

- a clearer separation between policy making and service delivery, leading to increased public accountability
- the wider application of user-pays principles based on risk assessment.

Consistent with the National Competition Policy adopted by the Council of Australian Governments in April 1995, the monopolies that dominated the provision of electricity, gas, water and related services in Melbourne have been restructured, and these industries are progressively being opened to competition.

Involving the private sector in all these ways will contribute to better management of the metropolis and better provision of the services Melburnians need.

The planning context

It is important not to treat suburban Melbourne in isolation from the central city or the rest of Victoria. The city's economic well-being depends on, and in turn underpins, the health of the regional and rural economy. Central city, metropolitan and regional development go hand in hand, and all three must be seen in their national and international context.

Living Suburbs is one of three interrelated policies. The first of these, *Creating Prosperity – Victoria's Capital City Policy*, was released by the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne in November 1994. It establishes a framework to guide development in the City of Melbourne to 2001.

The present policy complements the Capital City Policy. It reinforces metropolitan Melbourne's existing advantages, acts as a catalyst to create further advantages, and enhances the quality of life enjoyed by all Melburnians.

Living Suburbs will in turn be complemented by a policy for the development of regional Victoria. This will focus on the contribution the regions make to the State's prosperity and will provide a framework for strengthening that contribution.

Suburban Melbourne is part of a larger urban system, which includes both the central business district and the semi-rural areas adjoining the metropolis. Compare the downtown skyline from Williamstown with the landscape around Pakenham and you begin to appreciate just how many issues are involved in managing a city of Melbourne's diversity.

