



TCPA Submission to Growth Areas Authority

General Comments

Governance of the Growth Corridor Plans and Implementation Process

The eight principles enunciated in Chapter 2 - Principles Underpinning The Growth Corridor Plans, whilst laudable, are aspirational.

Detailed plans and regulations should mandate upon the relevant governing bodies (government departments, statutory bodies, and municipalities) and land developers these principles in action in fine detail in the decisions and implementation of land subdivisions.

Who/what organisations other than the GAA are to have ownership of the Growth Corridor Plans? For example, was the Department of Transport involved in the design of the corridor plans?

We believe that, at a minimum, the following stakeholders should take responsibility for, and legally commit to implementing, certain aspects of the Growth Corridor plans, particularly for transport and other infrastructure and services.

- Department of Transport
- Department of Education
- Department of Human Services
- Local Government

Development should not proceed unless all stakeholders (such as the above) have agreed to the plans and have committed to their implementation.

It is essential to define accountability, relationships and direction of controls between the Minister for Planning (to whom the GAA reports), the GAA, and the Dept of Planning & Community Development (DPCD). That is, what are to be the effective and accountable executive lines of reporting, communication, and responsibility within the Minister's office and the DPCD and GAA., so as to achieve the objectives in measured definition.

What should be the effective governing relationships between GAA and municipal councils and between the Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) and Municipally based local Planning Schemes (MPSs) and their Zones and respective overlays as determined in the Planning & Environment Act?

What scope is there for decision changes and rulings via VCAT?

What studies or assumptions have been made in respect of the impact of growth corridor development on the businesses, services and travel patterns of the nearby urban areas.

We recommend that new (or amended) KPIs and post-development audits be embedded within the legislative schedules, thence PSPs, MPSs and respective planning zone overlays, to ensure

sustainable outcomes. Our preference is for spatial and quantitative governance rules that are visible to all, and publicly accountable.

Strategic planning and decision-making must take into account long-term major and discontinuous trend changes, such as, and especially, peak oil and carbon emissions reduction targets, with consequence to sustainability of transport modes. In other words, the plans should not be premised on universal car mobility.

Costs

There should be a better business case approach to these "growth area" assessments, evaluation and approval, i.e., inclusion of ALL costs. What is necessary, who is responsible to provide, and estimate costs to provide a comprehensive living environment that would be considered sustainable.

1. strategic inclusion of ALL infrastructure required to support a complete development and living area for families must be strongly assigned to the responsibility of ALL developers
2. obligations and associated costs must be thoroughly articulated and explicitly assigned to the developers
3. as with standard RFTs, estimated costs for EVERYTHING must be clearly laid out such that all stakeholders can realise their obligation and the resultant dwellings' sale prices. These costs should predict the sales price for the houses, cost of the libraries, schools, transport, roads, parks, etc. This rule should be part of the legislative regulations.

This includes all the infrastructure in the response document to realise the

COMPLETE development of the growth area; all stakeholders (including future home buyers) should be aware of the these costs and the implications.

Performance Measurement

The Growth Corridor Plan is underpinned by eight principles. This provides a well needed development framework; however, it does not have any weight.

Written with only aspirational ideas and endeavours, there is no accountability or any metrics provided which will ensure that success (or otherwise) is measured. Why is this important? It is essential if lessons for future developments are to be learned.

Whether it is called Key Performance Indicators, Score Card or any other name, if no measurement is applied nothing will be learned, with the effect of repeating the same mistakes over and over or potentially worse: removing a successful component from the framework.

The principles outlined can be compared to a set of critical success factors (CSF's) underpinning the Growth Corridor Plan's strategy. The next step is to link these CSF's to a measurable number which in the medium to long term provides a diagnostic tool for other development. If you don't measure it, you don't know if it's broken – or if it works. If you don't measure it you cannot benchmark the outcomes of the development to the original eight principles and/or to the best in class development in Australia and in the world.

The TCPA strongly recommends a set of metrics be included with each of the principles, which can be reviewed during and after each development.

As an example, the aspirational average

density of 15 dwellings per hectare can be tabulated as below. This exercise should be done for all principles and is not limited to one metric per principle.

METRICS: Average Density (Local Neighbourhood)		
<15 dwellings per hectare	15 dwellings per hectare	>15 dwellings per hectare

In addition to KPIs, what role could restructured state levies and taxes, e.g. restructuring of developer contribution levies and rates, play in steering developers and approving authorities to design subdivisions for maximum choice of PT and non-motorised transport?

Is there strategic benefit in using financial “carrots-and-sticks” to drive sustainability in planning and development actions, e.g. to avoid the roll-out of enclosed/gated housing estates?

Structure

How did GAA select their chosen model of growth area structuring?

Road Network and Transport

More prescription and thus accountability is required at and below the 1.6 km and 800 m indicative street grid structure, to ensure no barriers exist to non-motorised travel and to ensure maximum access to and by bus and other PT services: i.e. grids must be permeable.

It should be a high priority in designing road easements and reservations to install bus ways (separated and/or priority bus

lanes), with provision for light rail at a later time. This should include provision for high capacity, high-speed regional and orbital bus or light rail, as well as local services.

Reservations should be created for through-traffic bypass roads parallel to high activity strip streets (see below).

In lower density areas, scope for demand-responsive transit (DRT) such as fixed-guideway personal rapid transit and on-road personal public transport (PPT) should be investigated.

Locate car-share and bike-share stations at town centres and main transport interchanges.

Is the grid pattern of roads shown in the residential development areas meant to be a firm plan or is it just indicative? Do the roads forming the grid serve multiple purposes, such as access to abutting land as well as through traffic, or are the functions intended to be separated?

We propose that a street and road network be designed together with a complementary land use pattern.

Objectives

- Separate through traffic from local (access) traffic
- Optimum solar orientation of buildings
- Land-use pattern that is suited to staged development
- Legible street/road network
- Realistic low-impact alternatives to motor car for local access

Differentiate between Roads and Streets

- Roads: primary purpose is local and regional traffic movement. Abutting land uses are low intensity (including open space, sports fields, etc).

- Streets: primary purpose is access to buildings and other abutting land uses.
- Streets have lower speed limit than roads.

Principal/Major Activity Street:

- Linear activity centre, modelled on Melbourne's inner suburban shopping streets such as Chapel Street or Sydney Road
- Abutting land uses are mixed, people-intensive uses such as apartments, offices, shops, clinics, libraries, etc.
- Preferred east-west orientation allows buildings to have northerly aspect for solar gain in winter – no west-facing windows
- High frequency bus services in dedicated bus lanes
- Car share and bike share stations at intervals along the street
- 40 km/hr speed limit
- Intersects rail line at a station (e.g. at Craigieburn or Cranbourne)

Residential Streets

- Main land use is low-rise (1, 2 or 3-storey) housing
- Preferred east-west orientation allows houses to have northerly aspect.
- 40 km/h speed limit

Collector Roads

- Connect residential streets to activity streets and to major road network
- North-south orientation
- Abutting land uses could include primary schools and kindergartens, childcare centres, etc*
- Separate bicycle paths and footpaths
- Local bus services
- 50 km/hr speed limit

Greenways

- Like collector roads but without motorised traffic

Major Roads

- Provide for through traffic and access to industrial areas, sports grounds and other low-intensity land uses, and to external trip generators such as suburban CADs (Broadmeadows,

Werribee and Dandenong) and Melbourne Airport

- Connect area to freeways and expressways
- Bicycle paths separated from vehicular traffic lanes

Pedestrian & cyclist access to all roads (except segregated expressways)

- The 1.6 km and 800 metre spacing formulae for roads and collector roads in the GAA guidelines are noted.
- All building or off-street site frontages should be accessible within 400 metres travelled by foot or bicycle to a scheduled bus or within 600 metres of a passenger access stop on a rail public transport route, in the absence of the bus mode. As a concessionary guideline in difficult subdivision precincts (see immediately below), this rule could be eased to ensure that at least 90% of building and site frontage access points are within 400 metres of a bus route as travelled on bicycle or foot , etc.
- Thus, rectangular or rectilinear street and road networks are required in all Precinct Structure Plans and local subdivisions, and cul-de-sac street structures be discouraged by planning and state and municipal tax rating formulae.
- Where cul-de-sacs alignments are used in subdivisions, say in proximity to natural obstacles, sufficient public right-of-ways (ROWs) will be set into the street subdivision to provide pedestrian or bicycle access to public transport streets and routes.

* Children over 10 years of age generally understand and can access public transport independently of others. Thus, secondary school students are able to travel independently of adults. Therefore secondary schools should be placed within walking distance to intersections of principal or significant local bus services and rail routes. This implies their co-location with town centres. Careful thought is warranted in locating primary schools as young children

generally rely on adults for travel unless they are within walking distance or safe cycling routes to their schools. Again, locating primary schools close enough to one bus route would encourage parents to visit these schools by public transport.

The corridor plans imply that some rail lines that are currently beyond the metropolitan train system will be electrified (for example, to Melton), and new stations will be built (for example, at Donnybrook).

Are there firm plans for electrified suburban services to be extended into the growth corridors?

Residential Density

Is there scope to have different density structures in various areas?

Higher density housing (> 20 dwellings per hectare) could be accommodated along mixed-use main streets as well as clustered around town centres. This arrangement allows for efficient public transport services to run along the main street, with travel demand evenly spread.

Town Centres

Is the indicated preference for “centric” point designs for activity centres the best way to go? Have other designs such as the linear activity centre been considered?

We agree that major town centres and secondary schools should be located on at least one Principal Public Transport Network route. Ideally, local town centres and primary schools should also be located close to public transport.

Whilst there are benefits from locating major activity centres at or near railway stations, bus patronage could be more evenly spread by situating town centres at intervals along a bus route, with a train station or other traffic generator near the mid-point of the route (as is proposed in the case of Craigieburn Road, for example).

Consider the practical virtue of a high density transit corridor concept in developing activity centres: inner Melbourne’s established activity strips, e.g. Chapel St, Glenferrie Rd, Brunswick St, and Sydney Road, provide greater site areas for development and provide greater choice of activities.

What are the attributes of a Major Town Centre? A town centre should be the location for many non-retail land uses, such as:

- Apartments
- Council offices
- Commercial offices
- Medical and dental facilities
- Childcare centre
- Library
- Art gallery
- Cinema
- Theatre
- Church
- Town hall
- Meeting rooms
- Market place
- Town square
- Park
- Bus station

A town centre could take a number of spatial forms, such as:

- Linear (based on inner Melbourne’s strip shopping centres)
- Arranged on a grid of local streets or pedestrian thoroughfares (e.g. Dandenong)
- Arranged around a public square or squares (e.g. Adelaide)
- A combination of the above

Landscape

Local landscape features such as hills and creeks should be preserved as open space (principle applied in Canberra).

Views from the public domain of distant landscape features such as hills or mountains (or tall buildings?) should be preserved, and ideally such features should be focal points of streets.

Amenity

Our inclination would be to leave wider buffers around freeways and railways and build at a higher density.

Comments on Specific Corridor Plans

Northern Growth Corridor

Corridor is severely fragmented by Hume Freeway, railway lines and Outer Metropolitan Ring Road (OMR), particularly around Donnybrook. Land north of the OMR is not ideal for residential development. The narrow wedge of land between Hume Freeway and the rail line, and north of the OMR, seems to be particularly unsuitable, as it would be exposed to traffic or train noise from three sides.

What is the catchment area for the Mickleham town centre?

Craigieburn Road could be developed as two linear activity centres, west of the railway and east of the Hume freeway.

South Eastern Growth Corridor

This corridor is suited to east-west Activity Streets that connect with stations on the

Cranbourne rail line.

Western Growth Corridor

The area around and to the east of Rockbank station suffers from a similar problem to the Donnybrook area: it is fragmented by actual or planned freeways and railways. The narrow wedge of land north of Rockbank station and south of the freeway seems to be particularly unsuitable for residential development (notwithstanding that it has already been partially developed). The whole of the wedge between the railway and the freeway is beyond walking distance from the proposed activity centres.

The Toolern activity centre has no catchment to its north, which is partially developed industrial land. This centre might be better located further south.

TCPA Activities for 2012 Q1

The committee (24/2/12) resolved to work on the following projects:

1. Submit a brief submission to the City of Stonnington regarding the expansion of Chadstone shopping centre (deadline 29/2/12);
2. Respond to the Planning Minister's proposal for an expanded CBD;
3. Pursue the objective of an integrated public transport interchange at Southland;
4. Prepare a specification for a new TCPA website.
5. Examine the possibility of TCPA having a role in the Sustainable Living Festival (2013).

Other activities may be added to the list from time to time.