



***Town and Country Planning Association
Incorporated***

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<http://www.tcpa.org.au/>

31 July 2017

Mr John Alexander OAM, MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Alexander

**Re: House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities
 *Inquiry into the Australian Government's role in the development of cities.***

Please find on the following pages the submission of the Town and Country Planning Association Inc. to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities' *Inquiry into the Australian Government's role in the development of cities.*

Yours sincerely

Peter Hill
Honorary Secretary
Town and Country Planning Association



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**Submission to the
House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Infrastructure, Transport and Cities**

**Inquiry into the Australian Government's role in the
development of cities**

*“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only
when, they are created by everybody”*

Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities (1961) New York: Random House.

31 July 2017

Introduction

The Town and Country Planning Association Inc. (TCPA) thanks the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities for the opportunity to make this submission.

The TCPA's submission responds to the Terms of Reference for both sub-inquiries:

1. Sustainability transitions in existing cities; and
2. Growing new and transitioning existing sustainable cities and towns

Background – TCPA

The TCPA is a politically independent not-for-profit association incorporated in Victoria. Its members and supporters represent a wide cross-section of land use and transport planning expertise and interests.

Origins

TCPA began life as the Victorian Town Planning and Parks Association, which was formed in Melbourne in 1914, with Dr J. W. (later Sir James) Barrett the first president. The name was later changed to the Town and Country Planning Association. Its objects were “to give the town a bit of the country, and the country a bit of the town, to secure better housing, to protect existing parks, to safeguard native animals and plants and erect memorials to explorers”. The Association adopted a new constitution and was incorporated in 1994.

Objectives

The objectives of the TCPA include:

- To promote the application of principles of ecological sustainability to existing and new settlements and urban regeneration;
- To encourage the practice of environmental planning;
- To advocate the establishment of an effective strategic planning framework;
- To motivate, educate and inspire popular support for environmental planning;

A Charter for Planning

The TCPA's philosophy towards the planning and regulation of land use and related public functions is described in *A Charter for Planning*, adopted in 1997 (TCPA Charter).

The TCPA Charter sets out the planning goals, ethical values and principles that the TCPA believes should underpin all urban and rural planning decisions, policies and strategies.

(See TCPA website at <http://tcpa.org.au/other-documents/>)

In brief, the TCPA Charter outlines:

- Planning Goals for
 - Efficiency
 - Social equity
 - Ecological sustainability
 - Quality of life
 - Amenity
 - Conservation of nature
 - Conservation of cultural significance
 - Quality of design

- Planning Ethics addressing
 - Common interest
 - Property equity
 - Consistency
 - Public input and accountability
 - Barriers to participation
 - Transparency
 - Freedom from political interference
 - Overriding commitments, including honouring national and international commitments
 - Compensation for demonstrable loss
 - Unearned gains
 - Amenity
- Planning Principles for
 - Legislation
 - Policy development
 - The development of plans
 - Objective assessment
 - Information rights
 - The appeal process
 - Environmental and social impact assessment
 - Government intervention
 - Financial assessment
 - Public assets
- Planning Policies for
 - Environmental standards
 - Targets
 - Performance standards
 - Conservation and rehabilitation of natural areas
 - Containment of urban spread
 - Minimisation of travel
 - Integration of land use and transport
 - Maintenance of open space
 - Long term strategy planning

In terms of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, the TCPA believes that that the goals, values and principles apply across the urban hierarchy, whether that be to major metropolitan areas, regional cities and towns or remote settlements.

TCPA activities

The TCPA advocates for an integrated strategic approach to planning of land use and transport for ecological sustainability and a healthy living environment.

Its activities include:

- writing submissions to government on urban planning matters
- alerting members to events such as public forums and lectures related to urban planning
- alerting members to news items related to urban planning
- writing commentary and opinion articles

More detail and links to various publications and activities can be viewed on the TCPA website

<http://tcpa.org.au/>

TCPA Publications relevant to the Inquiry

The TCPA would draw the Inquiry's particular attention to following commentary and submission publications since 2007, which address matters contained in its Terms of Reference as they apply to land use, transport, environment, economics and legislation.

Urban form

- *Urban Form and Access to Jobs*, 10 October 2014
<http://tcpa.org.au/urban-form-and-access-to-jobs/>

Metropolitan planning strategies

<http://tcpa.org.au/tcpa-submissions/>

- *Submission to Plan Melbourne 2016 Refresh Discussion Paper* December 2015
- *Submission to Metropolitan Planning Strategy Discussion Paper* March 2013
- *Submission to City of Port Phillip Montague Precinct Structure Plan* July 2012
- *Submission re Amendment C154 (Chadstone Shopping Centre) to Stonnington Planning Scheme* Feb 2012
- *Submission to Melbourne 2030 Audit* Sep 2007

Transport planning

<http://tcpa.org.au/tcpa-submissions/>

- *Submission to Infrastructure Victoria on Transport Network Pricing* Feb 2017
- *Submission to Victorian Government Transport Legislation Review* Dec 2007

Terms of Reference – Response

As noted previously, the TCPA believes that the goals, values and principles apply across the urban hierarchy, whether that be to major metropolitan areas, regional cities and towns or remote settlements. Equally, the TCPA considers that the matters outlined in the Inquiry's Terms of Reference apply across the urban hierarchy, regardless of whether those urban areas are well-established, in transition or emerging/new.

- Addressing global “best practice”
- Development and master planning of regional centres and communities
- Investment in regional centres and infrastructure
- Business location in regional centres
- Urbanisation to achieve more balanced regional development
- New settlement development in areas located away from existing infrastructure.

The Inquiry is urged to consider the key questions in that context.

Sustainable urban form:

Access to jobs, schools, services and family

As noted in *Urban Form and Access to Jobs*, access to jobs for people living in the outer suburbs of Melbourne is a perennial topic of discussion. There are two options for providing better access to jobs in the outer suburbs.

- Locate more jobs in the outer suburbs.
- Provide better public transport to connect the outer suburbs to city centre jobs.

A city centre is that it offers a much larger number and variety of jobs than can be found in any one suburban location. Companies cluster in the city centre because it is the most accessible part of the metropolitan area, and because synergies result from the close proximity of similar or complementary businesses. It is argued that employees could more easily change jobs without the upheaval of moving house or making difficult cross-suburban commutes.

Dispersing city centre jobs throughout the suburbs to designated activity centres has been the focus of metropolitan strategies over the last few decades with the emergence of designated employment, education and medical activity centres and enhancement of the public transport network (road and rail) to improve accessibility.

A city in which jobs are dispersed evenly throughout the metropolitan area needs a grid network of roads and public transport. With the exception of the tram network in the inner south eastern suburbs, Melbourne's fixed rail public transport is radial. There is an urgent need to increase the capacity of the rail network and to run more feeder bus services in the suburbs.

This line of argument presumes that the primary criterion for housing location is ease of journey to work and that all household members in the workforce work in the same or similar location. However, other factors such as proximity to schools and elderly family members can have priority in different phases of a household life.

Successful Infrastructure Planning – Infrastructure Victoria Learning from Others

Planning, providing, maintaining and enhancing a society's infrastructure is an important and ongoing challenge. Many towns, cities, regions, states and nations are grappling with effective infrastructure provision in the face of shifting demographics, changing demands for services and environmental, economic and technological trends or disruptions.

In developing a 30-year infrastructure strategy, Infrastructure Victoria undertook a review of how other jurisdictions identify important challenges, prioritise actions to prepare for and respond to these challenges, and improve their responses over the long term. The review examined different approaches to long-term infrastructure planning, but not the detailed decision-making for, or implementation of, specific projects.

The review, "*Learning from others: Applying infrastructure planning lessons from other jurisdictions*", (Infrastructure Victoria, February 2016), suggested the following conditions, practices and mindsets are important to support effective infrastructure planning:

- Build consensus through collaboration with the community, industry and all levels of government.
- Establish a long-term plan to guide coordination and prioritisation, and provide certainty.
- Focus on how infrastructure can improve social, economic and environmental outcomes.
- Establish and maintain clear governance structures to prioritise, not politicise.
- Gather solid evidence to improve analysis, transparency and accountability.
- Report results to inform public debate and maintain momentum towards a desired future.

The TCPA committee considered the Infrastructure Victoria review and resolved on 1st April 2016 to endorse the six key elements for successful infrastructure planning. Those elements, although presented nearly a decade after, are consistent with the TCPA Charter.

The Infrastructure Victoria review is recommended to the Inquiry and can be viewed at <http://www.infrastructurevictoria.com.au/sites/default/files/files/Learning%20from%20others.pdf>

Melbourne's strategic planning history

Refer: Department for Environment, Land, Water and Planning
<https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/planning-for-melbourne>

Melbourne was founded in 1835 and was officially declared a city by Queen Victoria in 1847. Today, Melbourne is consistently recognised as one of the world's most liveable cities and has a long history of strategic planning.

Strategic planning began with Robert Hoddle's 1837 street layout, known as the 'Hoddle grid'. This layout is what we know today as Melbourne's central business district and has influenced the layout of modern day Melbourne.

By the early 1910s, concerns about the dilapidated parts of the city prompted major public inquiries by the Joint Select Committee on the Housing of the People in the Metropolis (1913-14) and a Royal Commission in 1915. These events led to the development of Melbourne's first strategic plan in 1929. The Plan, named the *Plan for General Development of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission*, proposed a planning scheme to prevent 'misuse' of land and protect property values. It also highlighted traffic congestion, the distribution of recreational open space and the haphazard intermingling of land uses.

The 1929 plan was not implemented and it was only after the Second World War in the early 1950s that the planning system as we know it today commenced with the [*Melbourne Metropolitan Planning Scheme 1954 – Report*](#) and its associated [*Survey and Analysis*](#) volume.

Over the sixty years since this planning effort began more than 21 policies or plans have been produced. The TCPA has actively contributed metropolitan strategies since its inception in 1914.

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 is the metropolitan planning strategy to manage Melbourne's growth and change over the next three decades.

Integrating long-term land use, infrastructure and transport planning, *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* sets out the strategy for supporting jobs and growth, while building on Melbourne's legacy of distinctiveness, liveability and sustainability.

The strategy contributes to the overall vision for the state, and includes links with regional Victoria.

The updated plan builds on the extensive work and consultation underpinning *Plan Melbourne 2014* and previous metropolitan strategies and guiding policy documents including *Melbourne 2030* and *Melbourne@5million*.

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 will be given statutory effect through amendments to the State Planning Policy Framework within the Victoria Planning Provisions.

Regional Victoria

Regional Victoria is home to 25% of Victoria's population. By 2051, the population of Victoria's regions is expected to grow from 1.5 million to 2.2 million, with Melbourne growing from 4.5 million to almost 8 million. However, growth in regional Victoria will not be evenly spread. Between 2011 and 2031, regional Victoria's largest local government areas by population—Greater Geelong, Greater Bendigo and Ballarat—are projected to account for 50 per cent of all population growth outside Melbourne. Growth in peri-urban areas beyond metropolitan Melbourne will attract about 32 per cent of regional Victoria's population in the same period.

Overall, regional Victoria is growing but not as fast as Melbourne. If current trends continue, the proportion of Victorians living outside of Melbourne will decline. In some towns and regions, communities are actively looking for opportunities to reverse population decline in order to keep local businesses, services and community organisations. If regional Victoria is to share in the benefits of population growth and take on a greater proportion of residential and jobs growth, then we need to plan for better connections to infrastructure and services.

Planning for growth in regional Victoria must be led locally and acknowledge the diverse range of opportunities and challenges that exist in different locations.

TCPA acknowledges the need to consider the development of urban centres in regional Victoria

Victoria's Regional Statement

Victoria's Regional Statement addresses contribution regional Victoria makes to Victoria's economic strength and way of life.

The Statement recognises:

- The need for job creation, providing a better start for young people and supporting a brighter future for families and communities.
- Every region is different, from:
 - dry land to irrigated farming;
 - big cities to small towns; and
 - economies reliant on food and fibre, to tourism, manufacturing and natural resources.
- Some regions are experiencing significant population growth, while others are facing population adjustment and decline.
- That regional communities have their own character, their own aspirations, and their own common sense understanding of the challenges and opportunities that they face.

The Statement follows an extensive independent [*Review of regional economic development and service delivery*](#) led by former Victorian Premier, John Brumby. The objective of the Review was to give regional communities a say about their priorities for the future and the role government can play in delivering these.

The Review was a very important step in developing this Regional Statement. However, in addition to responding to the Review's recommendations, the Statement goes well beyond the Review's focus on economic development and acknowledges the changes impacting on regional communities and the urgent need to tackle pockets of entrenched disadvantage and disparity in some parts of Victoria.

The Statement will deliver a louder voice for regional communities in government decision-making across all areas of policy and service delivery including:

- Better Healthcare
- Education and Training
- Jobs and Growth
- Quality of life
- Safer Regional Communities
- Transport and Infrastructure

The Regional Statement sets a new approach that will change the way government works with regional Victorians. Nine new [*Regional Partnerships*](#) will be established across the State that will direct regional priorities and look at the strategic priorities regional communities have identified themselves – across economic, social and environmental issues – and oversee implementation of the top priorities on a year-by-year basis.

The Statement sets out the next steps and flags future directions for regional development policy. <http://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/regional-partnerships/regional-statement>

Regional Growth Plans

Regional growth plans provide broad direction for land use and development across regional Victoria. They also provide more detailed planning frameworks for key regional centres.

Each of regional Victoria's eight regions is covered by a regional growth plan. Follow the links below for information on each region:

- [*Central Highlands*](#)
- [*G21 - Geelong Region Alliance*](#)
- [*Gippsland*](#)

- [Great South Coast](#)
- [Hume](#)
- [Loddon Mallee North](#)
- [Loddon Mallee South](#)
- [Wimmera Southern Mallee](#)



The regional growth plans, together with the new metropolitan planning strategy, *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*, provide strategic land use plans for Victoria.

The regional growth plans have been developed in a partnership with local government and state agencies and authorities through consultation with the community and key stakeholders.

Regional growth plans will be reviewed every four to six years.

(Reference: <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/regional-growth-plans>)

Role for the Commonwealth in reforming regulatory or other barriers

COAG Ministerial councils

COAG Councils support COAG and allow it to focus on key national priorities. Councils provide a forum for intergovernmental collaboration and decision-making. They progress COAG priorities and referrals of work, along with other issues of national significance. In addition, the Councils develop policy reforms and other advice for COAG consideration, and oversee the delivery and review of reforms agreed by COAG.

There are eight COAG Councils:

- Federal Financial Relations Council
- Disability Reform Council
- Transport and Infrastructure Council
- Energy Council
- Industry and Skills Council
- Law, Crime and Community Safety Council
- Education Council



- Health Council.

However, none of these councils will be able to address matters that are likely to or should emerge from the Inquiry and its report.

TCPA supports the need for the Commonwealth to support collaboration between jurisdictions, across all three tiers of government and non-government organisations.

TCPA urges the Inquiry to consider the need for:

- A COAG Cities & Urban Development Ministerial Council involving representation by state and territory treasurers and planning ministers, and local government.
- A Cities & Urban Development NGO Roundtable to ensure business and community groups have a direct voice to government on issues involving our cities.
- A Department of Cities & Urban Development tasked with developing and co-ordinating policy which involves urban outcomes.

Conclusion

A bi-partisan commitment to planning and delivering better cities; to working collaboratively with the states and territories, and with industry, to prioritise and fund the infrastructure we need for jobs, growth and a better way of life is now more urgent than ever.

The TCPA thanks the Standing Committee for the opportunity to make this submission to the Inquiry and trust that it will assist its deliberations.

Peter Hill
Honorary Secretary
Town and Country Planning Association Inc.