



# 6

## A fairer city

### Direction 6

- 6.1 Increase the supply of well-located affordable housing
- 6.2 Plan for a more equitable distribution of social infrastructure
- 6.3 Improve the coordination and timing of the installation of services and infrastructure in new development areas
- 6.4 Develop a strong cultural environment and increase access to arts, recreation and other cultural facilities



## Increase the supply of well-located affordable housing

In recent years, the housing market has become more complex in its structure, composition and geography. Property values have risen steadily with the average increase across the metropolitan area between 1996 and 2001 being 42 per cent. In some suburbs property values have risen spectacularly, for example, North Melbourne rose 212 per cent, Croydon North 145 per cent, Sorrento 136 per cent and Maribyrnong 127 per cent in the same time period. Affording good, well-located housing has become an acute problem for many private renters and home buyers.

There is growing spatial polarisation, with inner suburbs tending to represent high-priced market segments and outer suburbs lower-priced segments. Affordable, low-cost private rental housing is in decline in inner Melbourne and accessibility to services in lower-cost rental areas is unsatisfactory. This accentuates the polarisation of the city and generates areas of social disadvantage.

The existing distribution of public housing does not match changing housing needs, especially the need for a wider range of housing options in the middle and outer suburbs. Strategies for public housing estates are being developed to reduce concentrations of public housing and overcome social and economic disadvantage. Public and community housing stock is not increasing in step with demand. Increasingly, public housing is targeted to households with multiple needs, rather than to those who simply cannot afford private rental accommodation.



The supply of affordable housing in all parts of the metropolitan area will need to be increased



Better information about mismatches between supply of, and demand for, affordable housing will be required for different households and locations. The supply of affordable housing in all parts of the metropolitan area will need to be increased.

It is recognised that this need exists, and that the planning system alone is not well equipped to meet it. A significant proportion of new development, including new development at activity centres and strategic redevelopment sites, must be affordable for households on low to moderate incomes, especially those that are experiencing housing stress but are unlikely to gain access to public or social housing. Ways of achieving this will be explored. The monitoring of housing affordability will be important in finalising eligibility criteria for these dwellings.

These measures will involve a number of agencies working closely together to maximise every opportunity to increase the supply of affordable housing and meet household needs.

## Initiatives

- 6.1.1** Monitor supply and demand in affordable housing at local and regional levels and publicise examples of best practice in the provision of well-designed affordable housing
- 6.1.2** Increase the supply of affordable housing through joint programs with the Urban and Regional Land Corporation, the Office of Housing, local councils and the not-for-profit sector
- 6.1.3** Continue the redevelopment and renewal of public housing stock to better meet the needs of existing and future clients
- 6.1.4** Address areas of particular disadvantage, especially where high concentrations of public housing exist, through the Office of Housing's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy
- 6.1.5** Develop and implement initiatives to increase the supply of appropriately located affordable housing throughout the metropolitan area
- 6.1.6** Work with all stakeholders, including the Office of Housing and the private sector, to identify opportunities and develop techniques and solutions to facilitate a mix of private, affordable and social housing in Transit Cities projects
- 6.1.7** Change the policy that governs the disposal of government land and buildings to reflect the best use rather than the highest price achievable, and base the policy on new socially responsible criteria





## Plan for a more equitable distribution of social infrastructure

Access to social, cultural and creative infrastructure varies across the region. Some people have excellent access to a wide range of facilities, but others – often those on lower incomes – do not enjoy the same convenience. Inadequate access affects people's sense of wellbeing, quality of life, and can exclude them from full participation in society.

People with disabilities, the frail and the aged are vulnerable because they face particular problems in finding, reaching and using appropriate services and facilities. As the population ages, these problems will affect more and more people and areas unless appropriate action is taken.

The Government is developing and implementing measures to improve the situation (see 'Improving wellbeing for all

Victorians'). In so doing, it recognises that local communities are in the best position to know what services and facilities are priorities and what needs to be done to enable all members of the community to benefit from such facilities (like neighbourhood houses). A place management approach (see Policy 9.5) is a tool for ensuring community input.

In allocating spending for new social infrastructure, the Government will give priority to areas of greatest need and the priorities identified by local communities, in order to overcome past inequalities.

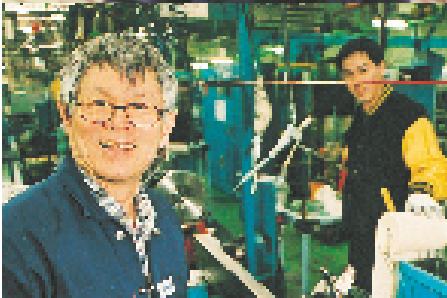
Action will be needed to identify and progressively improve the distribution of social and cultural infrastructure in under-endowed areas, thus improving access. Locations for such infrastructure will be sought in activity centres, particularly the Principal Activity Centres.

## Initiatives

- 6.2.1** Work with local communities to identify gaps or deficiencies in social infrastructure and develop action plans to remedy these gaps
- 6.2.2** Give particular priority to social disadvantage in the outer suburbs, particularly with those metropolitan councils that administer both urban and rural areas, identifying social infrastructure that is in short supply
- 6.2.3** Work with local government and other organisations to improve the provision of community transport services within an overall policy framework that aims to give greater mobility to people unable to use public transport
- 6.2.4** Support neighbourhood houses so that they remain viable as places where people can meet and learn in a welcoming, user-friendly environment
- 6.2.5** Continue to support local government in the provision of well-planned, quality and accessible community sport and recreation facilities and environments



Spending for new social infrastructure will give priority to areas of greatest need, as identified by local communities



## Improving wellbeing for all Victorians

Government initiatives to improve the wellbeing of all members of the community include:

### Growing Victoria Together

*Growing Victoria Together* is a broad framework to balance social, environmental and economic goals and actions. It links the issues important to Victorians with the priority actions to be taken next and the measures we will use to show progress. It is a basis for building a fair, sustainable and prosperous future

### Building Great Communities

This key initiative will improve social, economic and environmental wellbeing, while reducing inequities and the impact of rapid social change across the State. Local communities are best able to identify the issues that need addressing, but they should not have to work alone. The Government will work in partnership with them to tackle issues of concern and ensure that its services are more responsive to community needs

### State Disability Plan

A 10-year disability plan is being developed with extensive community input. It reflects the aspirations of people who live with a disability and it aims to make Victoria a more inclusive, welcoming and equal place by 2011. This will involve community education, capacity-building, working with local councils and making public services more accessible

### Victorian Rural Human Services Strategy

This strategy, now being developed, recognises the need for comprehensive health and human services in regional and rural Victoria. It will provide a framework to guide and support planning, investment and service delivery from 2002–07

### Metropolitan Health Strategy

The Metropolitan Health Strategy is being developed to guide the future level, mix, distribution and quality of health services across metropolitan Melbourne. The strategy will identify and promote emerging models of care for managing demand and improving health outcomes and will provide the framework in which local health planning and implementation can occur

### Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy

Neighbourhood renewal, an important part of the Community Building Program, is a place-based response to disadvantage that involves government working with local communities to address relative disadvantage and inequality to create successful, thriving places where people want to live. It aims to increase community pride and build local capacity so that communities are self-reliant. It depends on local involvement and initiative and on more effective partnerships across government and between government and non-government sectors

### Safer Streets and Homes

The Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy for Victoria 2002–2005 integrates the Government's approach to crime and violence prevention into the wider spectrum of community safety programs that aim to make Victorians safe and ensure they are confident about their safety

### Physical Activity Framework

This recognises that physical activity plays an essential role in contributing to the health and wellbeing of all Victorians. It includes as a key objective a focus on improving the places in which physical activity occurs, recognising that a key factor underpinning the ability of people to build physical activity into their daily lives is the availability and accessibility of supportive physical environments. The Government is committed to working in partnership with non-government and private sector stakeholders to capture the social, environmental, economic and health benefits of increased physical activity.



## Improve the coordination and timing of the installation of services and infrastructure in new development areas



The Government and its agencies, service providers and local government need to cooperate in order to better coordinate installation of infrastructure and services in new development areas. Too often the delivery of infrastructure lags behind the development it is meant to serve. Sometimes, better decisions could have been made about which infrastructure to build first or co-locate.

Processes should be developed to involve all stakeholders in coordinated long-term planning for infrastructure and service delivery. The aim is to achieve better economic, social and environmental results (see 'The Brookside Learning Centre at Caroline Springs').

### Initiatives

- 6.3.1** Ensure effective working arrangements are in place between State government agencies, non-government service providers and local councils to ensure effective forward planning and flexible service provision
- 6.3.2** Develop better models for the growth of schools so that new primary schools are established from the outset in new developments, and they keep pace with the growth in population in their catchment and range of services needed
- 6.3.3** Build on recent experiments in joint use of facilities with private schools and local government to fully utilise new community resources for arts and sport
- 6.3.4** Develop better forward planning models for primary and acute health services and associated facilities for new growth areas
- 6.3.5** Assess the needs for child care, aged care and other community services and augment the capability of existing services so that these are effectively delivered in newly developed areas
- 6.3.6** Continue the development of planning models for justice facilities in growth areas, paying particular attention to co-locational opportunities



Better coordination will achieve better economic, social and environmental results



## The Brookside Learning Centre at Caroline Springs

This centre, which opened in January 2000, is a key facility for the growing community of Caroline Springs, located west of metropolitan Melbourne. It exemplifies the partnership approach to developing community facilities, as it involves:

- private developers
- the Department of Education and Training
- a major independent school
- the Catholic Education Office
- local government
- a football club
- a private child-care facility.

Funding and negotiated agreements developed for the project include:

- special conditions on built form and time frames

- joint contributions and licensing arrangements
- developer contributions
- project management arrangements.

The centre provides lifelong learning services and other community services as well as shops and business offices – a mix of activities that ensures ongoing activity. It will cater for 1,500 school students and additional adult learners. Shared facilities include:

- an administration and gallery area
- a visual arts and technology centre
- a performing arts and music complex
- a community resource room
- a multimedia centre and a leisure centre
- a full range of recreational facilities – stadium, club rooms, gymnasium and change rooms, an outdoor playing space including a football oval – that attracts many community groups outside school hours.





## Develop a strong cultural environment and increase access to arts, recreation and other cultural facilities

Arts and culture are powerful community building tools. They provide tangible social and economic benefits and make a significant contribution to the attractiveness of the city as a place to live, work or visit.

Culture is about a way of life, a celebration of a community's identity and values. Melbourne has a wealth of cultural facilities and resources, and plays host to numerous arts, cultural and sporting events and festivals. It is important that these continue to develop and that they are accessible for all. Melbourne needs to reinforce the existing major precincts for arts, sports and major events of Statewide appeal. Proposed new facilities must be well located for services and transport.

Participation and engagement in creative activities, such as locally based arts and crafts practice and community-driven creative projects, is important to foster a culture of creativity and innovation within local communities. Access to these should be available across Melbourne.

Arts and cultural facilities are key infrastructure components. Activity centres, which reflect the arts and cultural preferences of their communities, are already focal points for communities and will become even more important. A wider range of arts, cultural and entertainment facilities, including cinemas, restaurants, nightclubs and live theatres, will be required at Principal and Major Activity Centres throughout Melbourne.

## Initiatives

- 6.4.1** Complete the Yarra Arts precinct Integration Project, with a range of cultural venues and improved community access and participation
- 6.4.2** Redevelop the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds as a year-round venue for major events and activities, including those requiring special train services
- 6.4.3** Promote the arts and culture by using professional artists and craftspeople wherever feasible to work on public projects – including government projects – and express artistic and community values
- 6.4.4** Strengthen the creative potential of local communities by encouraging local government and the community to audit cultural resources and identify opportunities and areas of need



Arts and cultural facilities are key infrastructure components