic or excess noise.*

## Scale, form and design of buildings at the residential interface

### Guidelines

Provide a transition from the built form scale of the centre to that of adjoining existing residential areas, either within the centre or on the edge of the adjoining residential area.

Articulate built form to complement the scale and character of surrounding residential areas.

Provide a gradual transition from existing frontage setbacks.

Where the garden and landscape character of the existing residential area is a valued characteristic, design a landscape setting that contributes to it.

### Avoid

*Higher-rise buildings immediately adjacent to established low-rise residential neighbourhoods.*

*Buildings sited, massed or articulated in ways that fail to respect the character of the adjoining residential area.*

*Abrupt changes in the frontage treatment in the interface area.*

*Front garden or landscape treatments differing in style to the existing residential character.*

## Parking and traffic

### Guidelines

Ensure safe, convenient pedestrian, cycle and local traffic access to the activity centre from adjoining residential areas, through measures such as connecting footpaths and roadways, improving lighting and footpath condition.

Take steps to limit the impact of non-local traffic and parking on surrounding residential streets.

Share parking facilities for the residential development with other activity centre uses, taking advantage of differing time periods of demand for parking.

Accommodate car parking under the residential development; where this is not possible, ensure ground-level street frontages have activity and interest for pedestrians.

Provide safe access to parking for residents – well lit, direct and preferably with passive surveillance.

### Avoid

*Indirect, circuitous access for pedestrians, cyclists and local traffic to the centre from existing residential areas.*

*Allowing non-local vehicles to come and go to major activity centre facilities along local residential streets.*

*Separate uses and developments, each with their own car parking.*

*Higher-density housing surrounded by car parking.*

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## Amenity and safety

### Guidelines

Increase surveillance and the overall safety of the centre by orienting development to overlook public spaces.

Locate and orient the development to avoid adverse amenity impacts from existing buildings and activities.

Design the site and buildings to minimise adverse effects on adjacent uses, particularly residential, from over-shadowing, overlooking, noise (such as from truck delivery areas) or odours.

Ensure that the amenity and safety of adjoining residential areas is addressed in designing the interface between them and the centre.

### Avoid

*Blank walls facing public spaces.*

*Locating dwellings adjacent to sources of noise such as plant rooms, entertainment venues, exhaust stacks or other plant and service areas.*

*Adverse effects such as cooking exhausts, plant rooms, traffic flows and service yards adjacent to sensitive uses such as residential.*

*Adversely affecting safety, both actual (traffic accidents) and perceived (the feeling that a street is safe to walk along).*

## Incorporating higher density housing into an activity centre

### Guidelines

Consciously design housing into new developments (such as shop-top housing, housing over big stores, building over surface car parks).

Use higher density housing to provide a transition between activity centre uses and surrounding existing residential areas.

Incorporate the development into the public street system.

Amalgamate small lots into larger sites, to facilitate better and more efficient design outcomes.

### Avoid

*Failing to consider the potential of residential as a component of commercial (or other) development schemes, or as a solution to developing underutilised or ugly sites.*

*Backs of shops or commercial buildings, service yards or car parks facing onto residential streets.*

*Gated enclaves of housing.*

## Scale, form and design of higher density housing

### Guidelines

Maintain a scale of built form that allows eye contact with people in public spaces.

Provide separate entrances to residential development in mixed-use buildings.

Provide a consolidated open space or landscaped area, accessible to the sun, that contributes to local recreational needs.

Design buildings to complement the scale and character of their surroundings.

### Avoid

*Higher-rise buildings located directly adjacent to established low-rise housing areas.*

*Confining residential units to locations that fail to contribute to passive surveillance of street and other spaces.*

*Entrances to residences shared with entrances to incompatible uses.*

*Developments that don't get enough sun.*

*Buildings that are sited, massed or articulated in ways that fail to respect local character or heritage.*

# Layout and structure of activity centres in new areas

The layout and structure of new activity centres, particularly those designed to service newly developing areas, can play a key role in developing sustainable communities.

## Street and block layout

### Guidelines

Locate activity centres along important streets and close to arterial systems, and design them to provide a high level of accessibility.

Accommodate arterial movements on freeways or arterial roads that avoid the activity centre.

Accommodate bus routes along neighbourhood connectors, and locate bus stops close to other public transport stops, retail or community activities.

Integrate the activity centre into the local street network, with a block size and shape that fosters accessibility, and direct links to surrounding neighbourhoods, particularly for pedestrians.

Relate the width of streets to the characteristics of adjoining land uses, the type of frontage and street parking requirements.

### Avoid

*Centres with poor accessibility from residential neighbourhoods.*

*Locating facilities and services that generate high traffic volumes on small local streets.*

*Pedestrian routes that go past inactive and back-of-shop uses.*

*Too many cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets.*

*Street alignments and layouts that increase distances for pedestrians.*

*Single-purpose main roads and local streets that only accommodate vehicular movements.*

*Streets that are too narrow or too wide for the functions they need to support.*

## Disposition of uses and development

### Guidelines

Allow for an adequate number of neighbourhood centres to support the functions of the activity centre.

Express community facilities and topographic features as landmarks, using street layouts to create lines of sight to these features to assist with orientation.

Design the centre and residential areas so that at least 60 per cent of dwellings and activities are within 400 metres safe walking distance from a bus stop, or 800 metres from a railway station.

### Avoid

*Building out views and vistas.*

*Locating schools where traffic volumes and congestion are high.*

*Locating railway stations away from a street frontage or at the back of shops or residences.*

*Bus stops that are difficult to access or located in areas of low visibility or low activity.*

## Street design

### Guidelines

Manage traffic volumes and speeds through traffic calming and intersection design.

Design streets with a high level of pedestrian amenity including tree planting, lighting, built form of a human scale, and active ground floors with doors and windows opening directly onto streets.

### Avoid

*Dark, hidden, windswept streets, fronted by blank building facades.*

# Building design and environmental sustainability

Buildings can be designed in ways that contribute to the overall vitality of activity centres. The mix of uses is also important. Activity centres only reach their full potential as community focal points if they accommodate a multiplicity of uses – not just retail. To fulfil the aim of reducing the need to travel, they should become concentrated centres of mixed-use activity. There are benefits in mixing compatible uses horizontally (within precincts) and vertically (within buildings), to make public spaces in the centres safer and more attractive to pedestrians. Buildings should be designed to contribute to principles of environmental sustainability, including the possibility of future adaptation or reuse.

## Orientation and external design of buildings

### Guidelines

Maintain the continuity of built form to the street, and ensure that building frontages extend to the main roads surrounding the centre (where present).

Encourage a mix of uses (either vertical, such as shop-top housing or offices over shops, or horizontal, where uses are beside each other), bearing in mind accessibility requirements of mobility-impaired people.

Ensure that streets are lined with buildings containing active uses at ground floor level.

Provide weather protection to all key footpath routes and transit stops.

Orient development to face onto waterways and creeks, open space or views.

Introduce design elements and rhythms that reflect local built form context.

Place car parking under buildings where possible; where this is not feasible, ensure that ground-level street frontages have activity and interest for pedestrians.

### Avoid

*Buildings surrounded by car parking.*

*Gap sites, and long frontages occupied by parking or service bays.*

*Large areas or wide building frontages with a single use, particularly if the hours of occupation are limited.*

*Long lengths of blank wall.*

*Large freestanding buildings separated by under-utilised landscape space or car parks.*

*Main road frontages dominated by car parking or landscape setbacks instead of active frontages.*

*Windswept, unprotected pedestrian routes.*

*Surface car parks or buildings that back on to landscape or open space.*

*Large, monolithic, unarticulated building forms in areas characterised by finer detail.*

## Environmental sustainability

### Guidelines

Design and orient buildings to maximise northern aspect solar access in the cooler months and to include insulation, glazing and sun shading devices.

Incorporate water-sensitive design principles to manage stormwater.

Design to maximise water recycling opportunities and to minimise importation of potable water.

Maximise opportunities for roof-mounted solar devices (such as solar hot-water systems and photovoltaic panels).

Design landscapes that make the most of water infiltration and retain it to help with plant maintenance.

Promote landscapes with native vegetation, where this conforms with local character.

Use energy-efficient lighting for security lighting.

Design and construct buildings so they are adaptable enough to accommodate a range of uses over time.

Provide adequate site storage and transport access points for separation of recycled materials.

### Avoid

*Buildings with significant areas of glazing facing west or south.*

*Discharging stormwater directly into local creeks without ameliorating peak flows and improving water quality.*

*Inefficient design features that waste potable water.*

*Landscapes and vegetation that require excessive amounts of imported water for sustenance.*

*Unnecessary over-lighting of areas.*

*Buildings designed to be capable of accommodating only one type of use.*

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## Managing amenity impacts

### Guidelines

Design buildings and locate their services to minimise adverse effects, such as noise or odours, on sensitive adjacent uses, particularly residential.

Locate site storage and transport access points for waste collection away from public spaces and residential areas.

Design public outdoor spaces to minimise the effect of wind.

Minimise particle emissions from construction and demolition activity by applying the Environment Protection Authority's *Environmental Guidelines for Major Construction Sites*.

Minimise exposure to air pollution hot spots by locating arterial freight traffic routes away from areas where people gather.

### Avoid

*Locating services with adverse effects, such as cooking exhausts, plant rooms, waste storage and service yards, adjacent to sensitive uses such as residential.*

## Parking

### Guidelines

Share parking facilities for residential development with other activity centre uses, taking advantage of differing periods of demand for parking.

### Avoid

*Separate uses, each with its own car parking.*

# Glossary of terms

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## ***Activity centres***

Provide the focus for services, employment and social interaction in cities and towns. They are where people shop, work, meet, relax and often live. Usually well-served by public transport, they range in size and intensity of use from local neighbourhood strip shopping centres to traditional universities and major regional malls.

## ***Central Activities District***

Metropolitan Melbourne's largest activity centre with the greatest variety of uses and functions, and the most intense concentration of development. It includes the Central City including the Central Business District, Docklands, the Sports and Entertainment Precinct, the Arts Precinct and Southbank.

## ***Central Business District***

Melbourne's gridded original street layout designed by Robert Hoddle, bounded by the Yarra River, Spring Street, La Trobe Street and Spencer Street, as well as the triangular area to the north bounded by Victoria, Peel and La Trobe Streets.

## ***Central Melbourne***

Those parts of the cities of Melbourne, Yarra and Port Phillip with a focus on capital city functions.

## ***Ecologically sustainable development***

Development that improves the total quality of life, now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends.

## ***Higher-density housing***

Housing units on a given area of land that are more numerous than the average in the surrounding locality.

## ***Metropolitan Melbourne***

The 31 metropolitan municipalities that make up the metropolitan region: Banyule, Bayside, Boroondara, Brimbank, Cardinia, Casey, Darebin, Frankston, Glen Eira, Greater Dandenong, Hobsons Bay, Hume, Kingston, Knox, Manningham, Maribyrnong, Maroondah, Melbourne, Melton, Monash, Moonee Valley, Moreland, Mornington Peninsula, Nillumbik, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Whitehorse, Whittlesea, Wyndham, Yarra and Yarra Ranges.

## ***Municipal Strategic Statement***

Part of the Local Planning Policy Framework, this contains the strategic planning land-use and development objectives of the relevant planning authority, the strategies for achieving these objectives, and the relationship to controls over the use and development of land in the planning scheme.

## ***Principal Public Transport Network***

A high-quality public transport network that connects Principal and Major Activity Centres, and comprises the existing radial fixed-rail network, extensions to this radial network and new cross-town bus routes.

## ***Strategic infrastructure***

Large-scale infrastructure, such as ports or airports, that has a major and long-term impact on activities in a region.

## ***Strategic redevelopment site***

An area within the built-up urban area designated for higher density residential development includes activity centres and major redevelopment sites.

## ***Structure plan***

A planning tool that sets out an integrated vision for the desired future development of a place, and establishes a planning and management framework to guide development and land-use change in order to achieve stated environmental, social and economic objectives.

## ***Sustainable development***

Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

## ***Transport interchange***

A place where people change modes of transport, for example from train to bus.

## ***Victoria Planning Provisions***

Policies and requirements for the use, development and protection of land in Victoria.

## ***Walkable***

Walkable communities, or locations, make footpath-based travel as easy as possible for all members of the community including children, people with prams/shopping carts and people using mobility aids. Walkability encompasses issues of safety (traffic and personal), attractive surroundings, distance between destinations, gradients, appropriate surfaces and physical barriers to access such as steps and gutters.

# References

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