

# Culture and the Metropolis



## Technical Report 9

PLANNING MELBOURNE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



## Message from the Ministers

By world standards Melbourne is a great city. The Bracks Government is committed to maintaining Melbourne's reputation as a highly liveable city and an attractive investment destination. The Government has embarked on the preparation of a Metropolitan Strategy to set a clear vision for Melbourne's future liveability, prosperity and, importantly, its long-term sustainability.

The preparation of the Metropolitan Strategy is drawing on inputs from a wide range of sources. It is vital that the strategy has a sound research and information basis. It is also especially vital that community aspirations for the city's future be well understood. The key inputs to the strategy therefore include both a wide ranging public consultation program as well as a series of research or technical papers on issues that may have an impact on Melbourne's future.

The Bracks Government has given an undertaking to make as much of this background information as possible widely available to stimulate discussion about the future of Melbourne.

This report is one of the technical reports commissioned by the Department of Infrastructure, which we hope will stimulate feedback. At this stage content and recommendations are only the views of its authors and not necessarily the views of the Government. The Strategy is still in its early stages of development and we remain open to hearing what the broader community would like it to encompass.

We encourage you to read this and other technical reports and, should you wish, to make your views known about the future of Melbourne by contacting us on:

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# **CULTURE AND THE METROPOLIS**

**The role of culture in urban development**

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#### **Bibliography**

**We would like to acknowledge the contribution to this paper from various sources set out in the Bibliography. Some of the material in this paper was prepared by Jon Hawkes for the publication, The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's Essential Role in Public Planning commissioned by the Cultural Development Network (Vic), published jointly with Common Ground Publications, June 2001. The Network is to be congratulated for its work in this area.**

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#### SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

Cities bring together people of different origins and cultural background, and they serve the fundamental purposes of enhancing the collective actions in which people engage to produce, organize, experience, consume, and express themselves. Cities also foster civic institutions and teach civility. The culture of the city represents identity, memory, heritage, tradition, diversity, and community celebration. It also involves the creation of products, knowledge, architecture, landscape and the symbols that express the city's distinctive character. Historically and into the future, cities have been and will be the source of innovation, economic growth and prosperity – and this includes the world's great art and culture, new industries, new types of people, as well as for solutions to the problems of growth and urban management.

The purpose of this paper is to highlight international principles on culture and development (Section 1), contemporary trends in cultural, social and urban studies (Sections 2,3,4) and how these should inform future directions for a Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy (MMS) which will need to recognise that:

1. Cultural policy must be one of the key components of the Strategy;
2. The competitive position and prosperity of Melbourne depends on creative cultures that facilitate creativity, innovation, economic vitality, learning and knowledge, strategic alliances, collaborative planning, partnerships and community building;
3. Public life and the quality of the public realm should be promoted;
4. There should be protection for cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, moveable and immovable, and the promotion of cultural heritage industries;
5. Cultural identities need to be given expression through cultural diversity and belonging, and through cultural activities, place-making processes, social planning, urban and landscape design programs as a more explicit and integral part of metropolitan and regional planning processes;
6. More human and financial resources need to be available for cultural planning and development.

Section 5 summarises the role of culture in urban development and planning, puts forward a program-based cultural planning framework for the MMS, and lists a series of strategic initiatives for the implementation of such a framework.

#### 1.1 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

In the context of international standards for development policy, there are four standout sources that incorporate a cultural perspective:

- **World Commission on Culture and Development** 1995 *Our Creative Diversity*, Paris: UNESCO;
- **European Task Force on Culture and Development** 1997 *In From the Margins: a contribution to the debate on culture and development* Strasbourg: Council of Europe;
- **The Power of Culture: The Action Plan**; recommendations from the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development, Stockholm. 3-4/98;
- **The Santorini Statement**; the report of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Ministerial Meeting of the International Network on Cultural Policy, Santorini, 9/00.

These sources illustrate the increasing awareness, at the international level, of the importance of culture in the process of making public policy, particularly in the field of urban development.

For example, *The Santorini Statement* (2000) contains the following 'Illustrative List of Cultural Diversity Principles':

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1. *The fundamental importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in particular Article 27 - "Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits".*
2. *The preservation of cultural heritage is a crucial component of identity and self-understanding that links a community to its past.*
3. *Art plays an essential role in the life and development of the individual and society. States must protect, defend, and assist their artists and artistic freedom.*
4. *Linguistic and ethno-cultural diversity helps maintain and develop national and international cultural richness and traditions and reflects a commitment to common values and social cohesion.*
5. *Authors and rights holders have the right to the protection of their moral and material interests regarding creation.*
6. *"Cultural goods and services should be fully recognized and treated as being not like other forms of merchandise (ICCPD 1998).*
7. *Social and cultural fulfillment of the individual is a key element of human development and must be integral to sustainable development approaches.*
8. *Cultural exchange and cooperation are necessary to build wider cultural allegiances in an increasingly globalized world and are important tools in building human security.*
9. *Cultural diversity includes an openness to a wide range of cultural influences and recognizes the importance the production and distribution of local content.*
10. *Governments have a role to play in preserving and promoting cultural diversity and respect for cultural diversity is an important element of developing good governance.*

These principles are based upon a perception of culture extending far beyond its popular usage as a term to signify the arts and heritage of a particular society. The concept of culture used here encompasses the 'values, beliefs, languages, arts and sciences, traditions, institutions and ways of life by means of which individuals or groups express the meanings they give to their life and development' (UNESCO 1996).

A formal definition for the concept of culture would include (Hawkes 2001):

- the social production and transmission of identities, meanings, knowledge, beliefs, values, aspirations, memories, purposes, attitudes and understanding;
- the 'way of life' of a particular set of humans: customs, faiths and conventions; codes of manners, dress, cuisine, language, arts, science, technology, religion and rituals; norms and regulations of behaviour, traditions and institutions.

'It is therefore important both to acknowledge the far-reaching instrumental function of culture in development (that is, culture's contribution to economic growth), and at the same time to recognize that this cannot be all there is to culture in judgements of development. In addition, the role of culture as a desirable end in itself, as giving meaning to our existence, with a dual role of culture applying not only in the promotion of economic growth, but also in relation to other objectives- sustaining physical environment, preserving family values, protecting civil institutes

'In the promotion of all these objectives some cultural factors will help, others will hinder, and in so far as we have reason to value these specified objectives, we have grounds - derived and instrumental grounds - to value those cultural attitudes and features that foster the fulfillment of those objectives. But when we turn to the more basic question: why concentrate on these specified objectives (including economic growth, reduced inequality, environmental conservation, and so on), culture has to enter in a more fundamental way - not as a servant of ends, but as the social basis of the ends themselves. We cannot begin to understand the so-called "cultural dimension of development" without taking note of each of these two roles of culture' (UNESCO *Our Creative Diversity* nd).

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The European Task Force on Culture and Development (1997) in its publication *In From the Margins* takes the cultural development debate to a more practical level of specificity. It identifies four key themes:

- promotion of cultural identity (which according to UNESCO 1996 signifies 'all cultural references through which individuals or groups define or express themselves and by which they wish to be recognised; cultural identity embraces the liberties inherent to human dignity and brings together, in a permanent process, cultural diversity, the particular and the universal, memory and aspiration')
- endorsement of multicultural diversity
- stimulation of creativity of all kinds
- encouragement of participation for all in cultural life

And *The Power of Culture: The Action Plan* (1998) recommends the following five policy objectives:

1. make cultural policy one of the key components of any development strategy
2. promote creativity and participation in cultural life
3. reinforce policy and practice to safeguard and enhance the cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, moveable and immovable, and promote cultural industries
4. promote cultural and linguistic diversity in and for the information society
5. make more human and financial resources available for cultural development

This paper addresses the role of culture in urban development and discusses the way that:

- culture can be seen to be an essential building block in the Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy
- the values and ways of life of the citizens of Melbourne that make Melbourne what is and what it will become
- sustainability, well being, social cohesion (community building), identity, active citizenship are all goals of publicly initiated planning and culture is fundamental to them all

In addition the paper examines culture in the context of the city that:

- culture springs, first and foremost from human interaction and the daily exchanges between people
- making culture is a daily public event – not just in schools, in the media, in the 'culture houses', but in the streets, shops, trains and cafes
- by our behaviour we are known and this never-ending public process is a city's signature
- culture encourages the understanding of our own place in history and the world and in the daily patterns of life

It is from this viewpoint then that culture can be seen to be an essential building block in the Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy. The values and ways of life of the citizens of Melbourne make Melbourne what is and what it can become.

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## SECTION 2 CITY CULTURE

Cities have emerged out of the necessities of economic and social existence, which means that above all, they serve the fundamental purposes of enhancing the collective actions in which people engage to produce, organize, experience, consume, and express themselves. They provide the physical settings for the functions that require mutual cooperation and interactions between people.

The city facilitates communality, accommodation, dialogue, protection, fostering civic institutions and teaching civility. Historically and today, cities are also the source of innovation, economic growth and prosperity – and this includes the world's great art and culture, new industries, new ways of living, new types of people, as well as for solutions to the problems of growth and urban management.

Traditionally, cities have served the function of reducing the distance between people and thus enabling them to get together to easily exchange messages, ideas and goods, to engage in communal and common activities. Urban form and settlement patterns have been shaped by the means of communication and transport, and continuing changes in settlement forms will largely be a function of how communications technology changes.

The intellectual role of the city is determined by the richness and variety of functions found within its formal public infrastructure and informal social settings. These in turn determine the quality of life opportunities within the city in the fulfillment of basic human needs, from safety to self-actualisation, including cognitive, aesthetic and cultural interests. The future challenge is to create new ways to recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultural identity with all the cultural references through which individuals or groups define and express themselves.

*Cities will remain and, in many cases, become again, centres of innovation and knowledge transfer, simply because of their critical mass and the ways in which they operate as a frequently spontaneous grid of exchanges - of goods, services, people and ideas.*

Colin Mercer 1994

### 2.1. Cultural vitality

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*Cultural viability and vitality concerns the maintenance, respect and celebration of what a city and its population is. It involves identity, memory, tradition, community celebration and the production of products, artefacts, and symbols, which express a city's distinctive nature.*

Charles Landry 2000

Liveliness, energy, excitement and engagement are critical indications of a healthy urban environment. So much so that it has been argued that 'cultural vitality is as important to a healthy and sustainable society as social equity, environmental responsibility and economic viability' (Hawkes 2001).

Therefore in the context of the city:

- culture springs, first and foremost from human interaction – the tangible products of these interactions, no matter how wonderful, are ultimately secondary to the daily exchanges between people;
- making culture is a daily public event – not just in schools, in the media, in the 'culture houses', but in the streets, shops, trains and cafes;
- by our behaviour are we known - this never-ending public process is a city's signature.

The manifestations of cultural vitality are robust diversity, tolerant cohesiveness, multi-dimensional egalitarianism, compassionate inclusiveness, energetic creativity, open-minded



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curiosity, confident independence, and rude health. Attributes, which will provide a future our children will thank us for.

For some the vitality of a city is indicated by the arts - music, drama, painting and literature. For others it is the experience of learning and intellectual engagement. Others find vitality in the tangible and intangible heritage of a city - monuments, vistas, gardens, rivers, seafronts, shipwrecks, churches, public buildings. Some regard language, tradition and social customs as the essence of a vital culture; others identify it with community activities and rituals - sport, festivals, garden shows, technology-expos - events that provide a sense of achievement and identity.

This sense of communal life is also found in the culture of everyday life. Retail shopping districts, activity spaces and places, schools, libraries and healthcare centres, neighbourhood meeting places, parks and gardens, cafes and recreational areas, seaside and bayside environments - all are places in which community well-being and local identity are developed and celebrated.

But ultimately it is the behaviour and attitudes of the people that occupy these environments that are the major contributors to, and beneficiaries of, the life of a city. It is their engagement, enthusiasm and energy that will determine the vitality of the metropolis.

Creatively responding to change requires viewing cities in a new way by rethinking priorities and creating new alliances. Culture is a fragile and delicate organism. It can easily become atrophied, fragmented, hierarchical, exclusive, lazy, smug, imperialised, passive or one-dimensional. Continuing health and vitality needs constant care - this awareness must inform the strategies of development.

Cultural vitality is a necessary precondition for sustained economic growth. Apart from the attractiveness of a culturally vital city - to tourists, investors, and migrants - vitality is the antithesis of entropy. It is a truism to observe that unless a city can maintain its life, it will die.

#### **Cultural Vitality: Key Issues/ Challenges**

**From a metropolitan planning perspective, the MMS will have to recognise that the vitality of a city depends upon complex cultural systems that need to be promoted by:**

- **creative cultures within the context of creativity, innovation, economic vitality, learning and knowledge, and strategic alliances**
- **public and meaningful experiential and interactive relationships between individuals and groups through collaborative planning, partnerships and community building**
- **social capital relationships and network systems which facilitate and support diversity, equity, creativity and participation**
- **public life in public places in user-friendly and dynamic public places and their physical constructs - physical forms, activities, the diversity and quality of public spaces**
- **public references to the past with strong psychic significance to the roots of both our common and our diverse memories;**
- **culturally accessible and responsive political, governance and managerial systems.**

#### **2.2. Cultural identity**

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*Local cultural identity and pride are essential elements in achieving economic, community and environmental regeneration and action*

*Imagination and creativity are essential elements in achieving local identity and personal development*

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*Diversity of lifestyle, livelihood, culture and habitat is an asset and through the understanding of this a tolerant society can be developed*

*Local distinctiveness takes centuries to develop but can be lost overnight and so must be defended and nurtured*

*Charles Landry 2000*

The cultural environment of identity is reflective of the way we see ourselves, the way we treat each other, the way we communally organise, the way we respond to problems and opportunities, and the way we generate and distribute wealth.

According to Hall (1996),

- Traditionally, identity has been understood as something coherent and fixed as the essential qualities ('human nature') of a person. In the second view of identity, biology is said to combine with social variables such as class, race or gender to produce what is still a relatively coherent and fixed identity. But during the previous century, this traditional self has been 'decentred'.
- Modern forms of identity are not seen by all as coherent and fixed, but as something constructed and always in a process of becoming, as much about the future as the past. This is identity as 'production' rather than inheritance and/or the result of circumstance. It is identity constituted in, and not outside, history and culture, and it becomes a concept of multiple and mobile identities.
- Thus 'identities are about questions of using the resources of history, (the city), language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being'
- Although identities are clearly about 'who we are' and 'where we think we came from', they are also about 'where we are going'. Identities are always a narrative of the self-becoming. If you ask who I am, I will tell you a story. In this sense identities are increasingly less about 'roots' and more about 'routes'.
- As identities are formed out of our everyday social being, how culture is experienced is now also a mode of being, a way of gaining identity. Our identities are in part constructed out of things we engage with— what we listen to, what we watch, what we read, what we wear, etc. In this way the market offers tools of identity making. Cultural involvement is perhaps one of the most significant ways we perform our sense of self.

The field of cultural studies recognises that the culture industries are a major site of ideological production, constructing powerful images, descriptions, definitions, frames of reference for understanding the world.

Our view is that 'culture' is not something already made which we 'consume'; culture is what we make in the varied practices of cultural identification through our participation, interaction, association and consumption. The totality of these experiences is the making of cultures, and that is why it matters.

It is also a central argument of cultural studies that making 'culture' is complex and contradictory, and cannot be explained by simple notions of determination, false consciousness (whether capitalist, imperialist or patriarchal), co-option and manipulation. Meanings are never definitive but always provisional, always dependent on context.

We observe the current view that the practice of cultural studies insists on context and is committed to a radical contextualism, a contextualism that defines culture, or the relations between cultures and power, both outside and inside of the particular context or place under consideration.

Cultural identities are also partly represented in the public life of public spaces as these reflect the social and communal life of the community. Culturally specific public spaces are needed to support public life, vitality, livability and quality of life throughout the metropolitan area. This is

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because public space is the common cultural ground where people carry out the functional and ritual activities that bind communities whether in the normal daily routines, social gatherings or in periodic festivities.

The culture of the city is often seen as a mosaic of social worlds, an exciting array of ethnic enclaves, of artists' villages, of trendy streets and elite neighbourhoods where different areas of the city sustain different ways of life.

It must also be recognised that the public life of urban spaces needs to be able to accommodate alternative cultures of diversity and difference (such as race, class, gender, age, life course, disability, sexuality, and homelessness) that form the everyday life and energy of cities. As public life evolves with cultural change, cultural identities are not to be solidified around one or two social traits, but as a process, as performed, and as unstable/dynamic as cultural identities are re-enacted through daily life.

The city needs to provide movement between cultural identifications in different situations and places, and allow multiple cultures and identities to inhabit places so that there are multiple grids of difference and varied links between place and identity formation.

Cultural identity therefore manifests itself in the distinct landscapes of places and neighbourhoods, and it is important that the regulation of land use takes the unique physical characteristics (both natural and built) of a place into account when determining the parameters of future development. But identity is a far wider, and deeper, concept than simply being a signifier of outward appearance. The concept of identity encompasses (as has been noted earlier) all the ways we use to remind ourselves and show others who we are.

An awareness of the layering and overlays of identity is crucial to effective planning. There is no doubt that the residents of a city identify themselves as being of that city (the big picture) but each has many other identities that gradually focus down until we come to the unique individual. Along the way are large sectors (eg, 'Westies'), suburbs, and precincts, streets (eg Lygon, Smith or Brunswick Street). And that is just identity based upon locale (certainly the easiest to deal with) - we all have a score of other identities: family, gender, work place, age, sporting club, drinking hole, community group, birth place, parents' birth places, etc.

The MMS must facilitate the celebration of all these identities, respect their existence, and exploit them to stimulate the vitality of the whole. The promotion of identity is a critical process in itself with numerous side benefits. Distinct and confident identities create an integral basis for well being, social cohesion and economic development.

#### **Cultural Identity: Key Issues/Challenges**

**From a metropolitan planning perspective, the MMS will need to:**

- **adopt a more multi-faceted and integrative view of cultural identity, social and cultural life which focuses on people actively and interactively constructing their worlds, both materially and in the meaning they wish to make within their regions and localities**
- **recognize that cultural identities need to be expressed in regional and municipal strategies, linked to cultural and social planning, and to place-making theory**
- **put a priority in public policy in general, and with respect to regional and local governance in particular for more integration between policy areas (such as housing, health, education, transport, tourism, sport and recreation) and for a stronger emphasis on managing, in strategic ways, the evolution of the cultural qualities of places, of localities, of hinterland regions, of valued landscapes, and the whole metropolitan area**
- **allow the expression of cultural identity through cultural activities and place-making processes, and with linkages to urban and landscape design programs and urban development projects to become an essential and more integral part of metropolitan and local government planning process**

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#### 2.3. Cultural heritage

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*Cultural Heritage, as a broad concept includes the natural as well as the built environment and therefore:*

- *Encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites, and built environments, as well as bio diversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences*
- *Records and expresses the long processes of historic development, forming the essence of diverse national, regional, indigenous and local identities as an integral part of modern life*
- *Represents a dynamic reference point and positive instrument for growth and change*
- *Reinforces understanding that the particular heritage and collective of each locality or community is irreplaceable and is important foundation for development, both now and into the future*

ICOMOS 1999

As noted by Armstrong (1994:103), the concept of heritage in Australia was originally associated with notions of national identity. 'It was not until the 1970s that heritage assumed the specialised meaning of "things we want to keep" in response to the rapidly changing urban fabric of Australian cities. By the late 1970s, the concept of heritage and cultural continuity had become highly bureaucratic under the various Acts at federal and State level, and a growing body of heritage professionals had emerged. This continued into the 1990s. Meanwhile in the 1980s, the push for tourism generated a "heritage industry" which appropriated the concept of heritage through numerous marketable icons and nostalgic representations of Australianness. Thus cultural continuity in Australian multicultural sub/urban places today is being constructed largely by a professionalised Anglo-Celtic interpretation of the past, while a burgeoning "heritage industry" serves up trivialised "ethnic places" for tourist consumption. In both processes of place-making a mythic groundedness is generated to paper over underlying cultural discontinuity.'

The tangible resources of urban cultural heritage include historical, industrial, social and artistic artefacts. They are manifest in a city's architecture, urban landscapes and landmarks. Together with the traditions of public life, festivals, rituals, art and craft markets, they offer cultural experiences as a way of locating the particular and unique heritage and lifestyle of a city. In this way, cultural tourism builds on the unique, existing local environment and culture of an area, and unlocks the cultural resources for shared use and mutual communication

A more complex base lies within the intangible heritage realm. Intangible resources are those narratives and elements that link the ideas, spirit and talent that create the tangible. Culturally-evolved environments/places/ spaces all develop an intangible sense of 'place' that can have a myriad of meanings. These meanings, associations and bonds encompass:

- the attachment of meaning through the interaction of people and place
- place as not only physical but also experiential
- place conceived as having an essential character, identity and 'spirit'
- the primary experience of place (that is, the immediate emotional and unreflective response) may often lead to the more reflective processes and then to attachment
- places are also symbolic of highly personalized narratives and associations
- shared experience in public places helps shape the culture of the place

In this way tourism evolves from culture and cultural tourism experiences to become special attractions and draw-cards for both visitors and residents. Cultural tourism operators describe the

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visitor as one who is seeking education as well as pleasure, one who uses travel as a means of achieving personal growth.

Our heritage is much more than just a series of artefacts for museums or assets for the tourism. Where we come from helps us to discover where we want to go. Our social memory and our repositories of insight and understanding are essential elements to our sense of belonging. Without a sense of our past, we are adrift in an endless present. Applying this understanding is a clear example of the role that culture can and must play in public planning.

Heritage narratives focus on built form, but do not necessarily consider cultural heritage that is manifest as a way of life. Planning codes need to be able to adopt new regulatory approaches to place-making (Untaru 2001) that can facilitate the continuity of a way of life in terms of heritage as cultural practices. This might include the right of small businesses to continue, the prevention of large internalised shopping franchises, the protection of existing hospitals, local libraries, plantings, and recreational places.

Projects building on concepts such as urban iconography and neighbourhood character are aimed at providing public planners with insights into community perceptions of their sense, and pride, of place, and what the real value is (that is, above and beyond the language of real estate) in civic and local surroundings. The results will impact upon and affect the public planning process. This is culture in action. And to recognise it as such will allow these initiatives to be treated in an integrated and co-ordinated manner.

#### Cultural Heritage: Key Issues/Challenges

From a metropolitan planning perspective, the MMS will have to

- recognise the breath and broader framework beyond the notion that the City's heritage comprises just public buildings, gardens and sculptures
- directly involve citizens and local communities in the identification, conservation and celebration of their heritage
- strike a creative balance between ensuring the continuing integrity of heritage assets and their role in the tourist industry

#### 2.4 Cultural diversity

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*The city brings together people of different origins and cultural patterns. This is both its chief strength as a centre for social and cultural innovation, and its Achilles heel. The mixing of lifestyles and forms of expression in urban areas can be a source both of creation and innovation and of conflict. Consolidating social integration with respect to ethnic and cultural diversity, and yet inciting them to blossom, is a major public policy challenge facing cities today and tomorrow.*

*Cultural Ministry, Netherlands*

*Difference is not just to be tolerated, but valorized, given value by the dominant culture. Difference addresses the powerful, asserting specific needs, claims, and rights. Difference speaks to us with a **collective voice**, in the voice of specific "social groups". Thus it is beyond liberalism. The individual voices to whom we have been listening speak not only as individuals but also as and for collectivities. Their claim is to be allowed to be different **within an inclusive society**. They want to be acknowledged and valued as different within a society of citizens – with the right to make claims on the political community and to participate in it. Difference then is not just different interests, not just a reincarnation of the familiar pluralist politics, but a different way of being in the world. This involves the need, and the right, to give expression to difference in the **public sphere**.*

*Sandercock 1998a*

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As acknowledged in *Challenge Melbourne* (2000:10), 'Today's Melburnians have more diverse, and more highly individual sets of values than their forebears. The changes in community attitudes, family planning and religious affiliation, for example, have led to the emergence of new social structures and changes in individual lifestyles. The city remains the second most favoured destination in Australia for migrants. A mobile international student population, permanent family reunion migrants, and business migration attracted by the robust economy continue to build on the strong multicultural mix of Melbourne'.

However, with global economic restructuring, progress has always presented both risks and opportunities that are unevenly distributed between different social groups, such as women, the aged, the disabled, ethnic minorities and Aboriginal people. Although Melbourne today can boast higher levels of wealth and wellbeing than in the past, some of its people have not benefited from economic restructuring and the development of the information society, and income disparity has been increasing steadily since the 1970s. There have also been parallel demographic and socio-cultural shifts that in Melbourne have produced a much more culturally diverse and multi-ethnic urban environment.

Large cities have always had areas of different economic, social and cultural character, but current trends are showing the emergence of new social ecologies and typologies of local communities in mega-metropolitan areas. According to Baum et al (2000:24) for Australian cities: 'these outcomes once had a simple geography, with lower status inner and outer suburbs separated by a higher status and better served group of middle suburbs. The processes of change in the mix and availability of jobs and different capacities to purchase housing that have emerged with the so called "new economy" has produced a more complex social structure, one where differences in economic and social opportunity involve new suburban patterns. These new patterns reflect marked regional differences in job accessibility, housing prices and the quality of shopping, school, entertainment and social resources that overlay regional differences in the type of jobs that are available'.

This kind of occupational restructuring and social polarisation is leading to the emergence of new urban forms. In Melbourne, an important feature of these new patterns is the increasing status of inner areas, as well as the changing income status and character of what are now middle suburbs. There is a professionalisation and gentrification within the inner city, and in exclusive suburban and exurban enclaves, coupled with the downgrading of post-war suburbs in terms of declining job opportunities and increases in unemployment. Another impact on urban social issues is related to trends associated with ethnic or cultural or social clustering. Increased concentration may be related to individual cultural orientation, but there are concerns that ethnic concentrations will intensify, as will the segregation from other population categories.

The social ecology of Melbourne will continue to be characterized by increasing social and cultural complexity and differentiation among, between and within neighbourhoods. This will also be accompanied by demographic shifts, changes in household or family structure, living arrangements or lifestyle choices – trends that cannot easily be separated from the impacts of globalisation and labour force restructuring.

The effect of globalisation on local cultures has generated an enormous amount of discussion. In fact, the role of culture as the bedrock of a society is probably better understood in this cultural context than in any other.

What is clear is that culture is not a closed system. On the one hand we embrace influences from a myriad of sources, many of which are 'global'. On the other, our response to these influences cannot help but be mediated through our own particular, and unique, experience of culture. We are all one, we are all different.

Certainly, an awareness of globalisation has contributed to numerous 'distinctiveness' projects around the country. But this drive for distinctiveness – borne of the legitimate recognition that every community has its own specific needs and aspirations - is motivated by a desire to be seen by others as special or superior. And whilst this approach, usually driven by a promotional and marketing consciousness, is certainly useful in the context of attracting economic incentives like

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industry and tourism to an area, it serves little positive value to the community desiring to own and feel connected to the local culture.

Such conflicts of interest create a clash between the cultural manifestations **in** a community and the utilisation of culture **within** that community. Hence problems of authenticity arise.

However, diverse values should not be respected just because we are tolerant of otherness. For it is the discourse between diverse values and understandings which stimulate communities to discover new visions. The diversity of mediums of expression and of cultural manifestations is simultaneously essential parts of life's rich tapestry, and invaluable tools with which to engage with the challenges that will inevitably confront us.

If such a course of action is undertaken, tangible benefits will follow in the form of social integration and community development with unique and distinctive qualities attractive to tourism and economic advancement.

*Challenge Melbourne* (2000:3) recognizes that 'improving people's everyday experience of Melbourne is becoming increasingly important for residents and visitors. Cultural diversity, tolerant and open attitudes and safe, attractive environments all help people feel they can fully participate in urban life'.

The Melbourne Metropolitan region also consists of a number of dynamic and unique city centres – Ballarat, Geelong, Bendigo, Shepparton and the La Trobe Valley. Each of these cities has created through its people, history, industrial/rural economy, artistic and folklore traditions a rich and diverse cultural fabric. These cities illustrate how diversity of culture arises where there are different circumstances, cultural backgrounds and different social and cultural needs, and how these have been strategically used to guide growth and change.

As noted by Sandercock and Kliger (1998b:236) twentieth century planning has been founded on a notion of the 'public interest' which has become increasingly problematic by class, gender and race-based issues, and the lived realities of everyday life in many of the world's cities. A defining characteristic of the current era is 'a multiplicity of cultural communities and social groups dwelling in any one city or region, often alongside and yet not connecting with each other. A precondition for social justice in this era, then, is a politics of inclusion which is grounded in an understanding that there are *multiple publics*: that is, a *heterogeneous public*, with different cultural values, interests and concerns.'

These trends and perspectives will call into question long-standing notions of citizenship and national identity, and will also do so with regard to assumptions about planning practices and regulations, governance and arenas of public policy that affects people's daily living. Just as biodiversity is an essential component of ecological sustainability, so too is cultural diversity essential to social sustainability. We must have a pool of diverse perspectives in order to survive, to adapt to changing conditions and to embrace the future.

From a general policy perspective, 'one size fits all' policies will not be appropriate, and a combination of both people-based and place-based policies will be needed. Place-based policies involve dealing directly with places and localities through, for example, regional growth plans, public housing construction, industrial and urban renewal projects, place-making as expressions of cultural identity. For optimal outcomes, individuals, households, and communities need to be given the capacities – increased knowledge, levels of social and cultural capacity and material resources – as well as the ability to choose outcomes.

#### **Cultural Diversity: Key Issues/Challenges**

##### **The MMS will need to:**

- **recognise that cultural diversity is an integral part of Melbourne's daily life, and champion cultural diversity within the context of an inclusive society**
- **include a multicultural vision for the Melbourne metropolitan region**

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- place-based and people-based policy packages appropriate to the needs of Melbourne's localities
- incorporate cultural diversity values and alternative patterns of economic activity and social life into Municipal Strategic Statements, local development plans, planning codes, legislation, heritage studies and urban design
- acknowledge and accommodate cultural diversity in planning, consultative and participatory processes
- promote the development of cross-cultural skills on the part of planners and designers working with community consultation techniques
- promote the concept of authentic distinctiveness

The challenge for the state, and for citizens, is to ensure that this diversity is expressed, reflected, acknowledged, indeed 'valorized' in the mainstream of Australian life.

For this to occur, significant changes to the power relations within our society will have to occur – cultural democracy involves the exercise of rights, not simply the availability of opportunity. Some cultures, even today, still do not have broad representation in the public arena - addressing this inequity will need strategies and sensitivities that are courageous, inclusive and culturally aware - beyond existing discourses.

#### 2.5. Cultural belonging

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*'I have no right to claim on behalf of non-Aboriginal Australia that all the non-Indigenous are now part of Australia's deep past, nor do I wish to. Belonging ultimately is personal. There are many routes to belonging as there are non-Aboriginal Australians to find them. My sense of the native-born has come – is coming. It comes through listening but with discernment; through thinking but not asserting; through good times with my Aboriginal friends but not through wanting to be the same as them; through understanding our history but being enriched by the sites of past evil as well as good. It comes from believing that belonging means sharing and that sharing demands equal partnership.*

Peter Read 2001: 11

The Melbourne metropolitan region harbours a rich Aboriginal heritage dating from at least 30,000 years ago to the present day. This heritage extends well beyond artefacts, archaeological sites and rock engravings, and includes other places which hold a strong spiritual association with contemporary Aboriginal communities. These sites and places represent a wealth of knowledge, including the history and culture of the region's Aboriginal people, from which the wider community can learn a great deal.

In contrast to European heritage, only a small proportion of the Aboriginal sites and places thought to exist in the region have been identified and conserved. There can be little doubt that since the first days of European occupation, much of the Indigenous heritage has been destroyed. Increasing development pressures throughout Melbourne will increase the likelihood of losing valuable Aboriginal heritage, unless concerted efforts are made to identify, conserve and protect such sites and places. Intellectual property and language also require recognition and protection.

The general community poorly understands the value of Aboriginal knowledge. The majority of human history on this continent is in the spirit, hearts and minds of the Aboriginal population. Until recent times, attempts to retrieve, conserve and appreciate Aboriginal knowledge have failed. Also it is only quite recently that the general community has been exposed to the complexity and value of Aboriginal culture. Increased exposure through community events or media has fostered a greater acceptance and appreciation of the value of Australia's Aboriginal culture. However, despite this trend and the importance of Indigenous culture to international tourism,



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local communities do not, or chose nor to, come face to face with Aboriginal culture. The development of opportunities that allow the community to learn about Indigenous culture needs to continue.

Clearly there are many broader challenges within Indigenous rights which bring into focus cultural identity, land rights, authenticity/moral validity and the process of reconciliation. The issues that arise from these challenges also affect how non-Indigenous peoples' sense of connectedness with this country evolves.

Understanding the concept of belonging is to understand the relationship of an individual's connection to a group and/or value system. Pride and celebration of place - belonging and connectedness in relation to the physical environment - manifests a more complex set of inter-relationships.

In this respect, the place-making initiatives described in Sections 4 and 5 may enable Indigenous and Non-indigenous people to explore such concepts within their local context.

#### Cultural Belonging: Key Issues/Challenges

- **Aboriginal heritage sites need to be respected, maintained and protected**
- **More strategic and concerted actions need to be taken to improve site identification and mapping, for agencies to work together, and for Aboriginal community involvement in the identification, protection and management of sites and places of Aboriginal significance**
- **Increase public awareness and participation in Aboriginal culture and heritage**
- **Enhancement of contemporary Aboriginal culture in social plans, cultural events, housing, employment and education initiatives**
- **Increase opportunities for community contact with Aboriginal culture and extend opportunities for self-funded cultural initiatives**
- **Increase the efficacy of available options in statutory, planning and management techniques that minimise the impact of surrounding development on Aboriginal heritage sites**
- **Indigenous land rights and self-management issues have become part the nation's human rights and social justice agenda and must be a focus of public policy and planning**

#### 2.6. Community Wellbeing

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*Social cohesion involves building shared values and communities of interpretation, reducing disparities in wealth and income, and generally enabling people to have a sense that they are engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges and that they are members of the same community.*

*Jane Jenson 1998*

The paradigm shift in economic and social policy towards neo-liberalism has provoked serious social and political strains. Rising poverty, declining health and the public's lack of confidence in public institutions are examples of these tensions. There is an increasing awareness that more and more people are feeling disengaged from 'their' society. People fear change and are fearful of their children's future as well as their own. The dimensions and tensions within contemporary life range from

Belonging/ isolation

Inclusion/ exclusion

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Participation/ non-involvement

Recognition/ rejection

Legitimacy/ illegitimacy

In tackling social exclusion, the building of 'social capital' – through local partnerships, fostering community links and building skills, self-esteem and networks – will be a vital component of local and regional development. The UK Commission for Social Justice (1994:307-308) defines social capital in terms of places and localities: 'Social capital consists of the institutions and relationships of a thriving civil society – from networks of neighbours to extended families, community groups to religious organisations, local businesses to public services, youth clubs to parent-teacher associations, playgroups to police on the beat. Where you live, who else lives there, and how they live their lives – co-operatively or selfishly, responsibly or destructively – can be as important as personal resources in determining life chances'.

By constructing a concept of social capital, it will be possible to go beyond the concept of connections to look at ways in which social capital is accumulated, transmitted and transformed into economic capital for community wellbeing.

Sharing history and cultural stories, identifying with the symbols, icons, landmarks and monuments reflected in the built environment, all contribute to enhancing people's collective sense of meaning and ultimately their sense of community. Therefore a strong sense of local identity enhances a collective sense of place and connectedness.

In many ways people's participation in the local neighbourhood is linked to, and empowered by engagement with the built environment. The public spaces, facilities and parks/gardens all provide meeting places for interaction and community building if they engender an ethos of appreciation.

*Social integration and effective grass-roots democracy are necessary to create a sense of belonging and responsibility -- two ingredients of meaningful citizenship. "Designing and implementing systematic public policies should not only aim at improving people's quality of life, but also bring social and political stability to our cities, and thereby to our societies." Social exclusion, segregation and mounting violence, particularly among young people, are urban problems that cry out for solutions. They are cultural problems in the broadest sense. But there are also cultural responses to them in the narrower sense. For example, the discipline of living history can be used to teach young people about the methods of nonviolence. The HIP-HOP Project (Highways into the Past: History, Organizing and Power) is a sort of "Civil Rights Tour" that brings students from the Boston area to visit key sites of the civil rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s to learn about the power of nonviolence from people who were teenagers themselves when they risked their lives and filled the jails in their quest for civil rights. Amateur arts training, free or discounted access to cultural institutions and activities, have proven effective in including previously excluded members of society. Where arts funding is linked directly to efforts to support diversity, community development flourishes.*

*Cultural Ministry, Netherlands*

Social life and public life is therefore an active process of continual creating and transforming of identities and social bonds in interaction with others. These bonds adhere through shared understandings and mutual trust, which can be used to create social capital and relational resources to be called upon in future times. This relation-building and identity-creation work can be witnessed in many of the 'partnership' and 'empowerment' initiatives in contemporary regional and local governance.

#### **Community Wellbeing: Key Issues/Challenges**

##### **The MMS will need to:**

- **Promote the formation of social capital that can develop shared understandings of issues, agendas, program choices and coordinated action;**

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- **Confront the openness and diversity of relationships found in localities by focusing on their relational webs and networks (social and intellectual capital, trust) through which community building can be accomplished whether these are relations of economic activity, social life or governance.**

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## SECTION 3 CULTURAL PLANNING FOR THE CITY

### 3.1. Cultural Policy for Metropolitan Melbourne

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Cultural policy for urban development and the planning and management of Melbourne's cultural resources has a very important role in the Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy (MMS).

In the report of the Prime Minister's Urban Design Task Force, *Urban Design in Australia* (1994:28), cultural development is described as 'a post-industrial mode of wealth creation'. Within this new positioning there will need to be more than the standard recognition of culture (frequently spoken about as 'the arts') in the city.

As pointed out by Mercer (1994), cultural development and cultural planning will need to focus on organizing the human and social relations in the region. Through the development of a 'creative infrastructure' cities will assume new positions in the re-organised socio-economic relations of the knowledge economy. This concept of 'creative infrastructure' has been produced by various forms of convergence and gained broad circulation with the launch of Australia's first cultural policy statement *Creative Nation* – in October 1994.

Creative infrastructure is driven by the generation of:

- a critical mass in terms of the growing service economy
- the globalisation of information technologies and communications
- the economies of amenity, the role of cultural institutions in the urban environment
- the space of information flows, and their relationships to the structures of political and economic power
- the emergence of distinctive urban lifestyles and subcultures

It is in this context that cultural auditing and cultural mapping (see Section 5) can provide both a catalyst and vehicle for bringing together diverse interests.

*Cultural mapping involves the identification and recording of an area's indigenous cultural resources for the purpose of social, economic and cultural development. Through cultural mapping, communities and their constituent interest groups can record their cultural practices and resources, as well as their sense of place and social value. Subjective experiences, varied social values and multiple readings/interpretations can be accommodated in cultural maps, as can more utilitarian 'cultural inventories'. The identified values of place and culture can provide the foundation for cultural tourism and eco-tourism strategies, thematic architectural planning and cultural industry development.*

*Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation 1994:19-20*

Cultural planning for development has a crucial role to play in cities and regions because it provides the basis and conditions for innovation, creativity, diversity and fundamentally the production of value in much more than the purely economic sense.

In many senses 'culture' and cultural planning are already part of the urban planning, tourism and regional development agenda in Victoria. But, according to Hawkins and Gibson (1994:220-221), 'What is missing in Australian arguments for cultural planning is any sound economic analysis of the forces that are restructuring local economies and the cultural impacts of these changes. Cultural planning ...needs to move beyond motherhood statements about how good culture is for local identity and economics. It needs to reflect a more sophisticated understanding of the relationship between political processes and economic forces. The implicit emphasis on the aesthetics benefits of culture (good design, heritage, streetscapes, public art) makes cultural planning policy blind to the forces shaping cities. Ultimately, cultural planning is a misnomer. In its

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current form in A it has not really moved beyond arts planning because of the over-emphasis on non-technological, 19<sup>th</sup> century subsidised cultural forms’.

Cultural planning therefore needs to consider the cultural effects of existing urban forms and policies in order to understand how the economic and cultural intersect, and what are the cultural impacts of various forms of urban development, from the traditional fringe suburbs, to the shopping mall, to the city centre. Cultural planning must therefore be proactive rather than reactive, must move beyond the arts and into the wider cultural community, and must facilitate both cultural and economic diversity.

In a post-industrial context, where the knowledge economy and the information superhighway are becoming as important as physical transport systems in shaping and informing the nature of cities, it is the ‘creative infrastructure’ which is the special domain of cultural planning and development. This links to the concerns with cultural maintenance (the ‘things we want to keep’) to those of sustainable and innovative development (‘how we agree to move on in the context of social and economic imperatives’).

Appropriate cultural planning models need to be developed and grounded in institutionalist approaches now being used according to Healy (1999) for a range of developments in sociology, economics, organizational studies, urban and regional analysis, and public policy:

*Although there are different nuances in its use in each of these areas, the term (institutionalist approaches) refers to the embedding of specific practice, within a wider context of social relations that cuts across*

- *the landscape of formal organizations*
- *the active processes by which individuals in social contexts construct their ways of thinking and acting*
- *It does not refer to the analysis of the formal structures or procedures of public institutions, as in the traditional public administration view. An institution, therefore, is not understood as an organization as such, but as an established way of addressing certain social issues.*

*As developed within sociology, it is grounded in an interpretive and relational view of social life, which focuses on people actively and interactively constructing their worlds, both materially and in the meanings they make, while surrounded by powerful constraints of various kinds.*

*The institutionalist approach similarly emphasis relationships, but stresses that individual identities and preferences are actively constructed in social contexts. Relationships are also actively constituted, both in terms of social practices and as systems of meaning. Where many social (and cultural) networks coexist, what does one social group take quite differently?*

*Through the particular geographies and histories of these contexts, attitudes and values are framed. It is in these relational contexts that frame of reference and systems of meaning evolve. The significance of these localize ways of thinking and acting is recognized in the increasing contemporary interest in the distinctive “social capital” that seems to developing in localities. It is these systems of meaning, ways of valuing, and ways of acting that become the cultural underpinnings of everyday life, for people in households, firms, and agencies. However, these cultural underpinnings are not fixed and given, although they may be slow to change. They are actively made, remade, and transformed in the dynamics of the social relations that intersect in localities*

Patsy Healy 1999

#### **Cultural Policy and Planning: Key Issues/Challenges**

**For cultural policy and planning to form an integral part of metropolitan planning, the MMS must recognise the following:**

- *The connectedness of developments in the economic domain (the knowledge or information economy) with those in the socio-cultural domain (sense of identity,*

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*access, participation, belonging, and citizenship), with those in the domain of infrastructure (place and its uses), with those in the domain of environment (stewardship of natural and built resources)*

- *This sense of connectedness is not well represented in the planning, management and development of Australian cities. This lack of connectedness and the nature of professional training which renders planning as a largely physical science rather than a social or human one – has served us very poorly over the past fifty years, and may well be disastrous if it continues in the context of the knowledge economy*
- *Cultural planning asks us to qualitatively re-configure our urban mindsets as planners, policy makers, managers, consumers, and citizens and translate that re-configuration into policies, protocols and action plans*
- *Thus there needs to be a convergence – of cultural resources, knowledge and skills – on the morphology of the city. (In)... thinking about their relationship between the city, (its own cultural identity), and the global economy, (it)... is not simply a question of seeing how an already established urban form 'fits' into the context of new international economic (and cultural) relations*
- *... it is also a question of seeing how the city itself is to be transformed in its structure, functions and attributes by these new relations and for the benefit of its future citizens – not purely as an economic logic but also one which has implications for the social, cultural, infrastructure and environmental morphology of the city*

*Colin Mercer 1994*

The focus for cultural policy and planning will therefore be the cultivation of interactivity within the metropolitan region and within localities. This position will imply encouragement along the lines of current theory in communicative planning, the evolution of knowledge and cultural resources, as well as, the making of regulations and the allocation of resources.

The MMS will therefore need to give central place to the incorporation of a new cultural planning framework to guide change in Melbourne and its wider region. This should include a new commitment to more innovative ways of implementing the following policy perspectives in a more comprehensive and culturally-driven way:

- The City and region for creativity and innovation
- The City and region for economic vitality
- The City and region for learning and knowledge development;
- The City for collaborative planning

### 3.2. The City for Creativity and Innovation

*There has always been creativity in cities. They are repositories of creativity because of their role as markets and trading centres and their critical mass of entrepreneurs, artists, intellectuals, students, administrators, and power brokers. They are often cosmopolitan, encourage racial and cultural intermixing and offer opportunities for face to face interaction. They allow people to mix in myriad combinations with their ideas, needs, aspirations, dreams, problems, projects, conflicts, memories, anxieties, loves, passions, obsessions, and fears. Cities have identities and histories lastingly represented by their artistic, archaeological, anthropological and architectural heritage, their built form, landscapes, and topography, the liveliness and diversity of their cultural and social life and their civic traditions, festivals and rituals. All these qualities have made cities so attractive to some. The task is to recapture this creative potential of cities.*

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*Given that a city is a designed environment, a society, an economy, a polity, and an eco-system, it is important to inject creativity into all five dimensions. A city needs to be creative in the way it nurtures and shapes its natural and physical environment, in the way it runs its economy (a creative economy), in the way it develops its social dynamics (a creative society) and in the way it handles its political arrangements (a creative polity).*

*The terms creativity and innovation are often used interchangeably, but it is important to make a clear distinction. 'Creativity' is a divergent thought process that generates ideas, and is non-evaluative; whereas innovation is a convergent process concerned with the selection and implementation of ideas. Creativity is the process through which new ideas are produced, while innovation is the process through which they are implemented.*

Charles Landry 1994

Cities and urban areas are now being viewed as geographical entities whose socio-economic dynamics are governed by new principles of innovation and organisation, economic coordination and management. These new principles correspond with particular images and urban archetypes as important dimensions of urban economic organisation today:

- **The innovative city.** This is the most generic of images that refers mainly to the city as a dynamic agent in technological innovation, mainly through the creation of technology parks, training and education policy, etc. In recent years, there has been a shift in focus from the hardware view of innovation, to a knowledge-based view of innovation and creative infrastructure;
- **The producer and business services city.** This image stresses the domination of services, and the fast growth of business and new types of integrated services. In recent years, particular attention has been devoted to advanced producer services and the role which they play in the strategy and organisation of corporate life, as well as the restructuring of economic activities such as consultants in technology, organisation, human and cultural resources;
- **The informational city.** This portrays the informational society at the urban level, the influence of information technology on information systems and flows, as well as on the transformation of the capital-labour relationships in the city and its suburbs;
- **The transactional city.** This designates the city with an outstanding network of financial and business services, of transportation, information and communications infrastructure – and such includes both previous types – but also the 'hosting city', enabling transactions to occur because of its socio-cultural assets, its connections to political, scientific, cultural, etc., networks with international reach;
- **The network city.** This is a multi-nodal city, or conurbation of actively involved neighbouring cities, towns, regions, which because of proximity can benefit from the dynamic synergies of interactive growth via reciprocity, knowledge, exchange and unexpected creativity. They also achieve significant scope economies aided by fast and reliable corridors of transport and communications infrastructure.
- **The global city.** This refers to both the geographical influence and the functional, especially economic power of a city. Global cities are in general cities with a strong presence of headquarters of transnational corporations that operate in several continents. Some global cities have a functional specialisation (finance, control structure of certain manufacturing industries, etc), but most also show a high degree of completeness, diversity and complementarity among their economic, social political and cultural functions. Their global geographical and functional character places them at the heart of many international networks. The global city possesses most of the features of the above urban images.

'Knowledge rich' regions depend on the knowledge content of goods and services. The value of imagination, innovative design, technological superiority, and innovative and creative marketing and packaging are crucially important. A strong creative cultural environment will contribute to innovation in other sectors and enhance the economic, creative and social wellbeing of the city.

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As pointed out by Landry (1994), a city may be very creative, but may not have the analytical, evaluative and financial skills and resources to develop innovative products and solutions. Creativity is a necessary pre-condition for innovation, but innovation is what counts in maximising the potential of a city. Getting from creativity to innovation involves evaluation, and evaluation concerns the assessment of the appropriateness of an idea to a given situation, its feasibility, cost-effectiveness and popularity in wider contexts. Some cities may thus be strong in creativity and others in innovation.

Creative processes are the techniques which involve improvisation, intuition, spontaneity, lateral thought, imagination, co-operation, serendipity, trust, inclusion, openness, risk-taking, provocation, surprise, concentration, unorthodoxy, deconstruction, innovation, fortitude and an ability and willingness to delve beneath the surface, beyond the present, above the practical and around the fixed.

These aspects of human behaviour, often noted by social scientists, are the source and manifestation of creativity and innovation - central elements for the survival of the species. These qualities are essential to the process of problem solving and for the successful navigation of the future. Such attributes should be valorised in communities and become part of the consciousness of the planning community.

#### **Creativity and Innovation: Key Issues/Challenges**

*Cultural creativity is context driven, and determined by the social and economic context of a society at a given time. It is neither the individuals on their own nor the context on its own.*

*One strategic tool in this re-alignment is creativity and our central argument is that creativity is an important resource and a capacity. It is both the means through which one can address needs and problems, as well as a reservoir of riches and energies one can draw upon, rather like one does with natural resources like coal or oil. This potential has generally been unrecognised and even marginalised by the way urban policy makers – including both politicians and public servants – have operated since at least the industrial revolution.*

Charles Landry 1994

**The challenges for the MMS will be to ensure that Melbourne will be a city:**

- ***Where a network of creative and innovative public and private actors have and exert influence on urban development and the creation of places of innovation and cultural vitality***
- ***Where strategic urban policies cut through traditional departmental structures and link, for synergistic reasons and mutual benefits, hitherto unconnected action areas of political concern***
- ***Where concerted efforts to strengthen (innovate) the creative capacity of a city are undertaken***
- ***Where individuals and groups are allowed, encouraged and supported to experiment with new approaches to (creative place-making and) sustainable urban development***
- ***Which has a reputation (regionally and internationally) as a continuous observatory and laboratory for innovative urban development (socially, economically, ecologically and culturally)***
- ***Which is a magnet for creative, innovative personalities, for managers, scientists, bureaucrats and policy makers***
- ***Which, over a longer time period has the continuously attacked local challenges and problems, and succeeded to sustain its economic base and social freedom***



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*The strengthening of its creativity potential will allow a city, a city region to create better conditions for a city, its city managers and its citizens to respond flexibly to any structural changes they may be confronted with in their urban management tasks*

*Klaus Kunzman 1994*

The challenges for the MMS will also include organisational innovation as summarized by Charles Landry (1994):

- *Incorporating creativity into city management and overcoming obstacles to creativity and innovation generated by organisational and bureaucratic ways of working as well as by the rigid frameworks of established professional disciplines, and particularly:*
  - *overcoming the often short-term logic of professional politicians and non-elected and time limited agencies who aim chiefly at obtaining quick and visible results that prevents them from laying the foundations for longer term solutions*
  - *broadening the training base for different professions that is frequently too narrow to make creative connections*
  - *replacing the technical jargon of different professions which make communication with the outside world difficult and contains their own thinking and develop a common creative language*
  - *improving the awareness and knowledge about advanced thinking and best practice in many relevant fields such as the arts, urban design, organisational management and technology*
- *strengthening corporate strategic working and thinking in local government as professional specialisations and jealousies persist and departmental empires are freedom of access to power and information, and distort the development of creativity by excluding individuals and groups who may have a lot to contribute; and particularly:*
  - *overcoming the continuing rivalry and distrust between the public, private and voluntary sectors and facilitate inter-sectoral co-operation*
  - *removing obstacles and constraints for the involvement of a broader cross-section of people with creative ideas: artists, business people, academics, local media, journalists*
  - *establishing processes, mechanisms, and creative momentum - starting with projects, which are easier to implement and become 'early winners'; allowing the establishment of creative projects to be driven by original and sometimes eccentric individuals. It is important for creative individuals to flourish that that they operate within a supporting framework. Their 'creative deviance' needs to be positively sanctioned. Within local authorities this might mean that grants for innovation and pilot projects are made available, bureaucratic procedures are simplified and decision making cycle shortened, and an attitude is developed where opportunities rather than obstacles too resilient to effect real change*

### 3.3. The City for Economic Vitality

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Economists have drawn our attention to the importance of the growing service sectors in the late twentieth century city, the importance of financial institutions in the physical form and the 'centre of gravity' of cities, the importance of economic restructuring for the shape of the city.

Economic life depends on creativity and innovation, and expands by import replacing that leads to more robust local and regional economies, effective skill transfer, local cultural self-sufficiency, innovation and autonomy. This has always been the case, and is even more so now when the

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commodities being produced and exchanged are more likely to be the images, symbols and lifestyles of the cultural and communications industries than the products of traditional manufacture.

Thus the role for cultural planning in economic development is to substitute imports with locality-driven products in general, and in providing the conditions of creativity and innovation – that is the creative infrastructure – encompassing the expression of collective memory in actual practices of communication.

From an economic point of view, research into the analysis of cultural activity demonstrates the value of diversity and creativity for a city's regional economy. The successful city strengthens its economic reputation by creating new cultural-business innovations, which identify and articulate a broader diversity of cultural events/attractions for visitors, whether they are from the nearby regions or overseas.

In addition, it should be recognized that cultural events/attractions generate extra demand for retail services, bars, restaurants, and hotel services and for transport and transport-related services, thus exerting additional impacts on regional economic performance.

In recognizing the importance of the cultural sector and its resources for the economic performance, development, cultural vitality and community building of urban regions, the arts should not be seen by planning authorities, as they often are, only as a cost factor for achieving 'higher' non-economic goals in society.

The cultural sector should be seen in the context of the economic, social and cultural prosperity of the regional economy as a whole.

Therefore, it has been shown that:

*... culture is able to contribute to physical, economic, and social renewal in urban areas in a number of different ways and that these principles have, to varying degrees, been adopted by city governments as techniques of cultural regeneration.*

*When applied in combination, it is suggested that the following positions help to show the importance of culture as a tool for effective regeneration and urban development:*

- *The creation, production and consumption of the arts and cultural activities (such as performances, events, concerts, festivals, and screenings, etc) can help generate other economic activity by attaching into an area people who then use other 'non cultural' facilities, e.g. bars, hotels, and public transport, etc. In this way, cultural venues act as a catalyst for both activity and investment.*
- *Following on from this, the time frame for cultural consumption is not limited to the pattern of the normal working day. In other words, cultural activity can be used as the basis for an evening economy as it is able to attract people not only into different places but also at different times through such things as longer shop-opening hours, evening theatre, film and music performances, and extended licences for bars and night clubs. The logical conclusion of this concept is the creation of the '24-hour city'.*
- *Due to an increase in both the amount and time scale of activity it is apparent that culture can also help to provide the critical mass that makes an area work, both socially and economically. This is achieved by creating a range and mix of uses and activities in an area that support and reinforce each other and help to revitalise areas through the conversion of properties for cultural uses.*
- *Culture also plays an important role by providing the content for activity, using programs of cultural animation to create lively urban areas. Events in public spaces, squares and park as well as public art initiatives help bring meaning and, therefore, vitality to those spaces. In this way culture, in combination with the built environment, helps to create place.*

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- *Finally, and most importantly, culture is a vital component of the urban public realm as its spaces, street, and squares all help to create the identity of a city.*

*Mathew Wansborough & Andrea Mageean 2000*

#### **Economic Vitality: Key Issues/Challenges**

The MMS will need to promote the contribution of culture to the vitality and wellbeing of cities and urban areas, particularly with respect to:

- **Infrastructure for cultural participation, engagement and consumption that generates and supports other economic activity such as performances, events, screenings, concerts, etc**
- **Broaden the evening economy and patterns of the working day (by maintaining late night public transport, lighting, policing)**
- **The cultural animation of the public realm by programming events across a range of venues**

#### **3.4 The City for Learning and Knowledge**

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*New understandings and definitions of learning and the learning society are critical to the future success of ...cities. Learning is not only part of new skill development and the economic advantage that cities must cultivate, learning is also central to the way cities evolve new forms of self-governance.*

*All new forms of democratic involvement of people in decisions about their city's future depend upon radical notions of debate, conversations and communication. This means that people and the potential of 'human (and social) capital' have to be recognised as major assets for city futures. New learning processes also mean that a range of organisations, businesses and city networks, not just formal institutions of education will be important for the 'learning city'.*

*There is another way of envisaging the learning city. A true learning city is one, which develops by learning from the experiences of others. It is constantly on the lookout, searching out examples of success and failure and always asking why this is so. It benchmarks itself to appropriate other cities to get a grip on how well it is developing. It is thus a place that understands itself and reflects upon that understanding - it is a 'reflexive city'.*

*The city is a place where individuals feel they can become empowered, where organisations - public, private and voluntary - are open-minded and most difficultly a place where this amalgam of various actors with differing cultures coalesce to work together an agreed set of objectives for its city.*

*The key characteristic of the learning city is its ability to develop successfully in a rapidly changing socio-economic environment. In order to do this it nurtures the potential of all, because it understands that in the emerging knowledge based economy it is the capacity to learn and reflect in all its facets, in responding to urban challenges that will largely determine success or failure. It knows that knowledge is more than information.*

*Today cities have one crucial resource - their people...It is their cleverness, ingenuity, aspirations, motivations, imagination and creativity which are today of crucial economic significance, as the old locational factors - raw materials, market access - diminish to the point of insignificance. Thus the objective of farsighted urban leaders should be to embed a culture of learning into the genetic code of their city.*

*...the learning city is creative in its understanding of its own situation and wider relationships, developing new solutions to new problems. The essential point here is that any city can be a learning city.*

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*The learning city is thus strategic, creative, imaginative and intelligent – it looks at its potential resources in a far more comprehensive way.*

Sue Cara, Charles Landry & Stewart Ranson 1999

The Joint OECD/Australian Government Conference “*Cities and the New Global Economy*” (Melbourne 1994) and more recently *Challenge Melbourne* (2000:7-9) recognize that globalisation processes have had the following impacts:

- A major source of economic advantage lies in people’s skills and knowledge, making the attraction and retention of skilled people extremely important
- Growth industries such as multimedia and entertainment, require environments in which creative people can communicate easily
- The development of vast company conglomerates that control all aspects of industries such as entertainment and media
- The metropolitan job market has generated a demand for highly skilled and mobile ‘knowledge workers’ who use the opportunities of flexible working arrangements, high quality data transfer and telecommunications services to locate in regional areas around Melbourne, thus generating business in support of local communities
- Most knowledge intensive firms also value compact, well-designed central locations that simulate face-to-face communications and information exchange
- The global competitiveness of a city is influenced by how ‘liveable’ those working in the knowledge-intensive areas of business find it. To keep and attract this highly mobile work force, a city needs to offer a wide diversity of positive experiences. As well as good infrastructure and services, a vibrant street life, lively music scene, broad range of outdoor activities and strong universities are just some of the critical elements that make for a liveable city

Clearly Melbourne will have to continue to enhance its profile nationally and internationally as a centre of innovation in education, research and development, multi-media, information technology and the arts. An open society, excellent education facilities, diversity of activities and multiculturalism are preconditions, as Melbourne has these assets.

Future regional and metropolitan development will depend on co-localised and interconnected processes of technological development (innovation) and the evolution of a range of social institutions (institutional learning). This means that localised learning needs to be seen as resting on localised institutional learning involving a range of formal and informal local institutions that can facilitate trust, social and economic coordination. Policy should conform to market processes that take account of what goes on at the ‘bottom’, that recognise firms as experimenting, learning organisations, and create a regional structural and institutional infrastructure that corresponds to their cognitive, behavioural, cultural and strategic aspects of learning.

The learning city will also have to learn new forms of partnership between sectors and ways of listening to and involving the public. This will require:

**Partnership.** A fragmented education and training sector - with inadequate connections between sectors and competition between providers particularly in the post school phase - does not facilitate the participation need for the learning age. Learning communities will need to build the partnerships between sectors and institutions which encourage participation and progression in learning of all members of the community. Such partnerships:

- Develop community wide coalitions bringing together relevant partners from public and private sectors;
- Coordinate approaches to the various kinds of learning offered within the community whether formal, informal or work based;

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- Make contacts across sectors and educational phases;
- Use the media to promote an appetite for learning.

**Learning Communities.** These are to encourage its citizens to commit themselves to learning and to be imaginative in the way they provide learning opportunities for:

- Developing variety and flexibility in the kinds of involvement people can have in the learning process;
- Recognising and valuing all kinds of learning within and for the advancement of the community;
- Learning here is not only engagement in the formal educational processes but the connecting of the many kinds of learning, in the workplace, the voluntary organisation and the family with the purpose of making the community a better place to live.
- Learning about how the community is changing in order to be able to shape its future. It will need to learn about the context of change – in population movements, growth and decline in its industrial and commercial base, in the impact of new technologies.

**Participation.** These partnerships need to become part of a broader public dialogue the purpose of which is to clarify the future of the city, town or region in an era of global change. Many cities and towns are now looking to find new ways of strengthening the important traditions of local democratic practice and understanding the contribution of participation to urban development.

#### Learning and Knowledge: Key Issues/Challenges

The MMS will recognise the need for:

- a vision of the city as a place which contains a diversity of educational institutions, but also as a city which sees itself as a transmitter of learning and within which the city itself is an 'object of learning', and thus the city can be learnt about and changed;
- more possibilities for integrated planning for learning, to create relationships between formal and non-formal systems of education and a desire for equity.
- localised learning policy in regions and localities to support present economic activities while stimulating bottom-up learning through offering local firms inspiration to change behaviour and innovate incrementally;

#### 3.4 The City for Collaborative Planning

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Community development, social planning and urban planning continue to grapple with the issue of policy formulation and collaborative planning by stakeholders and communities. The emphasis on peoples' involvement in plan-making processes has increased considerably since the beginning of the 1990s. The current State Government (Thwaites 1999) is 'giving Victorians back their voice and influence by reinstating local government as a lead decision maker in planning...(so as to) ensure that planning is reflective of community values in relation to neighbourhood character, local heritage and protection of the environment as well as desire for growth and the need for infrastructure and services'.

Planning theory has taken a 'participatory turn' paving the way for a people-centred new planning theory. Collaborative planning needs to be all-inclusive, and to involve all stakeholders in the process of planning for achieving consensual policy and place outcomes.

The key principles for such a process have been identified as follows:

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- **Planning as interactive and integrated process.** This is essential as planning in collaborative planning theory is defined as an interactive and interpretive process. All planning knowledge is produced and reproduced through interaction and interpretation;
- **Formation of arenas by stakeholders.** Arenas for interaction and discourse are designed and redesigned by the stakeholders themselves with a view to including all of them in a friendly and supportive environment;
- **Interaction as communicative action.** This should take place under conditions of communicative rationality including comprehensibility, sincerity, legitimacy and truthfulness;
- **Knowledge forms.** Stakeholders have different systems of meaning, and different ways of knowing the world, different ways of accessing the world and different ways of reasoning and valuing;
- **Consensus and difference.** Stakeholders will not be able to achieve complete consensus on all issues of concern. Differences are discussed and not downplayed;
- **Respect for all members.** Other perspectives will be valued, and stakeholders will listen and search for probable meeting points arising out of different discourses;
- **Reflexive and critical capacity.** This reflects on one's own and others' beliefs and values in a critical manner;
- **Mutual construction of interests.** Interaction is aimed at mutual learning;
- **A plan of discourses.** A development plan or any other policy document prepared under the condition of collaborative planning would contain discourses and related systems of meaning of the stakeholders.

**This approach to collaborative planning and its implications for models of community building needs further elaboration from a cultural planning and place-making perspective, and would require a further phase of this consultancy project.**

#### Collaborative Planning: Key Issues/Challenges

The MMS will need to:

- **Fashion an overall metropolitan planning framework that incorporates collaborative approaches cultural development in a strategic context for future regional and urban development**
- **Make steady, incremental improvements to places and regions and in urban management processes over the longer-term**
- **Change local political and organisational cultures to support broadened approaches to collaborative planning through intensive training and education**

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#### **SECTION 4 CULTURE OF PUBLIC URBAN SPACES**

The cultures of urban spaces are expressed through the collective memory of place identities, the public life of social and communal activities and the spatial relations of their material and symbolic forms in the built and natural environment. Culture encourages the understanding of our own place in history and the world and in the daily patterns of life. Culture needs to be seen as a process as well as a product, a way of life as well as an artifact, a mode of production as well as a mode of consumption.

Culture is also an expression of certain meanings and values not only in art and learning, but also in the behaviour settings and urban spaces comprising the city and its region.

As these material and symbolic forms are produced and reproduced, the culture and identity of urban spaces are socially constructed, and are transformed with shifts in the local economy. Economic development and change, urban planning, the design and regulation of the built environment, and cultural development are all inter-related.

##### **4.1. Public Life and Cultural Vitality**

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The public realm and public spaces can be supportive of social and cultural values such as citizenship, democracy, pluralism and tolerance of diversity. The public realm needs to be accessible to and be used by all. It outlasts mortal lives, it memorialises and thereby conveys a sense of history and society to individuals, it establishes collectivity, and is an arena for diverse groups of people to engage in dialogue, debate and oppositional struggles. It can be a precious social binder which helps to create and sustain a coherent and inclusive public culture. Public space in the city center particularly represents an important neutral territory where people can mix and mingle and where to some degree everyone is equal.

The urban public realm is both symbolic of and provides the setting for certain social activities regarded as important to 'citizenship' and the functioning of liberal-democratic societies in general. It therefore needs to support four mutually dependent purposes and qualities: it is defined by universal accessibility; it is symbolic of desires for collectivity and sociability rather than individuality and privacy; it is socially inclusive and pluralist; it is important neutral territory. The value of Melbourne's public realm will depend on the degree to which these qualities are maintained.

Public spaces reflect the social and communal life of the community, and are needed to support public life, vitality, livability and quality of life throughout the metropolitan area. This is because public space is the common cultural ground where people carry out the functional and ritual activities that bind communities whether in the normal daily routines, social gatherings or in periodic festivities.

Cultural forces shape public life and the evolution of public life has produced many types of urban and natural environments intended to support public life. Public life in public spaces provides opportunities for recreation, leisure, relaxation, entertainment, social contact, binding people together in community activities, bringing together diverse groups and facilitating contact between different cultural groups. The culture and identity of urban spaces promotes a more enriched public life and civic consciousness.

In some respects there has been a declining significance of the public realm with the privatisation of people's lives, as leisure, entertainment, gaining information, and consumption are increasingly satisfied at home or in commercial centres. The relationship of public space to public life is dynamic and reciprocal, and new forms of public life will require new spaces. As public life evolves with cultural change, new types of urban spaces may be needed, and existing ones revived. It will be necessary to promote the creation and maintenance of public life in public places that are appropriate to their users and context and are well used over time.

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In general terms, the role and purpose of public spaces is to support the following types of public life:

- the social and recreational life of the community by providing multi-purpose spaces such as parklands, sporting fields, playgrounds, picnic areas, community centres, arts and performance centres;
- economic, functional and movement needs through the public domain (of streets and footpaths), transit interchanges, retail centres, shopping malls, marketplaces, car parks;
- activities with high social and cultural content (ie eating out, shopping, entertainment) including leisure in commercial settings;
- symbolic associations including the staging of local and national events, large festivals, the recognition of activities of cultural or heritage significance or any historical or memorial events that reflect the region's history and culture;

The City of Melbourne recognises the importance of public life and cultural vitality in its *Municipal Strategic Statement* (1999:2), and in its *Attractive City* aims, which are:

- *To enhance the physical quality and character of Melbourne's streets and city form through sensitive and innovative design and, in particular, improve the experience of the City for pedestrians;*
- *To conserve and enhance Melbourne's architectural heritage and historic character, and enliven it by adaptive re-use and innovative promotion;*
- *To maintain and enhance the City's parks, gardens and boulevards as the signature for Melbourne's livability, providing City residents and users with sanctuary, visual pleasure, and a range of recreation and leisure opportunities;*
- *To enrich Melbourne's distinctive physical character and ensure that it continues to develop a strong sense of place and identity.*

Public policy should attempt to counteract the contemporary tendency towards the fragmentation of the public realm as socially divisive, and when this is accompanied by fear, suspicion, tension and conflict between different social groups. Perceptions of a lack of safety are one of the major threats to the urban public realm, as fear results in the spatial segregation of activities in terms of class, ethnicity, race, age and type of occupation. The 'capture' of colonisation of public space by certain groups reduces its inclusive and pluralist qualities. In particular, the absence of women and other social groups is an impoverishment and degradation of the public realm and the life of the city.

It will also be important to enhance feelings of safety in the urban public realm in order to support public life, maintain and promote the vitality and viability of urban areas. Urban planning, design and public management will need to go beyond physical segregation, territorialisation, defence of space and property, and CCTV surveillance that controls who belongs and who does not. Trends towards the fortress city and gated communities protect property directly and people indirectly. The overall effect is to undermine the public realm's ideal qualities of social inclusivity, collectivity, and universal accessibility.

Alternatively, there will need to be a greater emphasis on the management of the public realm through concepts of animation, quality maintenance and more consensual forms of control. By the creation of appropriate ambience, activity, and animation, the 'peopling' of public places results in many concerns about personal safety being 'crowded out'. There needs to be a sufficient surveillance and/or a sufficient density of people to ensure safety. The concentration of activity in particular areas or 'corridors' can provide the necessary density of people in certain places. Such activity corridors need to be good quality environments with good lighting and natural surveillance, closely related to car parking public transport. For urban spaces to become peopled and animated, the public realm has to offer what people want and desire, and to do so in an attractive and safe environment. This will require actions first, on the supply side, to increase the



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available range of activities, and second, on the demand side to broaden the range of age, gender, social and ethnic groups using public spaces and the city centre. This will require better peopled places by the spatial concentration of different users, residential uses, the 'evening economy', land use controls for creating mixed uses, and 'cultural animation' to encourage people to visit, use and linger in urban spaces. Programs of cultural animation include lunchtime concerts, art exhibitions, street theatre, live music, and festivals across a range of times and venues.

#### **Public Life and Cultural Vitality: Key Issues/Challenges**

The evolution of public life in contemporary urban Australia has produced a variety of overlapping public spaces and multiple uses, including those specifically built or designed to support public life, and this diversity includes different forms of parks, sporting facilities, retail plazas and shopping malls, community centres, heritage and natural areas. With the increasing suburbanisation of Melbourne and the decentralisation of employment places and changing work practices, there has been:

- a new interest in public life in both the public and private realm associated with an increased commercialisation of leisure and a professionalisation of sport
- a parallel shift towards the security and enjoyment of home-based activities
- a renewed use of commercial and leisure precincts in central city areas
- a call to action for community environmentalists evidenced through community plantings and other volunteer schemes
- an increase in commercially-driven sporting and recreation activities that have seen a growth in private and public sporting and fitness venues
- an increase in commercial leisure through the provision of retail and entertainment centres
- new debates and discourse around the ideology of 'citizenship', 'the civic space' and 'the public sphere'
- the increasing privatization and commodification of public space particularly through a growth in public-private partnerships
- the linking of the culture of public space with commercial culture that has implications for both social identity and social control
- the expansion of leisure complexes ranging from multiplex cinemas, theme parks and leisure-retail centres
- a divide between commercial leisure 'haves' (disposable income but with less time) and 'have nots' (having time but less money)

As public life evolves with social and cultural change, new types of public and private spaces will be needed, and current ones will be transformed, revived or disposed of. There will be a need to be a different range of public spaces to meet the needs of different communities, lifestyle activities, and increasingly stratified and specialised forms of public life.

#### **4.2. Place Identity and Place-Making**

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The concept of place identity and place character is a shared but complex and multi-dimensional mental construction associated with such physical and psychological attributes as environmental aesthetics, community sentiment and identity, naturalness, change, uniqueness and affective responses to the environment – that emerge as salient dimensions collectively contributing to place character, but which may vary in emphasis from place to place and with particular groups of people.

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It is a frequently heard complaint that the 'character' of local environments is being lost due to incompatible development and associated environmental changes. Degradation and loss of local character as the effects of incremental, poorly controlled change, especially in the built environment, is occurring at ever increasing rates in metropolitan inner city and suburban areas, regional centres and coastal towns. Conservation and management of environmental features that reinforces a distinctive and positive urban character experience is one way of mitigating some of the negative psychological effects urban change can have on communities.

In response to these concerns the need for preserving a stable framework of familiar and valued environmental features, and statutory approaches for the expression of local place character has become an increasingly important concern of town planning practice (Untaru 2001).

**Place identity** embodies a broader situational perspective than urban character that realises more culturally relevant neighbourhood representations of the external world. It emphasises the generation of contextually relevant physical, social and cultural information for the planning and management of specific place settings. This place perspective will require extending theories developed under the universalistic perspective of urban and regional planning to the particular situations of places.

This new concept also parallels broader paradigmatic themes of post-modernism - such as 'place', 'sustainability', 'participatory democracy', 'social capital' and 'livability' that are now challenging the appropriateness of current regulatory systems, and address more contemporary issues such as the loss of sense of place, environmental integrity and local autonomy. It also sets broader frameworks for such concepts as community building and cultural regeneration that require, for example, consideration of context, image, efficiency and adaptability, vitality, amenity, richness and complexity, creativity, community and meaning.

Community and individual responses to their environment and localities relate primarily to cultural considerations of compatibility, appearance, aesthetics, ambience, character, memory and place identity. The urban, commercial, coastal, rural and bushland localities of Melbourne are seen to comprise a wide range of cultural settings, townscape and landscape variables and environmental resources.

Places will need to maintain both the hard infrastructure of streetscape quality and responsive urban design, as well as the soft infrastructure of landscape quality, cultural activities, public art, environments of charm and character. All places have a place identity, and in planning for a sense of place, it needs to be recognised that

- climate, natural vegetation and the subtle qualities of light are unique to a place
- physical factors such as the character of a place's streets, building types, signage and their construction materials all give a place a particular identity
- it is also the people, their activities their cultures, their modes of movement and transport that make places unique
- the nature of a place can be radically changed to create new place identities

There is also a growing concern with perceptual and aesthetic preferences, a desire for spatial and temporal continuity, and cultural perceptions of the 'meaning' of built form. For residential and commercial environments, there is an overall general preference for order, organisation, coherence, familiarity and compatibility, upkeep and naturalness.

**Place-making** will therefore require guidelines and processes for the creation of:

- a set of milieus for events and activities so that as behaviour settings they afford the sensory, formal and symbolic experiences that make places culturally relevant and pleasant to inhabit
- sequences of agreeable experiences, or pattern of places
- places having a clear conceptual framework that is the basis for the spatial geometry of places and the links between them

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The development of place-specific cultural strategies reflects the growing importance of the role of the arts in both economic development and place making. The indigenous artistic and cultural life of the city is also made part of the process of re-imagining the city and its regions to stress the quality of life and to attract investment. This has frequently led to urban development and regeneration strategies being based on consumption, with visitors and locals often being attracted by mixed use developments or cultural districts, with their synergy of offices, shops, cafes, restaurants and cultural facilities.

#### Place Identity and Place-Making: Key Issues/Challenges

- **An overriding concern for place-making that prioritizes the expression of cultural identity through cultural activities, urban and landscape design as an important and integral part of any wider urban regeneration, conservation or heritage strategy, land release and land allocation process, and the delivery of new residential environments**
- **The need for the MMS and Local Councils to identify priority areas for re-newed efforts for place-making that brings together creative and innovative activity for place-making processes**
- **Place-making practice that is grounded in cultural identity and cultural planning theory that is integrated with natural and built environment concerns in all contexts through policy and guidance**
- **Place-making prescription that is based on appraisal so as to value appraisal and design-related consultation as the only means to fully legitimise urban design policy and control**
- **The continual updating, monitoring and review of place-making strategies, guidance or policies to respond to cultural change, or to new circumstances and pressures (environmental, economic and social)**
- **The promotion of a contextual view of place making by recognising what is good, what is unique and what is distinctive about any local environment, giving those elements priority in any planning strategy, policy and guidance**

#### 4.3. Urban Design and Cultural Planning

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Cultural regeneration and place making have been used as tools for urban development, and are seen as a means of restoring and improving the quality of urban life through the enhancement and development of the unique characteristics of a place and its people. Cultural regeneration through as such things as mixed use development, environmental improvement schemes, the provision of public spaces and community facilities, public art and cultural activities help in the expression and development of the cultures of an area.

Cultural investigation and collaboration that inform urban design processes are integral and central to any process of cultural regeneration. This will require the notion of urban design to be firmly derived from an understanding of culture in both the general and particular sense, and to integrate closely to the practice of artistic, heritage and cultural activities in each place.

Urban design is spoken about in many different ways, but it broadly encompasses the physical design of the public domain, the patterns and relationships between spaces and buildings, the design management of development, the cultural and aesthetic qualities of place environments in their sensory, formal and symbolic dimensions. These different perspectives:

*“Instead of being a weakness...this may be a strength that allows (urban design) to develop and grow as a dynamic culture...urban design has developed incrementally in the UK [and similarly in Australia] from a narrow interest to a legitimate area of multi-disciplinary concern;*

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*and more recently into a broader cultural and educational base periodically aspiring to its own professional identity”.*

Kevin Murray 2000

Urban design is about:

- Improving urban quality and sustainability in the physical arrangement, appearance and functioning of urban areas, and their relationship to the natural environment
- Meeting people’s needs in a process of consultation and co-operation that brings together diverse groups, professionals and agencies
- Enhancing competitiveness and economic performance that aims for optimal quality, efficiency and effectiveness in the arrangement of urban infrastructure and services as these are dependent on success in these areas.

Urban design as a distinct specialty within town planning has been moving rapidly since the 1960s in the US, and more recently in the 1990s in the UK in response to urban regeneration programs, and in Australia more in connection of strategic master planning. Many cities have prepared urban design studies and plans that have attempted to go beyond the traditional planning concerns of land use and transportation, and deal with the character and quality of the large-scale environment. Many of the goals and methods of urban design today are a response to the failures of current planning processes that:

- demolished too much of the city leaving a barren urban landscape
- created a new-build housing market which produces standards –based products because such designs are cost-effective and maximises development land values
- failed to respect any sense of place or to build a sense of community by the over-dominance of car-borne travel, and the associated dominance of road design in the determination of housing layouts

Urban design plans in more recent years have generally demonstrated more concern for user needs, pedestrian access, preservation and re-use, landscape and public art design as ways to increase the identity and character of communities. These have also focused more on managing the quality and character of large areas through policies, standards, and design review.

An other urban design concern has been the identification of both the cultural and physical assets of environments – buildings, spaces, views, qualities, objects, activities or thematic elements – that should be maintained to sustain the cultural identity of localities and regions.

However there has been a lack of a common design cause between different professions and between state and local government resulting in a changing ideological positioning of successive governments and influence of different actors in the process.

#### **Urban Design and Cultural Planning: Key Issues/Challenges**

- ***Shifting the balance towards greater cultural planning and design intervention in both urban, landscape and architectural design towards greater status for both design policy and supplementary forms of design guidance***
- ***Emphasizing the importance of processes in design and cultural planning as a means to achieve better place outcomes on both the development and design control sides of the process***
- ***Promoting a broader agenda for urban design incorporating cultural, visual, social, spatial, functional and morphological dimensions, whilst prioritizing local cultural identities and distinctiveness as a means to preserve sense of place and design generally as a key component of sustainable development***

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- *Promoting a more explicit public sector role in securing design quality and a greater local determination of the design agenda, while design is identified as an underpinning theme of the planning system alongside cultural identity, mixed use and sustainability*
- *Emphasizing the importance of place and cultural context as the basis of design evaluation (and redefined as securing local distinctiveness), while the need to pursue design quality 'everywhere' - regardless of established quality – is accepted*
- *Encouraging local distinctiveness whilst guarding against over-prescription and control of design detail*
- *Moving beyond compromise solutions among landowners, housebuilders, planning and roads authorities towards 'design quality' as a non-negotiable prerequisite for the delivery of residential environments*
- *Emphasizing quality first, not efficiency first and demonstrating through the publication of best practice examples, the benefits of good residential design, and the means to deliver it through the planning process*
- *A move away from road-based standards and standard-based housing layouts as the layout of housing areas should emphasis the importance of places, landscapes and sustainability rather than of vehicle movement*

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#### SECTION 5 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR THE METROPOLITAN STRATEGY

The **CONCEPT OF CULTURE** encompasses the 'values, beliefs, languages, arts and sciences, traditions, institutions and ways of life by means of which individuals or groups express the meanings they give to their life and development' (UNESCO 1996).

These principles are based upon a perception of culture extending far beyond its popular usage as a term to signify the arts and heritage of a particular society.

A formal **DEFINITION** of the term culture would be as follows:

- **the social production and transmission of identities, meanings, knowledge, beliefs, values, aspirations, memories, purposes, attitudes and understanding**
- **the 'way of life' of a particular set of humans: customs, faiths and conventions; codes of manners, dress, cuisine, language, arts, science, technology, religion and rituals; norms and regulations of behaviour, traditions and institutions**

Therefore **IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CITY:**

- culture springs, first and foremost from human interaction and the daily exchanges between people
- making culture is a daily public event – not just in schools, in the media, in the 'culture houses', but in the streets, shops, trains and cafes
- by our behaviour we are known and this never-ending public process is a city's signature
- culture encourages the understanding of our **OWN PLACE IN HISTORY** and the world and in the daily patterns of life

**The CULTURAL IDENTITY of a City** is a far wider, and deeper, concept than simply being a signifier of outward appearance. The concept of cultural identity encompasses all the ways we use to remind ourselves and show others who we are.

- It is clearly about 'who we are' and 'where we think we came from'; they are also about 'where we are going'
- social identities are always a narrative of community and individual self-becoming. If you ask who I am, I will tell you a story. In this sense identities are increasingly less about 'roots' and more about 'routes'
- cultural identity manifests itself in the distinct landscape of a places and neighbourhoods, and it is important that planning for urban development takes into account both the unique social and physical characteristics
- culture is also expressed in the public life and the landscapes of the city, the region and its localities

**CULTURAL PLANNING** for development has a crucial role to play in cities and regions because it provides the basis and conditions for innovation, creativity, diversity and fundamentally the production of value in much more than the purely economic sense.

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- For cultural planning to form an integral part of metropolitan planning, the MMS must recognise the **CONNECTEDNESS** of a range of developments including:
  - the economic domain (the knowledge or information economy)
  - the socio-cultural domain (sense of identity, access, participation, belonging)
  - in the domain of infrastructure (place and its uses)
  - in the domain of environment (stewardship of natural and built resources)

#### **PROGRAMS: A PROGRAM-BASED CULTURAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR THE MMS WILL COMPRISE:**

1. **CULTURAL PLANNING processes** that adopt a more relational/ integrated view of cultural identity, social and cultural life which focuses on people actively and interactively constructing their worlds of the city, suburbs, neighbourhoods, places, localities or regions.

This will require:

- establishing **CULTURAL AUDIT SYSTEMS** that facilitate community planning and the development of cultural resource/asset inventories
  - emphasizing the importance of community processes in setting a **CULTURE FOR DEVELOPMENT** framework, and a means to achieve better **PLACE-FOCUSED OUTCOMES**
2. **PLACE-MAKING approaches** that recognise the expression of cultural identity through cultural activities and place-making processes and that need to be linked to cultural and social planning, and to place-making theory. This will require:
    - encouraging **LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS** whilst guarding against over-prescription and control of design detail
    - an emphasis on the importance of **PLACE AND CULTURAL CONTEXT** as the basis of design evaluation (and redefined as securing local distinctiveness)
    - promoting a broader agenda for urban design incorporating cultural, visual, social, spatial, functional and morphological dimensions, whilst prioritizing local cultural identities and distinctiveness as a means to preserve **A SENSE OF PLACE**
  3. **COMMUNITY DESIGN QUALITY** that allows the expression of cultural activities and the linkage of cultural identity to other social planning, urban and landscape design programs, and urban development projects so as to become an essential and more integral part of the metropolitan planning process. This will require:
    - Shifting the balance towards greater cultural planning and design intervention in both urban, landscape and architectural design
    - Promoting a more explicit public sector role in securing design quality and a greater **LOCAL DETERMINATION** of the design agenda, while design is identified as an underpinning theme of the planning system alongside cultural identity, mixed use and sustainability
    - Moving beyond **NEGOTIATED SOLUTIONS** among land owners, house builders, planning and roads authorities towards a higher level of design quality
    - emphasizing quality first, not efficiency first and demonstrating through the publication of **BEST PRACTICE** examples, the benefits of good civic and residential design

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4. A **METROPOLITAN CULTURAL POLICY** agenda that is targeted to generate the greatest contribution to the region's competitive position and prosperity. The focus for a metropolitan cultural policy and planning agenda will be the cultivation of interactivity within the metropolitan region and localities, and will facilitate:
- A city and region for economic vitality
  - The city and region for learning and knowledge development
  - The city and region for creativity and innovation
  - The city and region for collaborative planning

#### **PRINCIPLES: THE CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WILL EMBRACE THE FOLLOWING**

- "Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits" The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in particular The fundamental importance of Article 27
- The preservation of cultural heritage that links a community to its past. is a crucial component of identity and self- understanding
- Art plays an essential role in the life and development of the individual and society, and governments should protect, defend, and assist their artists and artistic freedom
- Linguistic and ethno-cultural diversity helps maintain and develop national and international cultural richness and traditions and reflects a commitment to common values and social cohesion
- Social and cultural fulfillment of the individual is a key element of human development and must be integral to sustainable development approaches
- Cultural exchange and cooperation are important tools in building human security and can build wider cultural allegiances in the global world
- Cultural diversity includes openness to a wide range of cultural influences and recognizes the importance of the production and distribution of local content
- Governments have a role to play in preserving and promoting cultural diversity and respect for cultural diversity is an important element of developing good governance

#### **OVERALL OBJECTIVES TO GOVERN THE CULTURAL FRAMEWORK**

- to safeguard freedom of expression and create genuine opportunities for all to use that freedom
- to work to create the opportunity for all to participate in cultural life and cultural experiences and to engage in creative activities of their own
- to promote cultural diversity, artistic renewal and quality, thereby counteracting the negative effects of commercialism
- to make it possible for culture to be a dynamic, challenging and independent force in society
- to preserve and use the cultural heritage
- to promote education
- to promote international cultural exchange and meetings between different cultures



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#### OUTCOMES: THIS CULTURAL FRAMEWORK WILL PROVIDE

1. A strategic context for urban regeneration, social renewal and community building that facilitates incremental improvements to places and regions and provides:
  - *strategic urban policies that cut through traditional departmental structures and link areas for synergistic reasons and mutual benefits*
  - *reputation- building initiatives (regionally and internationally) as a continuous observatory and laboratory for innovative urban development (socially, economically, ecologically and culturally)*
  - *an empowering climate for creative, innovative personalities, managers, scientists, bureaucrats and policy makers*
  
2. Broadened participation and decentralisation, through
  - *networks of creative and innovative enterprise agencies, both public and private, actively participating and influencing urban development*
  - *concerted efforts to strengthen (innovate) the creativity complexity and potential of a city*
  
3. Leadership, creativity and innovation initiatives that focus on:
  - *strengthening the creativity potential within a city and region in order to establish better conditions for a city, its city managers and its citizens to respond flexibly to structural and cultural change*
  
4. Wide-spread political consensus through cultural planning processes and systems that encourage
  - *an improved symbiotic relationship between the 'top-down' urban development policy and the 'bottom-up' local program initiatives*
  - *real on-the-ground/ owned outcomes*
  - *individuals and groups to experiment with new approaches to sustainable urban development*

#### 1. CULTURAL PLANNING PROGRAM INITIATIVES

**KEY OUTCOME AREAS:** *Cultural vitality, Cultural identity, Creativity, Innovation*

*A Creative City with a cultural vision for cultural vitality, the expression of cultural identity and diversity, that sustains its cultural heritage and promotes creativity, innovation, economic vitality, learning and knowledge, strategic alliances, and collaborative planning/ partnerships for community building and well-being.*

The development of a **CULTURAL PLANNING PROGRAM** will comprise:

- 1.1 **A CULTURAL AUDITING SYSTEM** to identify key local cultural resources and key opportunities for new creative enterprise The systematic processes within this programmatic approach will:

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- provide ways to mine and exploit the raw cultural resources
- identify the breadth/coverage of the cultural resource asset base
- align potential /opportunity within the asset base to form new creative enterprise alliances and negotiate ways that these assets can link with new technologies (e.g. traditional skills linked to new technologies )
- establish the ways that these attributes/ qualities can influence Place Identity positioning, and represent the unique, distinctive and particular elements that empower a City's image and reputation
- create Place Identity marketing/ branding themes
- create viable and vital cities with a strong cultural identity and visible place identity

Examples of specific program developments include

- **Design of public identification markers siting significant local community sites and buildings**
- **Community arts projects**
- **Public art initiatives**
- **Small Business Incubator schemes**
- **Cultural Tourism programs**

#### **1.2 An INCENTIVE SCHEME to enhance SOCIAL NETWORK SYSTEMS and the animation of public life in public places with an emphasis on facilitating and supporting diversity, equity, creativity and participation**

- Community Festival Programs to highlight the unique and distinctive local cultural identity themes
- Place-making Arts Programs to interpret and celebrate the significance of local icons and heritage markers/ features, as well as create new cultural expressions and signifiers

#### **1.3 PUBLIC HERITAGE PROGRAMS that reference the past with emphasis on the strong social and psychic significance to the roots of both our common and our diverse memories**

- Special Culturally specific Events/ Rituals/ Programs/ Exhibitions that present the tangible and intangible elements of our diverse local culture
- Heritage Walks, Tours, Interpretative Brochures

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## **2 PLACE-MAKING PROGRAM INITIATIVES**

**KEY OUTCOME AREAS:** The expression and valuation of cultural identity, cultural heritage, cultural diversity and community well being.

**THE SCOPE OF THE PLACE MAKING PROGRAM** will involve four (4) sub-programs:

- CULTURAL ACTIVITY AND PLACE INTEGRATION
- COMMUNITY EXPRESSION
- COMMUNITY INITIATIVE
- ACCESS, PARTICIPATION AND DIVERSITY

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2.1 The **CULTURAL ACTIVITY AND PLACE INTERGATION PROGRAM** will focus on place-based planning and design processes:

#### Contextual Appraisal

- place making approaches that are based on appraisal, through community value appraisal processes and design-related consultation techniques
- cultural identity initiatives that integrate the following place identity contexts: natural/ built, social/ physical, micro/ macro, tangible/intangible
- local artistic expressions of a City's cultural identity through a range of cultural activities, including community art, urban art and landscape design initiatives
- contextual place making processes that recognise what is good, what is unique and what is distinctive about particular local environment
- referencing Melbourne's history and culture through the identification of local places that evoke connections with past community events, stimulate feelings of local pride, and engender a sense of community association and belonging
- identifying the social and cultural values of public spaces through referencing the significance of their sensory, formal and symbolic forms

#### Design Collaboration

- building from the **recognition of** different forms of **local knowledge**, the value of the **social capital within social networks**, the significance of the resources of **institutional capacity** through which new initiatives can be taken rapidly and legitimately; urban planning not as 'building places' but as fostering institutional capacity enterprises for **ongoing 'place-making' activities** within territorial political communities
- design developments that evolve from and **integrate public perceptions** and understandings relating to:
  - the significance of community meeting places, spaces and buildings
  - heritage values, including intangible and tangible heritage elements
  - social values inherent in the public realm
  - "image" of the place, its relationship to orientation (legibility), accessibility, relevant, public attachment and behaviour
  - social value implications within the public realm
  - perceptual and aesthetic preferences and the desire for unity and continuity
  - cultural perceptions of the "meaning" of built form that give evidence to preferences. for residential and commercial environments in regard to order, organisation, coherence, familiarity and compatibility, upkeep and naturalness

#### Place Making Integration

- the integration of social, physical, environmental, historical and cultural identity values, qualities and elements that engage

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- climate topography, natural vegetation and the subtle qualities of light, scale, mass and form that are unique to a place
- physical factors such as the character of a place's streets, building types, signage and their construction materials that give a place a particular identity
- the people, their activities their diverse cultures, their modes of movement and transport routes that are specific and place-focused
- social animations/ traditions that provide an ambience and signature
- the inherent nature of a place that can be radically re-invented and/ or changed to create new place identities

#### 2.2 The **COMMUNITY EXPRESSION PROGRAM** will focus on local cultural identity through:

- cultural audit activities and place-making processes
- web site developments and multi media strategies
- linking cultural and social planning to urban design theory

#### 2.3 The **COMMUNITY INITIATIVE PROGRAM** will promote and enhance cultural identity with program developments that include:

- **Urban Iconography Studies**
- **Festivals with Artist in community residence opportunities** –to develop local cultural/ social /historical identity themes for performance, exhibition and design
- **Marketing and Merchandizing strategies** to promote Metro Melbourne's local cultural resources to visitors and residents

#### 2.4 The **ACCESS, PARTICIPATION AND DIVERSITY PROGRAM** will emphasise local involvement (at all socio- economic levels):

- **Place making community participation programs**
- **Community Cultural Centres that provide opportunities for creativity , exhibition and performance combined with retail outlets and commercial functions**
- **Mentorships/internships**
- **Community use of schools facilities**
- **Enterprise programs for Indigenous Arts/Crafts** distribution, sales and marketing
- **Heritage trails/ walks**
- **Recycling obsolete facilities** such as old factories, warehouses, courthouses, railway stations
- **Housing the Arts** – combining creative enterprises within the same facility as co-operative arrangements

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#### 3. COMMUNITY DESIGN QUALITY: INITIATIVES

##### KEY OUTCOME AREAS:

High quality living environments for public places and residential areas.

The expression of community values and a more enriched and safer public life and civic consciousness

The development of local and regional identities, historical continuity, cultural significance and healthy living environments

The COMMUNITY DESIGN QUALITY PROGRAM will comprise:

##### 3.1 Improved guidelines for COMMUNITY DESIGN AND URBAN DESIGN for:

- Townscape and Streetscape design that emphasizes the visual and heritage qualities of the built form/buildings in various settings, the spaces they create, their relationship with natural features and how these can be controlled to best visual and aesthetic effect
- Exterior and interior building designs for flexibility, adaptability and sustainability
- Open Space and Public realm animation with applications to the social and cultural use of the public and semi-public spaces and streets, and how such areas can be managed to promote an attractive and safe environment, efficient circulation and a full range of culturally-relevant and pleasant social experiences
- Ecologically sustainability development –reflecting the impacts on the natural environment, both visible and invisible
- An education program providing regular information on principles of architecture and urban design for planners, Councillors, and others in the development industry

##### 3.2 Introduce new approaches to a place management and governance through CROSS-GOVERNMENT PLANNING targeting program development for:

- **Disadvantaged areas**
- **Areas in need of re-generation and re-imaging**
- Education and training including **traineeships, mentorships, incubator programs and leadership development schemes**

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#### 4. METROPOLITAN CULTURAL POLICY INITIATIVES

##### KEY OUTCOME AREAS:

Economic development  
Innovation and viability  
Learning and Knowledge development  
Collaborative planning

##### 4.1 THE CITY AND REGION FOR ECONOMIC VITALITY THROUGH:

- promoting the contribution of culture to the vitality and wellbeing of cities and urban areas, particularly relating to:
  - Public/ Private infrastructure developments for cultural participation, engagement and consumption that generates other economic activity such as performances, events, screenings, concerts, etc
  - the evening economic benefits and the multiplier affect combining with the patterns of the working day (by maintaining late night public transport, lighting, policing)
  - The cultural animation of the public realm by programming events across a range of venues
- Re-invigorating the value-added potential of commercial and cultural industries such as the media, the music industries, commercial photography, graphic design, publishing, fashion
- Supporting the urban public realm as a social and cultural, as well as a physical resource
- Cultural planning informing the overall process of urban design and environmental improvement
- Place-marketing strategies focusing on-building civic pride and attracting investment thereby creating opportunities for local people to influence the articulation of local enterprises

##### 4.2 THE CITY AND REGION FOR LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT through:

- establishing a vision of the city as a place which contains a diversity of educational institutions
- enhancing the concept of a city as a transmitter of leaning
- promoting the city itself is an 'object of leaning', and thus the city can be learnt about and changed

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- developing integrated planning processes for learning, in order to create relationships between formal/ non-formal and more flexible systems of education

#### **4.3 THE CITY AND REGION FOR CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION THROUGH:**

- Broadening the training base for different professions that is frequently too narrow to make creative connections
- improving the awareness and knowledge about advanced thinking and best practice across related fields such as the arts, urban design, organisational management and technology
- strengthening corporate strategic planning and cross- discipline thinking in local government
- removing obstacles and constraints for the involvement of a broader cross-section of people with creative ideas: artists, business people, academics, local media, journalists
- supporting the establishment of creative projects to be locally driven and with local authorities providing:
  - grants for innovation and pilot projects are made available
  - bureaucratic procedures that are simplified and decision making cycle shortened

#### **4.4 THE CITY FOR COLLABORATIVE METROPOLITAN PLANNING through :**

- fashioning an overall metropolitan planning framework that incorporates collaborative approaches to cultural development within a strategic planning context for future urban development
- making steady, incremental improvements to places and regions, with urban management processes designed over a longer-time-frame
- re-structuring local political and organisational systems to support broadened approaches to collaborative planning

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