





## OUTCOME 4

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**Melbourne is a  
distinctive and liveable  
city with quality design  
and amenity**

# Melbourne is a distinctive and liveable city with quality design and amenity

Melbourne has always been a place defined and designed by its people.

Countless generations of Aboriginal people of the Kulin nations laid the foundations of what became Melbourne and Victoria—using, among many other ingenious techniques, fire to turn their corner of Australia into a land of abundance. Many of the first Europeans to settle in Victoria wrote about the then colony's manicured appearance, including the city's first surveyor, Robert Hoddle. Port Phillip was, Hoddle said, 'picturesque and park-like country'.<sup>30</sup>

The challenge ahead of this generation is to design a version of the city and state that, while protecting the best aspects of the natural and built environment, supports social and cultural diversity and economic activity and creates a sense of place.

An identifiable sense of place emerges from a unique set of characteristics and quality—visual, cultural, environmental and social. Communities with a high level of attachment to their cities also tend to have a high rate of Gross Domestic Product growth.<sup>31</sup>

Place-making is a conscious strategy designed to promote people's health, happiness, prosperity and wellbeing. It brings together a range of factors and disciplines, including economic development, urban design and environment, culture, community engagement, finance and governance. Place-making can apply to whole regions or individual neighbourhoods. In all cases it aims to capitalise on local assets, inspiration and potential.

## Enhancing our city's liveability

Melbourne is the world's most liveable city. It offers residents and visitors a wide range of options for employment, entertainment, education, recreation and living. Melbourne also has a history of outstanding public works—formal parks, attractive public spaces, grand boulevards and atmospheric laneways.

Melbourne's liveability and reputation draw on its cultural and sporting events and precincts. Iconic venues such as the Melbourne Cricket Ground and the Melbourne Arts Centre are integral to the city's identity. The combinations of the city's stadiums, business conference and convention facilities, libraries, museums, galleries, performing-arts venues, parks and open spaces, and the busy year-round calendar of events and festivals they enable are what make Melbourne such a vibrant and creative city.

This legacy needs to be maintained and extended to make all parts of the metropolis more liveable within the context of their existing and future character and form.



### A city of diversity

Melbourne is a city of distinctive centres and neighbourhoods, from the high-density, inner-urban areas of the central city to the leafy neighbourhoods of the east to the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges to the bayside beaches to the new growth areas to the south-east, north and west. Together these places create an accessible and inclusive city with living options that cater for people across all life stages.

Melbourne's cultural diversity adds to the city's vitality and creates economic and cultural benefits as well as a stronger understanding of the world. About 45 per cent of Victorians were born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas. Melburnians have family origins in more than 230 countries, follow 120 religions and speak more than 200 languages.

The more that is done to strengthen Melbourne's distinctive feel and identity, the more people will want to come here to live or to visit. Enhancing important aspects of Melbourne's 'heart and soul' will add to its appeal as a destination of choice.

### Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas

Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas support Melbourne through food production, critical infrastructure (such as water supply catchments and airports), sand and stone supply, biodiversity, recreation and tourism. Green wedges and peri-urban areas provide opportunities for the community to connect with nature, improving health outcomes, as well as maintaining the ecosystem services that underpin Victoria's prosperity. Protecting the green wedges and peri-urban areas will make the state's food supply more secure in the face of increasing climate pressures on food production.

## MELBOURNE'S GREEN WEDGES AND PERI-URBAN AREAS

Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas are the non-urban areas outside Melbourne's urban growth boundary.

Green wedge areas were first set aside in the 1970s to conserve rural activities and significant natural features and resources between the growth areas of metropolitan Melbourne as they spread out along major road and rail links. Since 2002, green wedge land has been defined under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. New planning zones and stronger regulations were also introduced at this time to better control the subdivision and use of green wedge land. There are 12 designated green wedge areas situated within the 17 metropolitan-fringe local government areas. Municipalities with significant proportions of both urban and green wedge land have also formed a group known as the Interface Councils to represent their shared interests and challenges.

Peri-urban areas beyond the green wedges are made up of local government areas with a predominantly rural character, located all or partially within a 100-kilometre radius of Melbourne and overlap with parts of Geelong's peri-urban area. A subset of these councils, the Peri Urban Group of Rural Councils (the Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Golden Plains, Macedon Ranges, Moorabool, Murrindindi and Surf Coast shire councils), has led research into planning issues affecting peri-urban areas. As a consequence of population growth, the group has advocated for better planning and infrastructure development.

# Melbourne's plan

## Direction 4.1

### Create more great public places across Melbourne

By adopting a place-making approach, the standard of urban design of public places can be raised across Melbourne's suburbs.

A more focused approach will be adopted to strengthen the design quality of public spaces and the interfaces between private development and the public domain.

Improvements to public spaces and more thoughtful integration of new development can make a measurable difference to the amenity, economic vitality and the cultural and social life of Melbourne.

To achieve a consistently high standard of place-making across Melbourne, the planning system will strengthen the design quality of public spaces and the interfaces between private development and the public domain.



#### **Policy 4.1.1**

##### **Support Melbourne's distinctiveness**

Melbourne is a mosaic of diverse natural landscapes and urban places, which contribute to the city's distinctiveness. Places that contribute to the city's distinctiveness—including places that are part of ongoing Aboriginal culture—need to be preserved.

The Victoria Planning Provisions contain clauses to protect aspects of distinctiveness, but can be improved to specify what Melbourne's distinctive aspects are, or how they should influence new development. This will encourage the creation of memorable, well-designed places that build on our city's legacy of distinctiveness and liveability.

#### **Policy 4.1.2**

##### **Integrate place-making practices into road-space management**

Streets are both places to pass through and destinations. There is a need to balance the competing demands of movement and place in defining the priority functions of streets. This will help create a sense of place and structure across the city.

VicRoads is applying a new transport-planning approach, based on principles relating to 'movement and place', to better engage with the community in considering how streets should perform their movement and place function. This will help the government work with the community to determine what types of movement should be prioritised in each location, and encourage greater interaction between people and places.

This approach will define the ways in which transport problems are understood, future needs are considered and the outcomes for active transport and place-making are identified and support the development of liveable and thriving communities.

There is an opportunity to incorporate the movement and place principles into the planning system to support improved place-making outcomes within the metropolitan road network.

#### **Policy 4.1.3**

##### **Strengthen Melbourne's network of boulevards**

Melbourne's grand boulevards—such as St Kilda Road, Victoria Parade and Royal Parade—are wide, generous, tree-lined spaces that serve multiple uses and can accommodate relatively tall buildings. Melbourne should aim to create contemporary boulevards that enhance the city's distinctiveness, extending these into parts of the metropolis that lack boulevards.

Many local governments have been working to create local boulevards. These have taken different forms and use different styles, such as bush boulevards or avenues of honour.

New boulevards will be progressively developed and will include planning for the urban growth area as well as transforming a network of selected existing road corridors across Melbourne.

#### **Policy 4.1.4**

##### **Protect and enhance the metropolitan water's edge parklands**

The Yarra River and its parklands shaped the development of Melbourne and are essential to the identity, liveability and prosperity of the city. The magnificent natural riverscape and network of parklands are a legacy of protection and planning decisions of the past.

Other significant water's edge parklands include the Maribyrnong and Werribee rivers and parklands and open spaces around Port Phillip Bay. These parklands are essential to the health and wellbeing of local communities. They also attract tourists and events that generate significant revenue streams for businesses and are the source of considerable historical and cultural importance to Aboriginal Victorians.

As Melbourne's population grows, it will be vital to protect and enhance Melbourne's major water's edge parklands. As a first step, the establishment of the Great Yarra Parklands will be considered, encompassing 2,450 hectares stretching from Warrandyte to the Bay.

Stronger planning controls will also be put in place to protect water's edge parklands from intrusion and encroachment of development that impacts on open space and diminishes their natural landscape setting.

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## Direction 4.2

### Build on Melbourne's cultural leadership and sporting legacy

Melbourne's reputation as a vibrant, creative city depends on the combination of its stadiums, business conference facilities, libraries, museums, galleries and performing-arts venues, as well as a year-round calendar of events and festivals.

Many of Melbourne's iconic venues are located in the heart of the city, including the MCG, Melbourne Tennis Centre, Melbourne Arts Precinct, Federation Square, the National Gallery of Victoria, and the Princess, Comedy, Her Majesty's and Regent theatres. Other important venues—such as the city's racecourses, sand-belt golf courses and art galleries—are distributed across the metropolitan area.

Sport and culture also thrive at a community level. The city's suburban sporting venues and community arts facilities give residents opportunities to participate in a wide range of sporting and cultural activities.

Designated cultural precincts and community infrastructure have been established in many parts of Melbourne, including the Lonsdale Street and Little Bourke Street precincts in the Central Business District; Lygon Street, Carlton; Victoria Street, Richmond; Oakleigh's Eaton Mall; the Thomas Street Afghan Bazaar in Dandenong; the Chinese Museum in Melbourne's Chinatown; the Greek Cultural Centre in Melbourne's Greek precinct; the African Australian Community Centre in Footscray; the Islamic Museum of Australia in Thornbury; and the National Jewish Library in Caulfield.

Melbourne's distinctiveness as a leading cultural and sporting city needs to be maintained and strengthened.

To maintain Melbourne's position of cultural and sporting leadership, it is important to refresh and expand its world-class sporting and cultural infrastructure.



#### Policy 4.2.1

##### Strengthen Melbourne's civic legacy of great places

As the city grows, major cultural and sporting precincts and venues will be expanded, with new developments that add to the array of major cultural and sporting attractions in the city.

Urban redevelopment projects will provide opportunities to plan for additional regionally significant cultural and sporting facilities.

The delivery of these regional-level facilities will be coordinated with local governments and other stakeholders through metropolitan partnership arrangements.

#### Policy 4.2.2

##### Support the growth and development of Melbourne's cultural precincts and creative industries

The city's dynamic arts culture will be supported and facilitated—ensuring spaces and facilities are created that encourage cultural innovation and new forms of artistic expression throughout the metropolitan area. This policy will help Victoria's cultural precincts and creative industries remain sustainable and attract investment, reinforcing Melbourne's multicultural diversity through a commitment to cultural events and programs and associated infrastructure and creative business opportunities.

#### Policy 4.2.3

##### Plan and facilitate private-sector tourism investment opportunities

Consistent with the long-term national tourism strategy and the *Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy*, Victoria aims to increase visitor spending to \$36.5 billion by 2025.

The Australian Government's Tourism Forecasting Committee indicates that Victoria's number of visitor nights will increase to 82 million (or 13.9 per cent of the national total) by 2020–21, worth an estimated \$17.7 billion in overnight tourism expenditure. This growth will drive demand for short-stay accommodation and new or enhanced tourism experiences.

Melbourne's challenge is to create innovative tourism experiences, encourage investments that meet tourism demand, and ensure that transport and aviation networks can support the growth in tourism. Tourism services need to be located appropriately—such as positioning internationally branded accommodation in the inner city catering to international leisure and business travellers.





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## Direction 4.3

### Achieve and promote design excellence

Melbourne is a design capital—thanks to its well-preserved heritage buildings, strong and distinctive architectural character, street art, and thriving museums. However, more can be done to strengthen Melbourne’s credentials as a creative and artistic city.

#### Policy 4.3.1

##### Promote urban design excellence in every aspect of the built environment

The quality of Melbourne’s built environment, public spaces and amenity depends on high-quality urban design. Plan Melbourne will ensure urban design principles and guidelines are considered when assessing the design and built form of development and infrastructure to create places that are:

- accessible, safe and diverse
- enjoyable, engaging and comfortable to be in and move around
- accommodating of people of all abilities, ages and cultures
- celebrations of the city’s social, cultural and natural heritage.

As the largest procurer of design services in Victoria, the Victorian Government can lead by example—setting a high design standard in its own projects. There are also opportunities to improve its design procurement practices.

An independent, expert, design review can add significantly to the quality of project outcomes for significant development projects. Embedding a formal and accountable design review process from the earliest stages of projects has been proven to improve outcomes, ensure best value, expedite decision-making and ensure that all relevant interests are taken into consideration.

More sophisticated design understandings and capabilities will help support local governments in their capacity to act as design advisers and assessors in the development approvals process. Promotion of the inclusion of Aboriginal urban design perspectives will be improved as part of this.



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## Direction 4.4

### Respect Melbourne's heritage as we build for the future

Heritage will continue to be one of Melbourne's competitive strengths, contributing to its distinctiveness and liveability and attracting visitors, new residents and investors. Heritage is an important component of Victoria's tourism industry and benefits the economy.

Aboriginal cultural heritage, including important landscapes and places, must be protected and conserved. Custodianship of country,<sup>32</sup> as well as contemporary Aboriginal cultural heritage values associated with residents of places, must be respected.

In time, new development will add to Melbourne's rich legacy of heritage places. The process of building a new legacy is important, just as it is vital that current assets are protected.

Innovative approaches to the creative re-use of heritage places need to be adopted, ensuring good urban design both preserves and renews historic buildings and places.

#### Policy 4.4.1

##### Recognise the value of heritage when managing growth and change

With all three levels of government sharing responsibility for protecting Melbourne's post-settlement cultural heritage, decision-making must be consistent and credible and be based on clear and widely accepted heritage conservation principles and practices.

Realising the community benefit of heritage will require careful management of the ongoing processes of change to the urban environment. Decisions must be based on an appreciation of Melbourne's past as well as an understanding of its future needs.

There will need to be continuous identification and review of currently unprotected heritage sites and targeted assessments of heritage sites in areas identified as likely to be subject to substantial change.

#### Policy 4.4.2

##### Respect and protect Melbourne's Aboriginal cultural heritage

Victoria's landscape holds the imprint of countless generations of Aboriginal people.

With the arrival of Europeans, new and very different sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance were created—including places of first contact between Europeans and Traditional Owners, missions, pastoral properties where Aboriginal workers played vital roles, places associated with the Aboriginal rights movement, and contemporary sites with ongoing uses and associations. Traditional Owners have unique responsibilities for managing and protecting this heritage.

In 2012, the *Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Establishment and Effectiveness of Registered Aboriginal Parties* recommended developing a statewide program of country mapping to improve the available knowledge about areas of cultural heritage sensitivity. The country-mapping program needs to be undertaken in conjunction with local government, Registered Aboriginal Parties and land owners/managers.

#### Policy 4.4.3

### Stimulate economic growth through heritage conservation

Melbourne's heritage is fundamental to its cultural economy. That is why we must invest in our heritage, and in places that contribute to Melbourne's identity and distinctiveness.

Regeneration of heritage assets through adaptive re-use can deliver unique and exciting places that can be used well into the future. Rehabilitating old buildings and places also creates opportunities for new investment and jobs.

In some instances, public benefits flow from private-sector developments involving significant heritage assets. Examples of this include the conversion of Melbourne's former General Post Office into a landmark retail complex, and the adaptation of the former Abbotsford Convent into a community and arts precinct.

#### Policy 4.4.4

### Protect Melbourne's heritage through telling its stories

There is more to heritage than place. The stories of Melbourne—including stories from before European settlement—help citizens understand the places where they live and work. They also help create a sense of belonging and community by encouraging tolerance and respect.

Supporting new and innovative ways to tell Melbourne's stories will create opportunities for community building through arts, heritage and cultural projects and support built and natural heritage conservation and place-making for new and existing communities.



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## Direction 4.5

### Plan for Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas

As Melbourne grows, planning for Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas is required to:

- protect biodiversity assets, including national and state parks, Ramsar wetlands and coastal areas
- support existing and potential agribusiness activities, forestry, food production and tourism
- protect major state infrastructure and resource assets, including water supply dams and water catchments and waste management and recycling facilities
- support renewable energy sources such as wind and solar farms
- protect extractive industries
- provide a recreational resource, which contributes to public health outcomes for all Victorians.

These valued features, assets and industries should be prioritised before other land uses.

Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas are identified on Map 19. Future growth in the green wedges and peri-urban areas will be managed to protect productive land, strategic economic resources, heritage and biodiversity assets, while accommodating additional housing and employment in established towns in the outer peri-urban areas that have the capacity for growth. Many towns in green wedges have limited growth potential.
















Consistent with Plan Melbourne and the Regional Growth Plans, planning for green wedge and peri-urban areas should:

- define and protect areas that are strategically important to the metropolitan area and the state, for the environment, biodiversity, landscape, open space, water, agriculture, energy, recreation, tourism, environment, cultural heritage, infrastructure, extractive and other natural resources
- protect and manage the value of green wedges consistent with green wedge management plans
- avoid development in locations where there is risk to life, property, the natural environment and infrastructure from natural hazards such as bushfire and flooding
- accommodate additional housing and employment in established towns that have the capacity for growth
- provide for non-urban breaks between urban areas.



## Map 19

### Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas

- |   |                                      |   |                                   |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | Green wedge land                     |  | Road network                      |
|  | Peri-urban area                      |  | Rail network                      |
|  | 100-km radius from central Melbourne |  | Transport gateway – major airport |
|  | Capital city                         |  | Transport gateway – airport       |
|  | Regional city                        |  | Transport gateway – seaport       |
|  | Regional centre                      |  | Urban area                        |
|  | Peri-urban town                      |  | Urban growth boundary             |
|   |                                      |  | Local government area boundary    |

Source: Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

#### Policy 4.5.1

### Strengthen protection and management of green wedge land

Planning tools that protect green wedge land include:

- regulations requiring ratification by both Houses of Parliament for planning scheme amendments that alter the urban growth boundary or green wedge subdivision controls
- Core Planning Provisions for Metropolitan Green Wedge Land (Clause 57), which set out prohibited land uses and subdivision provisions
- green wedge zones, which primarily include the Green Wedge Zone, the Green Wedge A Zone and the Rural Conservation Zone
- Green Wedge Management Plans, which are council-adopted strategies that identify a vision, objectives and actions for the sustainable use and development of each green wedge.

The 2013 reform of Victoria's planning zones broadened the range of uses permitted in green wedges and reduced permit limitations, particularly with respect to the Rural Conservation Zone. There is a need to ensure the planning controls in place for Melbourne's green wedges are robust and can deliver ongoing environmental, cultural and health and wellbeing benefits to the community, while supporting agricultural businesses and jobs.

Planning controls, however, can only go so far. Green Wedge Management Plans must be in place to support achievement of desired green wedge outcomes. Progress with the development and implementation of plans has been varied across local government areas and several green wedges do not have a plan in place.

Requirements for preparing Green Wedge Management Plans must be strengthened, and measures must be put in place to periodically review and update these plans to ensure they address emerging planning and land management issues.

#### Policy 4.5.2

### Protect and enhance valued attributes of distinctive areas and landscapes

Green wedges and peri-urban areas contain landscapes that have significant geographic and physical features. Localised planning statements have been prepared for distinctive areas such as the Bellarine Peninsula and the Mornington Peninsula. Statements are also being developed for the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges, and the Macedon Ranges. These areas have strong economic bases driven by tourism, recreation, agribusiness and lifestyle—and are close to Melbourne.

Other areas within Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas are increasingly experiencing pressure for change. This could potentially undermine the long-term natural or non-urban uses of land in these areas and must be carefully managed.

Planning for identified distinctive areas within green wedges and peri-urban areas needs to identify the valued attributes of these areas (as summarised on the following pages) and ensure they are protected and enhanced for ongoing use by present and future generations.



## DESIRED PLANNING OUTCOMES FOR GREEN WEDGES AND PERI-URBAN AREAS

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### Environmental and biodiversity assets

Protect and enhance environmental and biodiversity assets, such as coastal areas, wetlands, rivers and creeks, forests and grasslands. Key features of international and national significance include Ramsar-listed wetlands (Westernport, Edithvale–Seaford wetlands, Port Phillip Bay [Western Shoreline] and Bellarine Peninsula), the Western Grassland Reserve, the UNESCO Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Biosphere Reserve, and a range of national and state parks. Maintain and enhance the diversity of indigenous flora and fauna habitats and species and achieve a net gain in the quantity and quality of native vegetation.

### Landscape and open space

Protect significant views, maintain non-urban breaks between urban areas, and conserve the cultural significance, tourism appeal and character of scenic rural landscapes. Recognised high-value landscape features include open farmed landscapes, sites of geological significance, ranges, hills and ridges and open coastal spaces. Iconic landscapes, such as the Great Ocean Road, Bellarine Peninsula, Macedon Ranges, Western Port, Phillip Island, Mornington Peninsula, the Yarra Valley and the Dandenong Ranges, attract high numbers of local and overseas visitors each year.

### Water supply catchments

Manage and protect catchments (including Special Water Supply Catchments), groundwater, water infrastructure and storages, and waterways to improve water quality, protect the environment and provide a reliable and secure water supply.

Minimise any negative impacts from sedimentation or water pollution on the Port Phillip and Western Port coastal ecosystems.

### Natural hazards

Avoid development in areas that are subject to high risk from bushfire or flooding and inundation so as to minimise potential risk to life, property and the environment.

Recognise, understand and prepare for the projected impacts of climate change and rising sea levels.

Avoid significant land disturbance, reduce the occurrence and impact of soil erosion and salinity and manage potentially contaminated land.

### **Agricultural land**

Protect agricultural land from incompatible uses, maintain farm size, promote the continuation of farming and provide a secure long-term future for productive and sustainable agriculture. Key agricultural areas include the Mornington Peninsula, the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges, Werribee South, Keilor, Western Port and the Macedon Ranges.

### **Recreation**

Provide land for a range of open space functions to meet community needs for active and passive recreation and for protection of the environment. State and metropolitan parks provide a focus for a range of recreation opportunities and include the Yarra River, Warrandyte, Lysterfield and Dandenong Police Paddocks Reserve, and Churchill and Bunyip national parks.

### **Tourism**

Facilitate sustainable year-round tourism, and new tourism development (including diverse attractions, accommodation and eating establishments) that maintains the integrity of the natural environment, provides social benefits for communities and visitors and contributes to local economies.

### **Cultural heritage**

Provide for the protection and management of sites of Aboriginal and post-European settlement cultural heritage to ensure that links with the past are preserved for present and future generations to appreciate. A wide range of cultural-heritage assets are found in buildings, structures, scattered relics, trees and gardens, landscapes and geological formations, archaeological and fossil sites and areas associated with historical events.

### **State-significant infrastructure**

Protect regionally significant assets such as metropolitan landfills (for example, Clayton South and Wollert), wastewater management facilities (for example, Eastern and Western Treatment Plants), industrial areas and related odour and safety buffers (for example, Dandenong South), airports and flightpaths (Melbourne, Avalon and Moorabbin), and ports (Port of Hastings). Provide opportunities for renewable energy generation.

### **Mineral, stone and sand resources**

Protect designated mineral resource areas such as the coal reserves in central and western Gippsland. Protect sand and stone resources for future extraction to ensure a continuous supply of construction material.

### **Economy**

Maintain a strong, dynamic economy and employment base by building on the comparative advantages in agriculture, timber, transport, tourism, education, manufacturing, the service industry and commerce.

### **Population, settlements and local infrastructure**

Plan and manage sustainable urban growth that is concentrated in and around major towns within Melbourne's peri-urban area so as to provide employment, infrastructure, services and community facilities to new and established urban areas in an equitable manner.

Manage the growth and sustainable development of green wedge townships and settlements, having regard for their distinct character and environmental and servicing constraints.

Create socially sustainable communities and support an active community working towards reducing greenhouse gases and responding to climate change.

Protect and enhance the existing character, presentation and form of towns, including their main road entrances.

### **Rural living**

Manage rural living to prevent negative impacts on agriculture, biodiversity and landscape values.

### **Transport and accessibility**

Provide a high-quality road and rail transport network with a range of sustainable, efficient, accessible and affordable transport options that readily connect neighbourhoods, workplaces, community facilities, services and enable people to participate in community life.

Facilitate improvements to transport networks and facilities that support tourism, such as airports.

### **Planning and governance**

Facilitate integrated and balanced forward planning, involving all agencies, and having regard to the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.



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## Direction 4.6

### Strengthen community participation in the planning of our city

Planning for places undergoing change can be improved by considering a wide range of viewpoints from existing, as well as future, communities (such as the people that would like to live in these places at some time in the future). Community participation and engagement can strengthen community resilience, increase knowledge and understanding of change, and empower local groups to be part of shaping the city's future.

For instance, the acknowledgement and respect of Aboriginal culture, values and practices is at the heart of successful engagement with Aboriginal people—and helps counter racism and ignorance.<sup>33</sup> The contribution of Aboriginal values and perspectives needs to be embedded in the planning of Melbourne's built and natural environments through ongoing partnerships with Traditional Owners, local communities and others involved with planning, design and natural resource management.

Melburnians deserve a system offering mature participation in planning decision-making. For that to occur, planning processes must be improved, streamlined and made more inclusive. Metropolitan Partnerships will also provide the community and local businesses with opportunities to identify planning priorities in their local area.

#### Policy 4.6.1

##### Create diverse opportunities for communities to participate in planning

Putting communities at the centre of shaping plans can be achieved through deliberative community engagement. Public participation processes should be designed and implemented in partnership with communities, consistent with community engagement principles.

The design of community engagement processes for new communities will support a shift in emphasis to public involvement in setting the principles for land-use and development. This will be complemented by an expedited process for development proposals consistent with these principles.

The Victorian Government supports improved community engagement processes through the application of principles such as the International Association for Public Participation's Public Participation Spectrum, the *Public Participation in Government Decision-Making—Better Practice Guide* prepared by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office and the *Victorian Government Aboriginal Inclusion Framework*.

