

PART III

THE EXECUTION OF IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

A PROGRAMME OF URGENT WORKS

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NECESSITY FOR ADOPTION OF A PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT.

It is essential that a general scheme of metropolitan development should be adopted, and the Commission, on Map No. 4, has laid down a system of metropolitan main roads which, after a detailed study extending over six years, it believes will be necessary for the proper circulation of traffic within the area covered by the general scheme. It is recommended that this definite scheme for co-ordinated future development be adopted as the "official plan," and the one which should form the foundation of municipal and individual town planning schemes for the metropolitan area.

Those parts of the roads scheme which lie within developed areas should be put in hand and carried out when conditions tend to lessen the cost, or when their completion becomes urgent by reason of traffic or other conditions. The period over which such works will be carried out will necessarily be a long one, and to a large extent will be determined by the rapidity of development or by increase of metropolitan population.

The plan laid down in this Report is designed to serve a much larger population than is at present resident within the area of planning adopted, and its objects are to ensure that each completed proposal is an instalment of a general scheme of development, and to prevent wasteful expenditure on ill-advised improvements, which may be incapable of extension or wrongly located in regard to the general metropolitan development. At the present time there are certain works forming part of the complete scheme, which for a variety of reasons should take precedence over others and which, for ease of description and on account of the pressing need for action regarding them, are called "Urgent works."

CLASSIFICATIONS OF URGENT WORKS.

The Commission has given careful consideration to the various schemes which are regarded as urgent, and has subdivided them into three classes, also giving an indication of the method whereby they can be accomplished. They are shown on Map No. 5, and designated—

Class "A."—Those works located in rapidly developing areas, and which pass through subdivided lands which should be replanned to include the new road reserves, prior to more intense settlement.

Class "B."—Those existing roads upon which building lines should be established now, so that future widening may be carried out without extensive demolition of properties.

Class "C."—Those road improvements which should not be delayed and on which further obstructive buildings should not be permitted.

It is vital for the successful and economical execution of any of these works that the town planning legislation asked for in Part X. be enacted, and the recommendations made presuppose that the necessary powers are available. The powers referred to would permit the immediate operation of the whole of the schemes included in Classes "A" and "B," and would materially facilitate and cheapen the achievement of those in Class "C."

Urgent Works—Class "A."

The Class "A" urgent works are shown by a solid green line on Map No. 5. They comprise a series of lost opportunities which might have been incorporated in the original plans of subdivision had a definite plan of general development existed. In these cases a certain amount of replanning will be necessitated, but as there are practically no buildings affected, the cost of remodelling the affected subdivisions should not be large. Under the legislation asked for, they would soon be secured, so that in many cases any initial expenditure would be more than sufficient to pay for their accomplishment, leaving a surplus towards proposals included in other classes. It has been demonstrated, in the various schemes of replanning included herein, that partial resubdivisions can be carried out to secure the desired road improvements, and leave an almost equal number of allotments to satisfy the claims of dispossessed owners.

In certain parts, where these works are proposed, subdivision has not taken place, and in such instances the town planning authority should have power to compel the inclusion in the ordinary course of development of such roads as parts of subdivisional streets.

The road schemes do not involve the construction of the roads. It is only necessary for a strip of land in the correct location, and of adequate width, to be set apart to serve the districts through which they pass when they are built up. The main road is the most costly item, and its construction can be left until such time as it is necessary.

Improvements of this nature, secured in advance of development, would not prevent or delay the normal growth of the metropolis. Rather would they encourage the development to proceed, because of improved accessibility and better site planning.

Urgent Works—Class "B."

The works shown in broken red lines on Map No. 5 require only administrative action under a town planning Act. The definition of building lines would not involve any immediate costs. Action which would prevent the subsequent erection of buildings too close to the existing building lines would be the means of saving a considerable expenditure in the future. With the funds available, as shown later, the central authority would be able to reduce to a minimum the costs of acquisition of the additional road widths by opportune purchases from time to time. (See also pages 58 and 59.)

Expenditure such as that which must be incurred in the "C" Class works, which are really only the results of the errors of the past, will be avoided. It is certain that all "B" Class works will become "C" Class in due time unless remedial action as suggested is taken immediately.

Urgent Works—Class "C."

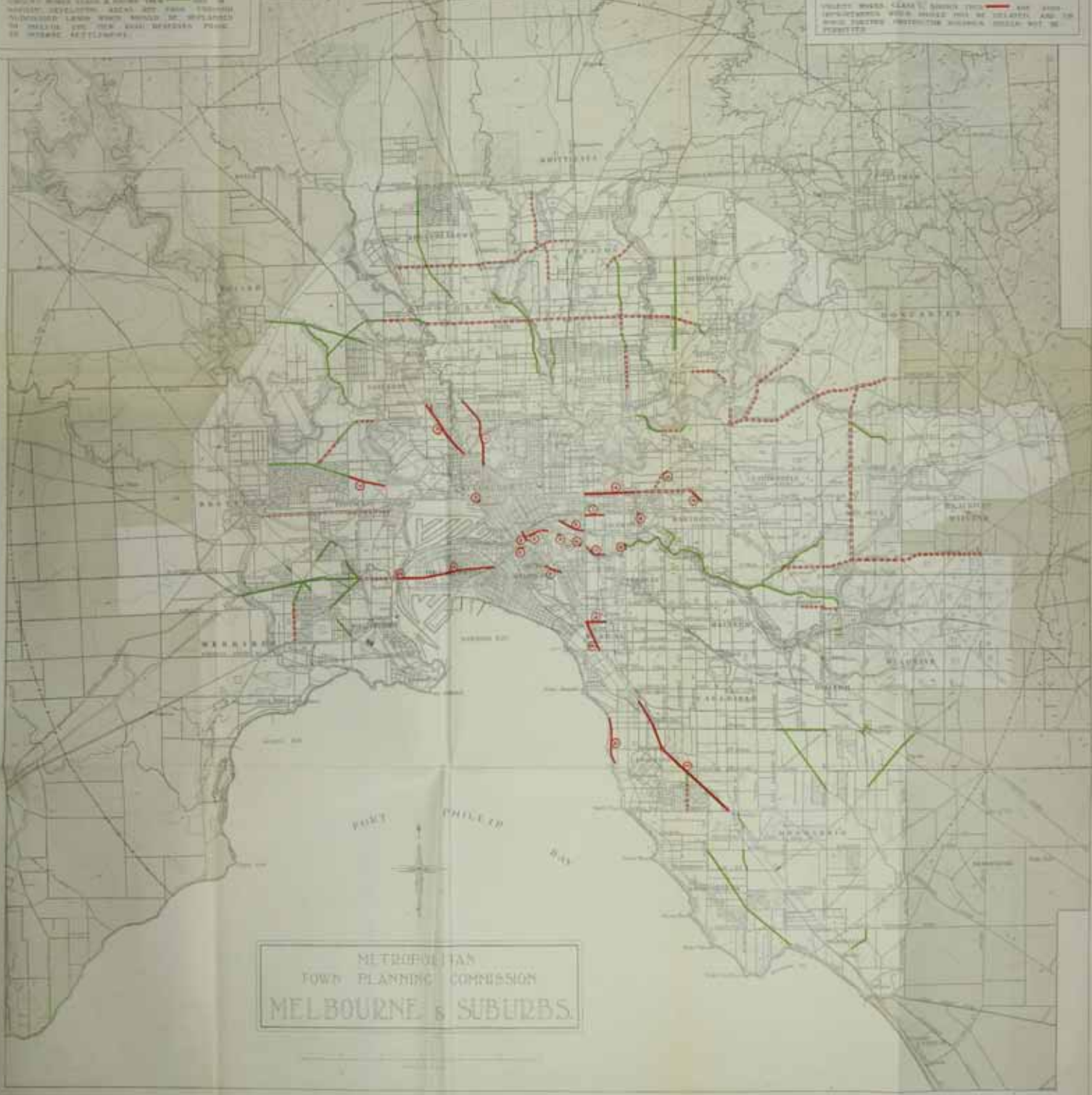
The "C" Class works are located in the built-up areas, more centrally situated, and comprise the expensive undertakings which have become necessary to meet the demands arising from the extraordinary growth of metropolitan street traffic. Action in the majority of these proposals is long overdue, whilst in the Commission's opinion all of them warrant urgent attention. Their total completion within the next ten years should be aimed at. These works are scheduled separately on page 149, and the statement gives a carefully prepared analysis of the approximate costs involved in the schemes, individually and collectively. The statement includes estimates of property resumptions as supplied by the municipalities concerned. The estimates of returns from resales have been obtained in co-operation with municipal valuers, and as far as possible they are based on actual sales recently made in the immediate vicinity. In all these estimates care has been taken to be liberal in costs figures and conservative in returns figures.

WORKS REQUIRING IMMEDIATE ACTION

WORKS WHICH CLASS 'A' SHOWS THIS LINE AND ARE IMPLEMENTED WITHIN 12 MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS REPORT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS URGENT AND THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN TO PREVENT DELAYS.

WORKS WHICH CLASS 'B' SHOWS THIS LINE AND ARE IMPLEMENTED WITHIN 18 MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS REPORT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS URGENT AND THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN TO PREVENT DELAYS.

WORKS WHICH CLASS 'C' SHOWS THIS LINE AND ARE IMPLEMENTED WITHIN 24 MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS REPORT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS URGENT AND THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN TO PREVENT DELAYS.



METROPOLITAN
TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION
MELBOURNE & SUBURBS.

ESTIMATED COSTS OF URGENT WORKS—CLASS "C."

Refer- ence to Map No. 5.	Scheme.	Property Costs.		Net. Land Returns.		Construc- tional Costs.	Total Cost of Scheme.		Refer- ence to page in Report.
		Resumption Costs.	Re-sales.	Loss.	Profit.	Dr.	Dr.	Cr.	
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
1	Bridge-road widening	122,700	135,600	..	12,900	28,800	15,900	..	98
2	Yarra Park-road .. ..	..	..	..	..	28,100	28,100	..	99
3	Swan-street—Alexandra-avenue Bridge	..	..	..	..	130,000	130,000	..	99
4	150 feet New Road—Queen's Bridge- street to Alexandra-avenue, Power- street to William-street	511,820	870,700	..	358,880	150,000	..	208,880	62
5	William-street bridge .. ..	..	..	..	..	190,000	190,000	..	115
6	Hanna-street to Clarendon-street, South Melbourne	108,000	65,900	42,100	..	6,800	48,900	..	113
7	Roy-street improvement	53,600	31,200	22,400	..	30,400	52,800	..	113
8	Victoria-street to Dynon-road	28,358	8,992	19,366	..	4,400	23,766	..	70
9	Ballarat-road widening	88,705	37,280	51,425	..	56,520	107,945	..	68
10	Mt. Alexander-road improvement	477,191	207,395	269,796	..	140,000	409,796	..	71
11	West Coburg—West Brunswick Arterial Road	46,804	26,815	19,989	..	{ (a) 25,000 (b) 47,500 }	92,489	..	72
12	Victoria-street widening and Victoria Bridge	369,000	197,700	171,300	..	108,200	279,500	..	82
13	High-street, Kew, improvement	58,145	65,860	..	7,715	15,486	7,771	..	103
14	Hawthorn Bridge .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	33 and 98
15	Canterbury-road—Barker's-road con- nexion	70,380	25,790	44,590	..	15,400	59,990	..	81
16	Punt-road Bridge .. ..	..	..	..	..	110,000	110,000	..	98 and 106
17	Harcourt-parade improvement	37,695	10,400	27,295	..	52,300	79,595	..	83 and 99
18	Williams-road Bridge .. ..	..	..	..	..	100,000	100,000	..	98 and 107
19	Wellington-street, St. Kilda	209,600	78,200	131,400	..	43,000	174,400	..	108
20	High-street, St. Kilda	779,200	230,600	548,600	..	63,000	611,600	..	86
21	Foreshore-road, Brighton	161,062	52,720	108,342	..	62,800	171,142	..	88
22	Point Nepean-road widening	285,727	112,070	173,657	..	197,620	371,277	..	87
23	New movable bridge over Yarra at Bay View-avenue .. ..	..	..	..	..	500,000	500,000	..	65
24	New main road to western suburbs across Fisherman's Bend .. ..	..	..	..	..	46,520	46,520	..	65
	Extension of Item 24 by construction of new main road from Bay View- avenue bridge (Item 23) to Geelong- road .. ..	..	..	..	..	86,000	86,000	..	65
	Totals	3,407,987	2,157,222	1,630,260	379,495	2,237,846	3,697,491	208,880	
	Grand Totals .. ..	..	..	1,250,765	..	..	3,488,611	..	

REMARKS.

Item No. 1.—From First Report—1925 Estimates. Not likely to be materially altered.

Item No. 3.—From First Report—1925 Estimates.

Item No. 4.—Part of Port Melbourne Highway Scheme.

Items Nos. 6 and 7.—From First Report. Reconstruction and regrading of Hanna-street in existing wide section is not included.

Item No. 9.—From Summerhill-road to Footscray Park.

Item No. 11.—Dawson-street to Park-street section remodelled—

(a) Cost of construction from Dawson-street to Park-street.

(b) Cost of construction through Royal Park.

Item No. 12.—From First Report—1925 Estimate. Not materially changed. See remarks on next page *re* Victoria Bridge.

Item No. 13.—Includes all land embodied in Council's scheme for improvement.

Item No. 14.—See remarks on next page.

Item No. 16.—From First Report—1925 Estimate.

Item No. 17.—Includes subway under railway.

Item No. 18.—Church-street bridge cost £101,727.

Item No. 19.—From First Report—1925 Estimate. Not likely to be materially altered.

Item No. 20.—From First Report—1925 Estimate. Not likely to be materially altered.

Item No. 21.—This scheme includes 14 acres of foreshore parks and substantial buildings thereon, some of which may have value as places of public entertainment. Portion of cost of this scheme (£56,166) should be allocated to Park System.

Item No. 23.—Movable bridge of Bascule type with about 220 feet clear opening and roadway for trams and vehicles.

Item No. 24.—Extension includes bridge over railway at Spotswood and bridge over Kororoit Creek, but road widening is an "A" Class and "B" Class work.

HAWTHORN AND VICTORIA BRIDGES.

The reconstruction of these bridges is included in the schedule of "C" Class works, but no estimate of their cost has been given because the Government has recently authorized the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works to undertake the work, and they are arranging for these bridges to be rebuilt out of available funds.

In its First Report, and many times subsequently, the Commission has stated its opinion as to the correct widths and alinements for these new bridges. It is regretted that the decisions made by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works in regard to the Hawthorn Bridge, are at variance with the Commission's recommendations. Although there is abundant evidence to support the Commission's opinion that the alinement and width adopted by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works will not meet the traffic conditions for even a reasonable period ahead, it is considered that no good purpose would be served by further comment on these differences, the details of which have been supplied to both the Government and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works.

ESTIMATES AND COSTS.

The total estimated net cost of these urgent works—Class "C"—is approximately £3,500,000. This figure embraces the cost of the whole of the urgent works of all three classes, as comparatively little expense is involved in the urgent works in Classes "A" and "B." The whole of this outlay would not be required immediately, for even if all of the works were simultaneously commenced (which is most unlikely), many of them would take years to complete. An annual expenditure of £350,000 would permit all the urgent works enumerated in the schedule to be carried out over a period of ten years. It is not expected that any succeeding ten years' programme will be as costly as the initial one, but there may be works which will have to be carried out much earlier than is expected. The first ten years' programme includes most of the expensive street widening schemes. After they have been carried out, a definite programme of development could be pursued at an annual cost which, the Commission believes, would be much less than that for the first decade. The Commission has not attempted to supply estimates of works which admittedly could not or should not be put in hand for, say, fifteen, twenty, or more years. Any estimates supplied so far ahead of the time when such works are likely to be put into operation would be misleading and their preparation would be an unnecessary waste of time.

It should be noted that the total figure of £3,488,611 includes £2,237,846 as the cost of construction of roads and bridges incidental to the schemes themselves. The remaining amount of £1,250,765 is required for property resumptions and incidental works. This is regarded by the Commission as extremely small for a metropolis of over 1,000,000 people. It is most gratifying to be able to recommend a scheme capable of supplying the major road transport facilities for such a large metropolis for so many years which involves such a comparatively small expenditure. Sydney is finding it necessary to spend sums many times greater than this, for less satisfactory results. The present commitments for similar work in that City, without any comprehensive plan of general development, are about £20,000,000. The same may be said of almost every large city, though most of them have some plan for future development.

FINANCING METROPOLITAN WORKS.

The Commission considers that all such schemes as come within the ambit of its recommendations should be regarded as of State or metropolitan concern, rather than as being the responsibility of single municipalities or other authorities. It would be extremely difficult to obtain agreement among contributing bodies if the cost of each separate scheme had to be assessed in respect of its potential value to each of those bodies. Efforts have been made in the past in this direction, and they have never been satisfactory. A glance at Map No. 5 shows how evenly these urgent works are distributed throughout the metropolitan area. A pooling of contributions would result in a balancing of benefits and costs, though it would still be necessary to assess certain contributions towards various schemes by regarding them in their relation to the particular authorities concerned. This latter aspect is referred to more fully in later pages.

METROPOLITAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO STATE ACTIVITIES.

Most of the Governmental activities which exist for the benefit of the country generally as distinct from the City are necessarily and rightly situate in the capital. Melbourne and its suburbs contain, by reason of being the centre of the State's Government, many reservations of property, buildings, depots, services, &c. The State enjoys all the advantages of metropolitan development, towards which the Government pays no rates to municipalities, makes no contribution for roads within the metropolitan area, and contributes only spasmodically and in small amounts to the costs of construction and maintenance of works, some of which are entirely necessitated by the presence of these State activities. In illustration of this, it might be mentioned that over £100,000 per year is taken from the revenue of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board towards matters extraneous to its services and of general State concern. One-fifth of

the gross receipts of the Melbourne Harbor Trust is paid into Consolidated Revenue annually; moreover, no harbour dues are paid on Government goods handled, representing altogether a total money value to the State revenue of over £150,000 annually. The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works supplies water and sewerage free of cost to all government buildings and undertakings, including the Railway Department. This means a very large saving to the State activities. The fact that rates are not paid to municipalities for State properties necessitates private property being charged proportionately more. The revenue derived from Crown lands leases, within the metropolitan area, is taken into Consolidated Revenue, and is about £50,000 annually. For the year ending 30th June, 1928, it amounted to £56,401.

The annual revenue under the Motor Car and Highways and Vehicles Acts for motor registration fees, drivers' licences, &c., has mounted rapidly every year. In 1910 the revenue was £3,029, but in 1928 it reached £1,014,208, all except £40,000 of which is devoted entirely to country roads. More than one half of this money is contributed from the metropolitan area.

In addition to the revenue from motor fees, 2d. per gallon on petrol imported into Victoria is levied by the Federal Government, from which it has been agreed to grant to this State an amount of £360,000 per annum for ten years, all of which must also be spent on country roads. As the 2d. per gallon special duty for this purpose returned £466,116 from Victoria to the Commonwealth Treasury for the last financial year, and as the quantity of petrol imported and the registrations of motor vehicles have increased greatly each year, it appears that it should be possible to make a substantial grant towards metropolitan roads and bridges without interfering with the £360,000 annual grant for country roads. In addition to the above tax of 2d. per gallon on petrol, the Commonwealth Government obtains a further 1d. per gallon as duty, so that the total petrol revenue from Victoria last year was £699,174, whilst the addition of the motor fees brings the total from both services to over £1,700,000.

The Commission considers that the roads and bridges construction programme as per Schedule "C" of the urgent works recommended, and the construction and maintenance of the metropolitan arterial roads, outlined in Part II., should be financed from motor fees and petrol taxes. It is urged that one half of the motor fees should be allocated for this special purpose. On last year's figures this would amount to about £500,000, of which only £223,784 would be required for the urgent works enumerated, leaving the balance to be devoted to general arterial road construction and maintenance. Considering that not even the most optimistic legislator imagined, when the motor fees were made the source of revenue for the Country Roads Board, that they would reach such a colossal sum so quickly, the Commission is of the opinion that no hardship would be inflicted by paying a just share to the metropolis where the largest part of such revenue is obtained.

METROPOLITAN CONTRIBUTIONS.

If £500,000 per annum were available for arterial road construction and maintenance, municipalities could supply more efficient service in other necessary directions, and would not be compelled to increase rates or resort to other means of obtaining revenue for essential services.

It would be essential to give rating powers to the new authority. As an average amount of about £125,000 would be required for such works, as are set down in the schedule of "C" Class urgent works, and contributions towards these undertakings could be expected by other means, as outlined below, this rating power could be safely limited to between 1d. and 2d. in the £1; 1d. on the present annual rateable value of the municipalities involved in the area of planning is equal to about £82,000.

CONTRIBUTIONS BY PUBLIC AUTHORITIES.

The Victorian Railways Commissioners, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, the Melbourne Harbor Trust Commissioners, and other public authorities should be required to join in the financing of works which are of benefit to their undertakings, or which are necessary to remove obstructions created by their works.

BETTERMENT RATING.

Wherever property has been increased in value consequent upon public expenditure for the improvement and development of the metropolis by any of the schemes recommended herein, the Commission is of the opinion that the property owners benefited should be compelled to pay a proportion of such increment towards the cost of the scheme by means of a betterment rate struck, where necessary, over a period of years.

The nature of the legislation required is indicated in Part X. in connexion with the outlines of the desired town planning Act. Although the provisions advocated by the Commission are simpler than those embodied in our existing legislation, the principle has been adopted frequently by the State Parliament, as is instanced by—

The Housing and Reclamation Act 1920.
The Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Act 1923.
The Railway Lands Acquisition Acts 1893–1915.
The Black Rock to Beaumaris Electric Street Railway Acts 1920–1923.
The Darling to Glen Waverley Railway Act 1926.
The Coburg to Somerton Railway Act 1927.
The Harbor Boards Acts (Outer Ports).

This method of assisting to defray the costs of public improvements has become widely recognized as necessary and reasonable. It will be noticed that the Commission has recommended that the legislation should authorize up to one half only of the assessed enhancement being applied towards the schemes of improvement concerned.

A CENTRAL METROPOLITAN CONSTRUCTING AUTHORITY.

An inspection of Map No. 4, which shows the entire road system for the metropolis, and a study of Map No. 5, which shows the uniform distribution of the urgent works of different classes, must at once reveal the metropolitan character of the proposals. It must also be plainly evident that in carrying into effect any scheme of general improvement, the metropolis as a whole should be charged with the balance of the cost not met by the various contributions enumerated on the previous page. Although many of the urgent works are situated wholly within the boundaries of one municipality, it would be inequitable to suggest that the limited number of people in that municipality should be charged with the cost of an improvement designed to facilitate the movement of traffic, most of which has its origin and destination outside that municipality.

Main traffic ways for the people in large cities are no less a metropolitan responsibility than water supply, sewerage, main drainage construction, tramways, power supplies, fire fighting, &c., all of which are controlled by metropolitan authorities. In Melbourne and suburbs, however, the responsibility lies with over 30 separate local bodies, and it is due to this multiplicity of control and the difficulty of obtaining legislation in recent years, that many urgent matters upon which there is little diversity of opinion, have not been dealt with.

The Commission considers that the first essential to any scheme of metropolitan improvement is the creation of a central metropolitan constructing authority, possessing the necessary powers and responsibilities for carrying out of such schemes as those recommended by this Commission, which are the concern of more than one municipality or which are in the interests of the metropolis generally.

The Commission does not consider it a part of its duty to suggest how this authority should be constituted, as this is the prerogative of Parliament. The principal methods, however, that have been suggested by advocates from time to time as a means of overcoming the difficulty are—

1. A Greater Melbourne Council which would take over the duties of the existing municipalities and such metropolitan bodies as are now under separate control.
2. A Greater Melbourne Council which would carry out works common to more than one municipality, but which would leave the existing municipalities to deal with matters of domestic concern.
3. The granting of additional powers to, and, generally, the reconstitution of, the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works to enable that authority to undertake road construction and general metropolitan improvement schemes.

Any of the above forms of centralized control, with sufficient executive powers, would be suitable for carrying out the constructional works included in the Commission's schemes, and would be a decided improvement on the present chaotic system of metropolitan municipal government.

Other proposals in regard to the form of authority have been made, such as the extension of the powers of the Country Roads Board, the creation of a board of experts, &c.; but the Commission is of opinion that it is essential that the ratepayers and the community generally should be represented, if not directly at least indirectly, on any body exercising such wide financial powers.