



# 9

## Better planning decisions, careful management

### Direction 9

- 9.1 Achieve better planning decisions
- 9.2 Speed up resolution of appeals
- 9.3 Keep *Melbourne 2030* up to date
- 9.4 Develop a strong partnership with local government
- 9.5 Implement *Melbourne 2030* in an integrated way that involves the community



## Achieve better planning decisions

To achieve the vision and directions of *Melbourne 2030*, the planning system must be clearly focused. Planning schemes and policies must clearly express their intentions. Planning processes must be effective and efficient. At present, the planning system is under stress because of high expectations, scarce resources and heavy workloads.

*Melbourne 2030* includes commitments to improve planning outcomes through initiatives such as clear identification of roles and responsibilities, clearer planning rules, improvements to planning processes and better guidelines for decision-makers (such as guidelines for structure planning around activity centres and the adoption of Neighbourhood Principles).

Changes to the *Victoria Planning Provisions* will clarify State policy and reduce the need for planning permits where there is no clear community benefit. Where planning permission is required, the considerations and expected outcomes will be clearly expressed. Effective administrative processes, appropriate levels of resourcing and the application of performance standards will be promoted.

### Initiatives

- 9.1.1** Work with councils, educational institutions and other stakeholders to build a larger planning workforce and provide more training and development opportunities for people involved in applying the development approval system
- 9.1.2** Improve the quality of planning applications by providing training to industry about application requirements, and promoting the use of pre-application certification of applications by private planners

- 9.1.3** Reduce the number of matters that need planning approval, simplify procedures and clarify rules, and provide more specific decision guidelines and performance standards by amending the *Victoria Planning Provisions* and planning schemes
- 9.1.4** Develop online application management systems through the Land Exchange initiative, and encourage councils to implement electronic application management systems to increase administrative efficiency in dealing with applications

The planning system must be focused to improve outcomes

## Speed up resolution of appeals



Victoria's planning system is being challenged by enhanced economic activity that is leading to record building applications and approvals. The system allows the views of all stakeholders to be considered. However, the number of disputed planning permit decisions is growing. And these are taking longer to resolve by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

The likelihood of disputed decisions can be reduced by working to:

- improve the quality of planning applications
- inform and consult people in the best possible way about land-use proposals
- clarify the processes that lead to planning decisions.

A range of measures will be introduced to reduce delays and streamline the appeals process.

## Initiatives

**9.2.1** Develop guidelines for best practice methodologies for community engagement and consultation about land-use planning issues, in order to reduce the need for dispute resolution at the end of the process

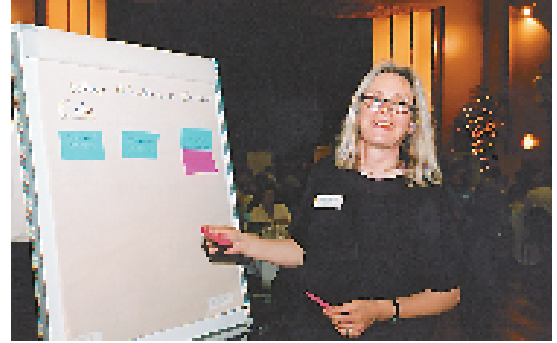
**9.2.2** Reduce the likelihood of disputes by improving the procedural and decision-making processes in the planning system that relate to

- use and interpretation of local policy
- the amendment of plans after a planning permit application has been lodged

**9.2.3** Provide more resources to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) in order to:

- increase the number of tribunals that can sit
- support VCAT in achieving its objective of increasing the proportion of cases that are heard by panels of two members rather than by a single member
- assist VCAT to significantly reduce the time taken to deal with planning appeals





## Keep Melbourne 2030 up to date

*Melbourne 2030* is a long-term document that also needs to be dynamic and responsive. To gain the understanding and support of business and the community, the Government will undertake a process of community-based implementation and review (see 'Encouraging public participation and scrutiny'). This will feature continued consultation, regular reporting and formal reviews.

### Consultation

*Melbourne 2030* contains issues that will take time to implement and details that will need to be discussed. There will be ongoing consultation with all those affected by its initiatives, including groups that are hard to reach. The Strategy sets out broad principles and planning approaches but it is not a straightjacket. The planning system will respond innovatively to issues that arise at any level, from local to Statewide.

### Reporting

An annual Community Update report will be produced to communicate progress. Multiple formats and media will be used so that it is accessible to as wide an audience as possible, including people with sensory disabilities or from non-English-speaking backgrounds.

### Reviews

*Melbourne 2030* must be assessed against new or emerging trends. Minor changes to it may occur at any time, while formal reviews – with full community involvement – will be carried out at five-year intervals to assimilate these minor changes and to check whether major change is needed.



Melbourne 2030 will be reviewed within five years



# Initiatives

- 9.3.1** Establish processes for regular consultation with major stakeholder groups on the overall progress in implementing *Melbourne 2030*
- 9.3.2** Produce an annual Community Update report that highlights progress with implementation and the emergence of new trends
- 9.3.3** Establish a web site with progress reports, data, trends and other information to aid in understanding and applying *Melbourne 2030*
- 9.3.4** Set up a formal process to review *Melbourne 2030* at least once every five years
- 9.3.5** Establish community liaison mechanisms to help prepare for formal reviews and to ensure broad public participation

## Encouraging public participation and scrutiny

As part of its Best Value approach, the Government encourages consultation and engagement between local governments and the community. *Community Consultation – Resource Guide*, a cooperative venture between the Victorian Local Governance Association and the Government, provides a methodology for local government to use when consulting with its communities. A similar consultative approach will be used to ensure transparent and accountable implementation of *Melbourne 2030*.

Best Value principles are:

- local accountability
- whole-of-organisation response
- consultation on performance
- best value outcomes
- benefits, not costs
- encouragement of innovation.

Consultation and good governance include:

- good governance aims to better understand the aspirations of communities and to involve them in direction and setting priorities
- effective consultation will enhance output delivery
- good consultation will mean improved management and better results for everyone.





## Develop a strong partnership with local government

Informed involvement from local government is critical to successfully implementing *Melbourne 2030* and achieving its potential. The Government and local councils will need to establish and maintain an ongoing partnership.

Councils will be asked to work with the Government in deciding how best to approach the variety of policy and implementation areas covered by *Melbourne 2030*.

Regular two-way communication with councils will occur as the implementation program evolves. Forums will be held with appropriate groupings of councils to discuss key issues and information will be made available on new concepts such as Neighbourhood Principles. All information will be in an easily accessible format.

Councils will be asked to contribute to the regular formal and informal reviews of *Melbourne 2030* and of its progress.

### Initiatives

- 9.4.1** Hold cross-government forums to discuss the implementation of *Melbourne 2030* and emerging issues
- 9.4.2** Develop an 'extranet' specialist planning web site for use by local councils and other agencies with information, advice and tools to help with the implementation of *Melbourne 2030*
- 9.4.3** Provide clear guidance about the requirements and expectations for the implementation of *Melbourne 2030*, in particular the roles and responsibilities of local and State governments and arrangements for effective relations and coordination between levels of government

The Government and local councils will need to establish and maintain an ongoing partnership

## Implement Melbourne 2030 in an integrated way that involves the community



Implementation of initiatives will require a cross-disciplinary approach that involves a wide range of stakeholders. Problems are rarely one-dimensional, while a single-issue response ignores the complexity of the way a city works and its 'people' element.

Taking a place management approach to implementing *Melbourne 2030* will deliver whole-of-government economic, social and environmental objectives. Broad cross-sectoral involvement will encourage individuals, organisations and communities to work singly and together to foster and sustain positive community change. Community involvement in decision-making will ensure public confidence in *Melbourne 2030* and will ensure that it continues to reflect community aspirations and values (see 'Place management').

### Initiatives

- 9.5.1** Provide support for meaningful local participation in government projects, thus contributing to community building
- 9.5.2** Use a place management approach in all significant government development projects



Community involvement in decision-making will ensure Melbourne 2030 continues to reflect community aspirations and values

## Place management

This approach focuses on results rather than contributions. It is particularly suitable where interwoven issues and problems in a particular place – whether it be large or small geographically – need a multifaceted approach that can address all factors together.

Models of place management can range from simple coordination of the activities of a number of functional agencies to a situation where the authority to determine outcomes, set policy and spend money is granted to a person or organisation looking after a place.

Place management can encourage individuals, organisations and communities to develop their capacity to work separately and together in order to foster and sustain positive change. It can also help to deliver more responsive governance. Achieving successful outcomes from the perspective of the people who live and work in a place requires local knowledge that the local community can provide. Traditional boundaries need to be crossed, therefore, not only in government but also across local community and business sectors.

Place management is defined as including some or all of the following:

- authority vested in a person or organisation to determine desired outcomes and spend resources in managing a targeted place
- policy and service delivery that crosses traditional, sectoral and program boundaries, and that helps achieve coordinated efforts by all agencies involved in the targeted place
- collaboration between governments, business, local communities and voluntary and philanthropic sectors, recognising that no single partner can achieve the optimal outcomes
- a holistic view of the factors impacting on a place
- 'bottom-up' initiatives shaped by the community, harnessing community energy and resources to design and implement local responses and actions.

