

A VISION for Melbourne



Melbourne is one of the world's most livable cities – a city to celebrate. The Victorian Government's aim is to keep it that way.

Implementation of *Living Suburbs* will enable Melbourne to grow into the 21st century as a metropolis of international standing whose prosperity is based on its livability; the knowledge, skills and creativity of its citizens; the strength of its relationship with regional Victoria; the quality of its infrastructure and environment; the sophistication of its economy; and its positive climate for business.

Living Suburbs identifies five strategic directions which underpin this vision.

- Direction 1** Provide a business environment conducive to sustainable long-term economic growth.
- Direction 2** Build on Melbourne's strengths as an international transport, production and communications hub.
- Direction 3** Strengthen links between Melbourne and regional Victoria to increase the competitiveness of the Victorian economy as a whole.
- Direction 4** Enhance Melbourne's environment and livability.
- Direction 5** Create a more functional city by better managing Melbourne's infrastructure and urban development.

FOUNDATIONS

for the future

Metropolitan Melbourne is a great place to live, work, learn and do business. Melburnians certainly think so, and experts around the world agree.

In modern cities, the health of each activity, function and location depends on the health of all the others. Recognising this interdependence, the Victorian Government's policy for metropolitan Melbourne addresses the many different forces shaping the city's development – economic, physical, environmental, social and cultural.

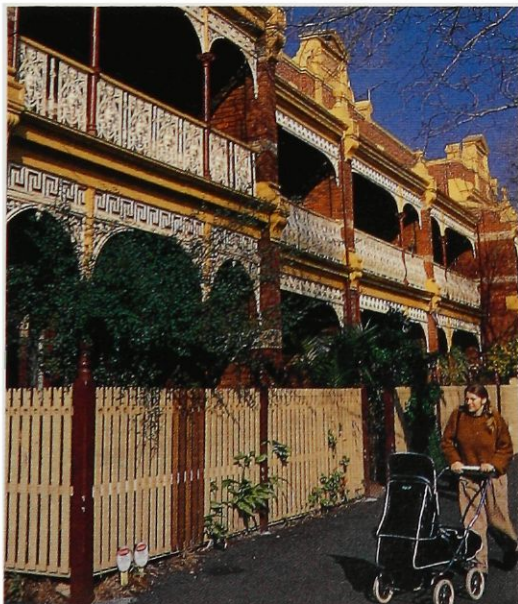
It focuses on the relationships between the central city, suburban Melbourne and adjacent regional areas, outlining a framework for integrated metropolitan development into the 21st century.

Melbourne has much in common with other world cities of comparable size, but the quality and diversity of its suburbs make it unique. Over the years, each of Melbourne's suburbs has developed its own special character in response to the tastes and habits of the local community. In a rapidly changing world, the solidity and civility of suburban life are increasingly precious social values.

That's why it's so important to strengthen Melbourne's suburban foundations. This can be done by improving housing, parks, schools, health and community services, recreational and sporting facilities, job opportunities and transport. It can also be achieved by making the good things Melbourne has to offer more accessible to all Victorians.

These objectives will be realised by building on the policies and programs implemented over the last three years. However, this isn't just a policy about ends. It is also a policy about means. It is a policy about generating the wealth

From the terrace houses of South Melbourne to the solar-efficient homes of Narre Warren – it is the quality and diversity of Melbourne's suburbs that make the city unique.





The various State football bodies have joined forces to create a national league administered from Melbourne. Distance matters less than it once did; competition between cities matters more.

needed to fund improvements to Melbourne's suburbs – about increasing the city's prosperity and raising its international standing.

There is no question that this can be achieved as long as there is an ongoing commitment to the values of competition, innovation and excellence that have made Melbourne a world leader in so many fields.

A place in the world

If the 19th century was the age of empires and the 20th the age of nation states, the 21st is shaping up as the age of cities.

Technological advances and the burgeoning international flow of capital, goods and ideas have reduced the importance of national boundaries. The effect has increasingly been to make cities rather than countries the focus for investment and development.

Melbourne must adapt to this changing environment. It must secure a niche within the global urban system. The city is already capitalising on its strategic location in the rapidly developing Asia-Pacific region, but this is only the beginning.

While this policy addresses Melbourne's relationship with the wider world, it doesn't underestimate the importance of the city's relationship with the rest of Australia. Melbourne is one of the two most important cities in the country – and the most important in critical areas like manufacturing and scientific research. Just as Victoria's prosperity depends on the health of the national economy, Melbourne's success in the international arena depends very much on the breadth and quality of its connections with other Australian cities.

Economic prosperity and quality of life

There are things about Melbourne we would never want to change, and there is no reason why the city shouldn't be as gracious and spacious two decades from now as it is today. However, we also need to recognise that ours is a living city; it will continue to develop and evolve.

Today's Melbourne is different from the Melbourne of the past, and tomorrow's Melbourne will be different again. The city is currently home to some 3.2 million people, or around 71 per cent of Victoria's population. The number of people living in Melbourne is expected to grow gradually by 440,000 (or 12 per cent) and the number of households by 215,000 between now and 2011 (see Figure 1).