

# There's something about....

## Community

*Planning for healthy, well functioning communities on  
the urban fringes of our cities*

*December 2011*



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## Executive Summary

Melbourne is, and is destined to remain, essentially a suburban city where the majority of the population choose to live in detached housing on suburban blocks. Equally, it is also arguable that this choice favouring detached dwellings is constrained by limited alternatives housing supply options, particularly in middle to outer suburban areas. By most measures, and within the context of Australia's underlying wealth that permits high levels of private consumption to enable this urban form to function, the suburbs provides residents with an enviable standard of living. Increasingly, new development occurring at the urban fringe of Melbourne and other Australian capital cities is occurring as master planned communities where national urban development companies are able to plan large scale, integrated "towns" that seek to meet triple bottom line outcomes. At the same time, the very nature of these estates and the resident profiles mean that vulnerabilities exist for some residents that are above metropolitan averages.

- High levels of mortgage commitments make households vulnerable to increases in interest rates or variability in household incomes through unemployment or an inability to work for other reasons.
- Heavy dependencies on private motor vehicles expose households to increases in fuel prices.
- Long commutes to employment impact on the quality of family life.
- The very "newness" of the estates means that community and commercial services are not available or readily accessible.

Melbourne also continues to be a rapidly growing city with new household formation driven by both population growth and other demographic factors such as increased longevity. A majority, or some 60%, of new housing will continue to be built in Growth Areas, at the outer edges of Melbourne, mainly in master planned residential estates.

The critical public policy challenge arising from this feature of urban development is how to create sustainable and well functioning "communities" in Growth Areas given the rapid rate of urban development and in the face of additional challenges associated with this very dispersed urban form. Simple geography (distances to work, services and social support networks) coupled with a range of economic factors associated with transport, the challenge of localised job creation and the poor economies of scale arising from low urban densities define some of the barriers to developing sustainable communities.

Nearly all the players within the public policy discourse, including the larger private sector developers, increasingly demonstrate a strong understanding of the importance of proper planning for these master planned communities. The best of this planning is most often reflected in the spatial organisation of the physical environment, including community infrastructure such as schools, parks and community centres. It is apparent that over the past several years, as evidenced by a plethora of recent research, there is intensifying interest in

improving planning for new outer suburban residential estates by State and Local Government, private sector developers, the Not For Profit sector, academic institutions, a range of State Government instrumentalities (e.g. Growth Areas Authority) and special interest groups (e.g. National Growth Areas Alliance). Even the Federal Government, which has been notoriously absent from debates concerning the urban development issue for major cities that accommodate over 75% of Australia's population, is registering an interest.

What the available literature and this project highlights is that two forms of planning and/or investment remain inadequate:

1. larger scale regional infrastructure such as the public transport system where the investment levels are high and often intergenerational in nature, and
2. the Social Infrastructure underpinning sustainable communities incorporating early "community making" work that helps build community through it's formative period and the availability of adequate and timely provision of community support services to vulnerable sections of a local community during the early period of development.

This project is primarily concerned with the second form of planning and provision of Social Infrastructure. Given the acknowledged success of establishing effective benchmarks for the delivery of community infrastructure such as community centres in Growth Areas as established in "Planning for Community Infrastructure" – a project initiated by the Growth Area Councils, there is considerable interest in investigating a benchmark system for Social Infrastructure. In this regard Social Infrastructure is defined as

***those processes, programs, events, services, networks and activities that support individuals and families meet their social and personal needs in a particular place through personal growth, social interaction, social services support and community development.***

The review of the available literature from the both the Australian and international experience has not revealed any established benchmark system or set of objectives standards for Social Infrastructure, as defined in this report, that could be replicated in the case of the outer urban Melbourne.

Where benchmarks are referred to, Social Infrastructure is equated with the "hard" or physical Community Infrastructure such as community centres, neighbourhood centres and the like. It has become evident through this project that in establishing substantial new residential areas at Melbourne's urban edge far greater attention could be given to designing for social sustainability and not just physical infrastructure and the lessons broadly gained designing for the built environment could be applied to Social Infrastructure. Planning for the provision of Community Infrastructure to service new residential estates has been assisted by the standards and benchmarks set down in "Planning for Community Infrastructure". However several Councils raise the concern that these standards are not matched by funding mechanisms to deliver the benchmarked facilities. Importantly, the point is made strongly in the literature and through interviews

that designing for social sustainability is as much about the process as it is about an “end” plan. It is about partnerships between people in organisations in order to build durable professional relationships- which can be challenging and requires constant work. (Young Foundation, 2010)

Equally, there is ample evidence in the literature, supported through interviews with Local Government, to now know what characterises success and failure in the establishment of new residential estates. This provides a solid guide for those in government charged with the responsibility for planning socially sustainable communities in Growth Areas.

Overwhelmingly, early and sustained engagement is seen to be critical in building socially sustainable communities. It is apparent that this early engagement should occur on a number of fronts – early engagement with any existing or neighbouring community to reveal local insights; early and ongoing engagement between government and the developer about the nature of the intended buying market for residential estate being developed; early and sustained engagement with new residents as they buy, build and move in; and early and focussed engagement with potential providers of services (education, health, social support) to broker service delivery partnerships. It then appears axiomatic that having skilled personnel available to participate in this early engagement is fundamental to success. Having the benefit of dedicated staff working “on the ground” in developing communities is part of the answer. However these staff are identified, be it Community Development or Community Strengthening, may not be that important, what is important is that in the formative stages of the community developing they act as a bridge between people in the community; a bridge for resources (activities, programs and support) that might be needed by those people; and a bridge to the other levels of government and institutions that provide the physical infrastructure and services. As the various elements of “community” are better established over time then the importance of this support lessens.

Practitioners at both Local Government level and among sections of the NFP sector support the establishment of a benchmarking system, broadly similar to that developed to guide the development of Community Infrastructure, where particular population numbers would trigger the provision of agreed Social Infrastructure programs and services. To this end, and at a minimum for each new Growth Area urban development project, either at a large scale by a single developer or aggregated across a number of smaller developments, there is merit in developing a comprehensive Social Interagency Infrastructure and Social Services Delivery Plan including both the hard Community Infrastructure of the buildings but also the integrated and complementary social services system that should be provided to the community as it grows.

Precinct Structure Plans as undertaken by the Growth Areas Authority that seek to provide a “blueprint” for future urban development provide a detailed level of foresight and planning into the spatial arrangement and design of the built and natural environment for future residential estates. It appears opportune to propose a similar concept for Social Infrastructure in the form of a

comprehensive Social Interagency Infrastructure and Social Services Delivery Plan that develops contemporaneously with the Precinct Structure Plan.

## Introduction

In a world where more people now live in cities than those who live in rural areas, how cities function has never been more important to future prosperity and sustainability. This is fundamentally true for Australia's cities and Melbourne whose organic development, especially in post Second World War Australia, has created a highly dispersed suburban form that is arguably inherently inefficient and that potentially erodes a number of the economy-of-scale benefits of cities. This dispersed urban form, while clearly preferred by large sections of the Melbourne population, challenges some of the assumptions that living in a city normally brings - about the advantages of transport efficiency and proximity to jobs, facilities, social and economic networks and services. Such a sprawling city, largely reliant on private transport, is heavily dependent on cheap or at least affordable energy costs and a concomitant dispersal of employment, retail and essential service provision to limit both travel distances and travel time. Without this dispersal of economic and social opportunity the result is road congestion; unacceptable travel times and high private transport costs; poor or no access to needed services; social isolation; and the general closing off of life opportunities that compounds social, health and mental health problems for vulnerable residents. As well articulated by the UK's Young Foundation when considering what needs to occur in planning for future residential communities:

*Although there is widespread understanding of the physical and environmental challenges involved in creating new settlements, there is still much to be learnt, from the UK and internationally, about what makes some communities succeed and others fail.*

*Skills in physical design are well in advance of skills in social design, and in the past we have seen that when pressure is high to deliver high numbers of new homes, concern about wider social issues can become lower priority. There is a fear now that in the drive for numbers, and amidst the difficulties of brokering and managing relationships between public bodies and developers, broader issues of social success may be overlooked. This is partly because building resident engagement and cohesive inclusive communities is genuinely challenging, but also because putting what is known into practice is difficult and requires working across professional and agency boundaries.*

*However if new homes do not become successful communities, the risk for the future grows: of managing the consequences of failure, and associated pressures on the public purse. Social design is an issue of public value as well as consumer satisfaction. It is important to find ways to avoid the mistakes of the past.*

*There is a need to build a practical understanding of what can be done to encourage the right mix of social engagement, networks, mutual support, public institutions, leadership and shared identities, as well as the other key factors that contribute to success. (Young Foundation, 2010)*



The Growth Areas, comprising those parts of six municipalities at Melbourne's urban edges where the bulk of the Greenfield urban development is taking place, is a frontier where the balance between the positive lifestyle benefits that new suburban residential estates brings is traded against the negative aspects of extended travel time and associated costs to access employment and a range of other social and cultural needs. Every level of government, the service provision sector, the urban development industry and, most of all, the people who live in these communities have a vital interest in making Growth Areas work well. After all, Growth Areas are integral and growing components of our cities and the costs of failure are borne not only by the individuals and families who are directly affected but by society at large which picks up the cost of failure – the costs of family breakdown, the costs of avoidable mental health conditions, the costs of other crisis interventions and even the costs of future urban renewal. Success is cheaper than failure, but the cost of success is not free and it is not accidental. Local and international research and the experience of on-the-ground practitioners outlines many of the problems and required solutions to making Growth Areas work for their communities, their governments and all the diverse sets of interests involved. The clear lessons are that the costs are in early and adequate investment in not only the hard infrastructure of roads, community centres, schools, parks and engineered works that are the highly visible signs of a community but, as this study argues, as much in the softer and less tangible Social Infrastructure of providing needed social support services in a timely fashion and helping fledgling communities form the basis of their future communities by connecting and resourcing people at a neighbourhood level.

The six Growth Area Councils comprise Wyndham, Melton, Hume, Whittlesea, Casey and Cardinia. They include Wyndham as the fastest growing municipality in Australia.

There are several other municipalities that sit at the edge of Metropolitan Melbourne including Mornington Peninsula, Yarra Ranges and Nillumbik that accommodate new residential development at varying levels. While these are grouped with the six Growth Area Councils as making up the nine Interface Councils (providing the interface between urban and rural contexts) they do not have the extent of rapid growth of new residential estates to warrant inclusion in the definition of Growth Areas but share some of the difficulties of timely and adequate services and infrastructure raised in this report.

The Shire of Mitchell to Melbourne's north is increasingly accommodating new residential developments in towns such as Wallan and Beveridge that orient toward employment in Melbourne. Mitchell has been identified by the State Government as having substantial tracts of land suitable for eventual inclusion in an expanded Melbourne and therefore there has been some early discussion about whether Mitchell should be included as a Growth Area. It has not been included in this study.

This report responds to concerns that inadequate resources are devoted to enabling communities to properly establish and develop, given the rapid pace of urban development and the time and resource pressures that outer suburban households face. It argues that improved but not necessarily excessive

investment is required in what can be described broadly as Community Development - working in and with communities to assist local people build individual skills, positive community interactions and community capacity.

At the same time, consistent concerns have been expressed that a number of important State Government funded programs that potentially provide timely interventions are not available to residents of Growth Areas requiring them. This is due to either a general lack of funding, outdated funding models, cultural issues within service provider organisations or inadequate service delivery space. This report describes these service oriented and developmental supports to emerging communities as Social Infrastructure. The term “Social Infrastructure” is used to define **those processes, programs, events, services, networks and activities that support individuals and families meet their social and personal needs in a particular place through personal growth, social interaction, social services support and community development.**

A relevant context in which these issues are considered is a capitalised market value of a typical new residential estate of 2,500 lots being in the excess of \$1 billion, which reflects a \$400,000 average cost per dwelling.

Australia lives the paradox of a vast continent that at the same time is one of the most urbanised societies on earth. Our cities embody this paradox by spreading themselves out to take advantage of a seemingly endless supply of land. While our cities continue the international trend toward more urbanised population centres, it does so mainly outwards, not upwards, compared to most other cities worldwide. Melbourne epitomises this feature of Australian cities with nearly a one hundred kilometre breadth, urban edge to urban edge. Clearly, such an urban form is economically and environmentally, if not socially, inefficient.

*Cities function less efficiently as they expand and reduce their average population density. Urban efficiency is usually defined in terms of travel patterns, infrastructure and energy use, and social and environmental costs including water use, congestion costs and the costs of sprawl (Buxton, Summer 2010/2011)*

Equally we must also respond to the fact that the lifestyle offered by this dispersed urban form is a clear preference for many people. The suburban lifestyle that so many Australians live is actively chosen and the “trade offs” in terms of time and monetary costs spent travelling is considered as being outweighed by greater housing choice and affordability and the high localised living amenity that is present in these new outer suburbs. Many surveys, studies and indices of “liveability” support the preference by many people who “vote with their feet and their wallets” to buy and live in these areas. (The Economist, 2011)(Property Council of Australia, 2011)

This report attempts to avoid using the description “community” too loosely as a euphemism for any new housing being developed at Melbourne’s urban edge. It is a central theme of the literature and supported by interviews carried out for this report that the essential challenge regarding the functioning of cities is how the transformation occurs from simple agglomerations of housing into sustainable communities - with all the attendant connotations of localised social

networks, accessible services and economic opportunity. The evidence strongly points to some learned lessons that characterise successful communities. It is not the intention of this report to examine all these lessons in depth as some, such as the importance of building a strong local economy, is beyond the limited scope of this study, although these will be touched on. But this report will focus on the factors of “social infrastructure” that are often overlooked. More specifically it examines

- the role community development or community strengthening programs and initiatives can play in new communities forming in Growth Areas that will enable them to become sustainable and resilient communities, and whether benchmarks exist that can guide decision makers in resourcing such initiatives, and
- the adequacy and timeliness of community support services, mostly at least partly funded by State Government, and whether objective benchmarks or standards are available to assist in the more timely provision of these services. This extends to introducing several identified issues for service delivery organisations including the adequacy and appropriateness of service delivery points, organisational capacity and adaptability to cater for rapidly developing Growth Areas, and funding models imposed by State Government.

This report acts as an introduction to these issues. It is proposed that the local perspectives provided by Local Government and the evidence and theory gleaned through the available literature will be further tested and amplified through a number of case studies in a subsequent stage of research. This research will then inform the development of a framework and a set of standards for the planning and provision of Social Infrastructure in Growth Areas and a review of the application of these standards to a “hypothetical growth area”.

## Defining Terms – Social Infrastructure, Governance, Community and Social Capital

### ***Social Infrastructure***

The term “Social Infrastructure” in this study is used to define **those processes, programs, events, services, networks and activities that support individuals and families meet their social needs in a particular place through personal growth, social interaction and community development.**

It includes the facilities and other locations where these activities occur but only through the utility of these facilities and locations. That is, only when they are utilised for social outcomes and therefore not confusing facilities such as community centres as ends in themselves. It also recognises that many other locations such as sports complexes, shopping precincts and other sites in the general community (e.g. local revegetation projects) provide opportunities for both formal and informal interactions between people that contribute to building a sense of community.

In rapidly growing residential estates at Melbourne’s metropolitan urban edge, at the most formative stage of establishing the basis for their future communities, Social Infrastructure arguably is the oil on the cogs of the physical machinery of the constructed or built environment. The concept of Social Infrastructure recognises that buildings of themselves do not and cannot create a community. It is people building relationships between each other that define a community.

The Macquarie Dictionary includes in its definition of Infrastructure “– *the basic framework or underlying foundation (as of an organisation or a system).*” A key implication arising from this definition is that the notion of an “underlying foundation” can and should be applied to the social dimensions of a place as well as the economic or physical elements. This is in the context of a common usage of the term Infrastructure being often used to describe the economic, built or “hard” environment, particularly the engineered works of roads, footpaths, water and electricity supply and sewerage services. Such a focus can mask the underlying purpose for “why” hard infrastructure is constructed which can really only be to support the people who are living and working in that place. Hard infrastructure is a pre-condition for a community but a community is not created by hard infrastructure. A community is created by people using the built environment to interact in both the economic and social spheres.

As Shakespeare puts it in his play *Coriolanus*:

*“What is the city but the people?”* (Shakespeare)

This is an important distinction from other looser definitions of Social Infrastructure that vary as widely as equating community centres and other

facilities with Social Infrastructure to the term referring to the construction of airports, water filter plants, hospitals and water and sewer mains renewal (Lend Lease, 2011)

For public policy makers at the different levels of government and those practitioners involved in the planning and delivery of services at the local level, an understanding of a range of other terms and concepts that are used in describing what the functions of Social Infrastructure are, is useful. Key terms and concepts include community, the focus on “place”, social capital, community capacity building, community strengthening and learning communities, cities and regions.

### ***Community in Place***

A review of the substantial body of literature around the concept of “community” and our own intuitive understanding of what it means to live in a particular location confirms that a community is essentially the people who live in a particular place, interacting in their pursuit of the fulfilment of their social and economic needs. Therefore, fundamental to creating “community” is the provision of complementary social and economic infrastructure.

Among the definitions of community described in the literature at least one makes the valid point that while the term “community” is most often imbued with positive feelings of belonging and mutual support, not all communities have or intend to have positive outcomes for all people. One definition describes community as “*relationships of support and/or interaction between people that might be based on place, shared interest or identity. These relations are often geographically based and may be of different strengths and they are not always positive.*” (P.Williams, 2009) The fact that communities are not all positive can be true of communities that form to deny access to outsiders, such as gated residential estates that deliberately seek to limit general public access and maintain a sense of exclusivity that is often motivated by concerns about property values and personal safety and security.

For the purposes of this report the relationship between place and community is important as there is an interest in how communities evolve in places undergoing rapid development in outer metropolitan areas. In the context of urban development in outer or fringe metropolitan areas a community is “place based” as it applies to the localised geographic space that people can use conveniently to meet their daily needs. This includes concepts such as local neighbourhoods in new housing estates, open space and the natural environment and local convenience shopping. And as a “place based” community it then naturally draws in Local Government, the level of government primarily concerned with planning and providing for many of the social and economic needs of a particular place.

This link between place and community is well expressed in the South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031:

*Sense of place is found in the distinctive features of an area’s physical landscape, built environment, population characteristics, economy, arts and*

*cultural heritage. It is also based upon the relationships, connections and networks between the people who live and work in a community. A sense of belonging to and identifying with a place is an essential part of building a community.* (Department of Local Government and Planning, Queensland, 2009)

Local Councils also agree on the importance of availability of such services in new growth areas for new residents with a support system that evolves as the community grows. This support system is best able to develop, be responsive to and effective with a community that is strong and resilient. Strengthening the community is an integral element underpinning Social Infrastructure. In this regard community strengthening is defined as:

*“Any sustained effort to increase the connectedness, active engagement and partnership among members of the community, community groups and organisations in order to enhance social, economic and environmental objectives.”* (Cosidine, 2005)

Social capital is yet another term used in current discourse that seeks to describe what contributes to building strong communities. As variously defined, social capital at a community level it is about *“trust and social cohesion that leads to shared norms and values, connection to place and involvement in dense social networks.”* (Lewis, 2010)

There is significant commonality around many of the terms used in describing “community” that includes being people based; interactions occurring between people; sharing common objectives; and is often is about a place. None of the terms define community as just a place.

## **Governance**

Governance and community capacity building are further terms that address what it is required to assist in establishing and enhancing the development of community. Community capacity describes the skills to develop the range of capacities that are required across a community to allow that community to be sustainable over time. Skills in forming and managing the groups and organisations that are the expression of the shared effort in the provision of services needed to support the fabric of the day to day life in a community, such as the childcare centres, parent support networks. In this context, and often in international development circles, a significant element in community capacity is *governance*, that is, who makes what decisions about what matters and who is affected by these decisions. And more importantly how can local residents or more generally citizens participate meaningfully in the decisions that affect them and their local community. Governance is a critical element of building a sustainable community in either a formal sense through the role of a recognised level of government within the Australian political hierarchy or more broadly about engaging through or in spite of power relations at a localised community level that affect resource allocations - about who gets what. Use of the term “power relations” imply that not all people are equal in having full access to influence outcomes, so great effort is required to allow all parts of the

community to be given a voice, with particular attention to traditionally disempowered sections of a community.

Successful communities foster local involvement in the community governance of many aspects of their community life.

*Governance refers to the process of making decisions which define the expectations, systems and management, in this case, of a neighbourhood. It is influenced by the local institutions and agencies which deliver services to an area and should also be shaped by local people.*

*A route to good governance is to ensure that decision making is accountable - in other words that it really reflects the wishes of those being governed. It is good accountability that makes it possible for others who are not living in a place to be involved and to do a job on behalf of residents, while at the same time making sure that what they are doing is endorsed by local people. Good governance also needs to be transparent, so that people are clear how decisions are made and what evidence and justifications are used to inform the decision-making process.*

*Good community governance is a process that, at its best, is totally bound up with engagement of residents. Residents should have opportunities both to be involved with decision-making processes in a range of ways - from being informed of decisions, to being consulted, to actually helping to make decisions. Strong resident engagement processes are important for offering local people information and involvement in making decisions for their local area. (The Young Foundation)*

The literature also distinguishes between different forms of governance including formal and informal structures that exist within community, government and corporate spheres. At the community level

*[Community governance may be defined as] community level management and decision-making that is undertaken by, with, or on behalf of a community, by a group of community stakeholders. The focus on 'community' rather than on a corporation, organisation, local government or the public sector is the distinguishing feature of community governance (Totikidis, 2005)*

Notably, all the six Growth Area Councils involved in this study seek community participation either in the direct practical management of local resources such as community centres, Neighbourhood Houses or open space or through engaging in established consultative processes that assist with decision *forming* that feeds into Local Government decision *making* at the Council level. A feature of resilient and sustainable communities is the extent that local people are active participants in the decision making that impact on their local area. (The Young Foundation)

Local Government in Victoria is ideally placed and empowered to promote community engagement and participation.

## Developing “Community” in Growth Areas

### ***Introduction***

This project identified several consistent themes across both the theory and practice that can inform how sustainable communities in outer suburban Growth Areas should be planned and resourced, beyond the simple construction of facilities. These themes were evident in both the Australian and international arenas and several relevant studies and reports are used below to assist understanding of what public policy initiatives can be implemented.

The three studies and reports cited identify a number of consistent themes that are notably all “people centred” and revolve around:

- engendering engagement and participation at the community level that has the potential to lead to empowerment of the community in the governance of local resources and opportunities.
- the importance of excellent urban design across all aspects of the built and natural environment and, in particular, the role of design in facilitating interactions between community members.
- economic development that facilitate employment pathways to enable economic and social participation.

While the interrelationship between these three themes is critical, this report focuses mainly on engendering engagement and participation at the community level and how a sense of community develops in new residential estates in Growth Areas. It is concluded that having personnel “on the ground” is important to foster community level interactions and facilitate dialogue between local residents and decision makers who control other resources such as funding for programs so that local needs are able to be articulated and acted on.

The Work, Home and Community research project by the Centre for Work and Life, University of South Australia, was conducted between 2006 and 2009 and provides highly informative findings. The project undertook research in ten Australian suburbs, examining how workers and residents put together their work, home and communities in four master planned communities, four “traditional” suburbs adjacent to these planned communities and two inner urban, harbour-side master planned communities. The studied communities included Victorian examples although under research ethics these are not specifically identified. The project identified particular characteristics that were found to assist in the creation of stronger local communities and these are detailed in Appendix 2 to this report. Critically, among the controllable characteristics identified i.e. those can be actively influenced by public policy initiatives, were:

- Excellent urban design including people oriented streetscapes and the walkable distribution of community services, facilities and public “third” spaces that promote personal interactions between residents



- Community-makers – the presence of people who strive to connect with others, including the provision of support to stimulate such types of people to create connections;
- Funding for relationship-making activities like local festivals and celebrations, mothers' groups;
- Formal support for particular "life-cycle" related events for example, for new mothers, new residents, retirees, or teenagers;

In the international research, the Future Communities UK project, a collaborative project between government and the NFP sector designed to assist practitioners working in new residential estates, it was investigated as to what has worked to successfully build "sustainable communities of tomorrow". The range of what were considered to be key ingredients included

1. Residents in control: governance, engagement and accountability
2. Early Engagement of Future and Existing Residents
3. Facilitating Social Networks
4. Choosing a Stewardship Approach
5. Community Ownership and the Management of Assets
6. Maintaining High Quality Public Space
7. Promoting Environmentally Friendly Behaviours
8. Achieving Good Design
9. Economic Development
10. Community Builders

These ingredients are detailed in Appendix 3.

A third instructive analysis at the local level recently completed by the City of Whittlesea was an overview report that described the benefits of an early Community Development (CD) worker in Growth Areas based on their "on the ground" experience. This is more fully described by Whittlesea as Appendix 4 but in summary it concludes that:

*There are many benefits for having a CD worker in a community in the early stages of its development and whilst this is not an exhaustive list of all those, it does outline some of the major benefits:*

- *Builds the foundation and culture of the community*
- *Provide links for new residents early in development*
- *A central contact*
- *Information sharing*
- *Community engagement*
- *Maximise limited resources and avoid duplication*
- *Improvements for planning and infrastructure*

- *Maximise opportunities to be innovative and creative*
- *Support advocacy*
- *Support emerging leadership and community groups*
- *Support and promote business/employment opportunities and needs*

A fourth example of the key characteristics that indicate successful early intervention programs is a meta analysis undertaken for the Federal Department of the impact of community-based prevention and early intervention action. These findings reveal

- *a clear predominance of programs either based in schools or working through schools as a community resource*
- *best practice in prevention and early intervention and best practice in community building have much in common*
- *inheritance of social capital requires that it is actively 'passed on' between generations and nurtured by older members of communities*
- *community involvement and participation is a factor in all community-based programs*
- *government support for programs is appropriate to provide seed money but also early intervention programs that encourage community building are cost-effective*
- *families are a key element to strong communities because they are a primary building block of the social fabric* (Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009)

### ***Meshing New and Established Areas***

A consistent theme that has been identified throughout the local and international literature and reinforced in interviews with several of the Growth Area Councils is where new residential estates develop in close proximity to established areas, such as the expansion of towns such as Pakenham. This can place considerable additional pressure on local decision makers such as Councils to mediate between attempting to meet the needs of residents in new residential estates who often have higher expectations of the provision of infrastructure, facilities and services more aligned to inner metropolitan areas and the demands of residents of established areas who have traditionally struggled to have resources available.

Often the resources that established communities have are the result of considerable local effort and fundraising. The tensions and resentments that can develop can stand in the way of the established community, with many inherent strengths of networks, smoothing the way for new residents in new residential estates. An “us and them” mentality can develop which impairs what should be

an asset in building and integrating new residents into local networks. This feeling of “us and them” is exacerbated when new estates, because of more stringent modern urban planning requirements, already are or, just as importantly perceived to be, better supplied with community infrastructure in the form of developed open space, services and facilities. (Bennett.J with Hetherington.D, 2006)

*In growth areas, the idea of building new suburbs next to older communities which have perhaps formed an identity as a semi-rural township, can evoke uncertain relationships between the old and new. This emerged especially in areas where new estates have received new services, shops and community centres, and older areas are at risk of feeling neglected (Robson, 2010)*

From a solutions point of view it is important that the needs of existing communities are not ignored with a focus solely on new residential estates.

### ***Growth Area Councils Developing “Community”***

In interviews with the six Growth Area Councils it was evident that they offered or supported a broad range of Community Development type activities in their Growth Areas including

- **Direct community development** programs such as the Cardinia Council Community Strengthening Officer program that *resource local community organisations requiring advice and guidance on management issues, project development and access to general information.*) (Cardinia City Council)
- **Community Centre based community strengthening** such as those offered by Wyndham Council that are primarily provided through multi purpose community centres to *provide community spaces for classes, functions, meetings, recreation activities and events. .... facilities include community rooms, a computer room, a meeting/consulting room, fully equipped kitchen, small BBQ area, disabled facilities and a baby change area.* (Wyndham City Council). Some Community Centres across the six Growth Area Councils also offer outreach programs into the community where it is recognised that residents can’t or won’t access activities in a centre.
- **Community Grants programs** that provide funding to support local organisations to offer “in community” development programs. Wide ranging community grants programs are provided by all six Growth Area Councils and are acknowledged as a proven method to enable local organisations to deliver services and initiatives to local neighbourhoods. For example the City of Whittlesea offers a Community Development grants program to *provide funding for projects and events that facilitate community cohesion and strengthening....*(Whittlesea City Council)
- **Events** including street parties, local festivals or more incidental events

such as community revegetation projects are supported by all six Councils to foster building local connections. The philosophy behind events is articulated by the Shire of Melton as *Festivals and events have been used by communities throughout the ages as a celebration of cultural values and beliefs. By conducting festivals and events these values and beliefs are sustained and reinforced and community ties are strengthened.* (Melton City Council) (Melton City Council)

All the Growth Area Councils include some degree of Community Development practice although these activities may be titled differently in different Councils e.g. Community Strengthening at Cardinia. The City of Casey demonstrates their approach through the following adopted Council Policy. The policy is included at Appendix 5.

*The City of Casey is committed to the community development process through the implementation of a set of Community Development Principles and recognition of community development in Council plans and strategies...*

*... a team of community development professionals (Community Development Team) was established to support the process of community development. The Community Development Team works in the Casey Community as well as with other Council departments to ensure community development processes are recognised and implemented into appropriate plans, projects and programs. Examples of areas the Community Development Team oversees are access and equity, community grants and awards, global friendship, community activities, multicultural and indigenous issues, support for committees and community groups and volunteers.*

While the provision of Community Development services is an accepted response to nurture a sense of community in a particular place it often does not achieve mainstream recognition or support, possibly because it lacks the durable presence of something as tangible as a building. Also as a preventative or formative mechanism to strengthen communities Community Development does not have the evaluative benefit of the close “cause and effect” measurement that often attracts “core” funding support over time. However, notably the benefits of Community Development have been recognised in one of the most significant pieces of research on new urban communities, the Work, Home and Community research project. This research found

*deeper social connection was also evident in some planned communities especially where “community makers” were present – that is, people who went out of their way to create community events or exchanges that built relationships. In some cases, the developer or local government allocated resources that fuelled the activities of informal community makers, or formally funded initiatives that brought people together (for example, new arrivals meetings, mothers’ groups, and community events). The addition of these resources created community connections which many residents valued highly.* (Williams.P, 2009)

In conclusion, it is apparent through the literature that strong evidence exists that establishing successful new communities in Growth Areas has been significantly assisted by the work and early involvement of people and resources that nurture engagement and communication between residents, government, the developers and other community organisations; and assists in recognising and supporting emergent community leadership, activities and programs, and community level governance. This broad role is variously described as Community Development, Community Strengthening or Community Making (or even Place Making). Equally, the Community Infrastructure of community centres, Neighbourhood Houses and sports and recreation facilities provide a critical platform from which this community engagement and participation can physically take place. The two parts (Community Development and Community Infrastructure) are highly complementary.

As described by the City of Redland, SE Queensland in their Social Infrastructure Strategy:

*In the past, social infrastructure planning has largely focused on creating lists of facilities that are needed based on population numbers – for example one meeting room per 9,000 residents. The Redlands Social Infrastructure Strategy takes into account benchmarking based planning, but adds to it by considering a broader picture of social infrastructure. The strategy does not propose to develop meeting rooms as such, but rather to create multi-purpose facilities and revitalise existing halls and centres to create community hubs that are used for meetings, activities, community development programs, service delivery, disaster recovery and other purposes depending on further community engagement.*

*The strategy has also adopted a more considered approach to social infrastructure provision, based on the need to establish sound and sustainable community structures to support the provision of services and programs to a local community or client group. Resources may be initially targeted to undertake community development work, prior to investment in services or a new or enhanced facility. (Redland City Council)*

## The Roles of Government and the Private Sector

### **1. Introduction**

There are many stakeholders who have a particular interest in the creation of sustainable communities with Local and State Governments arguably the levels of government with the most critical interest and impact, and with the Commonwealth Government now showing some interest if not concern. The developers of new residential estates have, at a minimum, a commercial imperative to ensure that their residential product remains desirable to new buyers. The not-for-profit sector is integrally involved in the provision of a range of community support services for rapidly developing Growth Areas, often within a framework of State Government funding programs, and deals with the adverse outcomes of poorly functioning residential estates. It also goes without saying that residents themselves have the overriding interest, that is, in living satisfying and complete lives in sustainable communities. All these sectors currently play some part in the building of “community” that takes place in Growth Areas. But the key issue is whether the parts that are played are properly understood and defined, equitably shared, adequately funded or delivered in a timely fashion that builds community capacity at pace with the physical construction of the residential estate.

In recent times there is a rush of interest in understanding the functioning of new residential communities developing in outer suburban areas. This interest has resulted in Inquiries and the commissioning of manifold research projects to better understand how to improve planning and service provision. Various sectors are now demonstrating interest including differing levels of government but primarily Local Government and the Victorian State Government along with some of the State Government’s statutory organisations (e.g. the Growth Areas Authority, VicUrban [now rebadged as Places Victoria) and VicHealth; the Not For Profit sector including peak bodies (VCOSS), philanthropic organisations and some of the large NFPs involved in service planning and delivery; academic institutions; and some of the larger and more progressive developers.

The literature around what is needed to build sustainable and resilient communities in Growth Areas, coupled with the views expressed by Local Government; all indicate that a level of the planning and provision for the necessary building blocks for sustainable communities is currently being put in place. However, what is evident is that this is often patchy, inadequately resourced, not timely, too focussed on “hard” infrastructure and, in totality, does not yet give the best opportunity for communities in Growth Areas to establish the elements of what will make them fully functioning communities.

## **2. Local Government**

Local Government in Victoria has a direct legislative charter to advocate for, plan and provide services and community facilities to meet the needs of local communities. It is specifically charged with *“fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life”*. (Local Government Act 1989 Appendix 1) So in relation to building sustainable communities in the new residential estates being developed in outer suburban areas, Local Government has a fundamental and enduring interest. This is played out at one level or another in almost everything Councils do in the planning, provision and advocacy for a myriad of services, community facilities and physical infrastructure. It also manifests in Councils being concerned with what could be held as more intangible, but nonetheless, critical aspects of building “community” - empowering and enabling residents to articulate and build the type of communities they want and need. This aspect of Local Government’s role can have many names but it has been most often described as Community Development in previous decades. Community strengthening is also a commonly used term in recent discourse as describing generally the same thing. This report uses the term “Social Infrastructure” to encompass community development and strengthening but also to describe the range of other support services that enable individuals and families to function within society. The use of the term Social Infrastructure is an attempt to place this critical but more intangible contribution on a similar footing to the “hard” infrastructure of what too many people superficially equate with community e.g. the community centres, local parks and libraries.

Local Government not only has the charter but also is unarguably best placed as the level of government “closest to the people”, both spatially and organisationally, to give expression to community governance directly or to provide accessible pathways for residents to work through established processes at the Council level to have their needs for services, facilities and infrastructure met. Later in this section, the role of Local Government in promoting Community Development is dealt with.

Councils covering Melbourne’s outer suburban areas have united around issues of common interest and concern and formed formal and informal groupings such as the National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA), the Victorian Interface Councils and the Growth Area Councils. These established bodies and looser groupings have been active in researching issues impacting on their newly formed outer suburban communities and advocating to other levels of government to improve the planning and delivery of infrastructure and services to newly formed communities. The need behind this advocacy is articulated by the NGAA:

*The National Growth Areas Alliance has identified that there is a structural problem in the way new communities are planned and developed in Australia. The NGAA understands that this situation has developed over time but that given the quantum of population growth facing these areas urgent attention is required to avoid some potentially serious social and*

*environmental consequences in the next decade and beyond.* (National Growth Areas Alliance)

More broadly, Local Government has long been an integral part of Victoria's service planning and delivery system across a broad range of services and across all life stages in what has often been coined "cradle to grave" – maternal and child services to youth services to family and children's services to aged care services to even managing cemeteries (although recent State Government interventions have taken away the "graves" from metropolitan Councils). Councils engage in a number of broad areas of planning, often involving the eventual delivery of facilities or services.

1. **Land use planning and infrastructure planning** that plans the spatial elements of the built environment is a well recognised role for Local Government and equally the planning and delivery of engineered works such as road and drainage infrastructure is integral to what Local Government is commonly known for undertaking. As the six Growth Area Councils need to deal with the challenges of rapid urban growth within their municipalities they place a high premium on strategic land use planning which is significantly bolstered by the role of the Growth Areas Authority in the preparation of Precinct Structure Plans that provide *the "blueprint" for development and investment that will occur over many years.* (Growth Areas Authority). This land use planning in Growth Areas can often result in the provision of community infrastructure such as community centres but it is a central tenet of this research project that the provision of community infrastructure not be conflated with being everything a community requires for it's sustainability.
2. **Service planning** for services and facilities where Local Government is the accepted provider of services is an important role for Councils. All six Councils participating in this study indicated that they have well established service planning units guiding their planning for the recognised services that Local Government provides such as Maternal and Health Services, Sports and Recreation facilities and services and Aged Care services. The service planning capacity of the Councils appear adequately resourced, although it will be always argued that Councils carry too much of the financial burden of service planning and provision. These Growth Area Councils and Local Government generally provide a number of mandated and well defined services such as Maternal and Child Health that are often population driven with agreed minimum service standards and subject to detailed performance reporting both internally and to other levels of government. Service planning for these services is definable with often quantifiable inputs and outputs.
3. **Community planning** is planning for the social sustainability of resident communities within a Council area. It is undertaken in differing ways by all Councils but as the scope of what may be included under social sustainability is broad, as a discipline, community planning is often not well defined. Community leadership programs, neighbourhood or precinct planning groups, community grants schemes and community



development programs are all examples of the types of Council initiatives that are put in place to improve the social sustainability of local communities. Arguably, a rise in “managerialism” across government that focuses heavily on quantifiable measurement (or to quote the management edit “if you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it”) has diminished the harder to quantify services such as Community Development.

4. **Collaborative cross sectoral service planning** occurs where Councils take an active role in planning for services such as health and education, where State Government has major responsibility for the planning, funding and delivery of services but where Local Government is involved in parts of the overall service system. It is also often motivated by Councils pursuing a “whole of community” or integrated local area planning.

### **3. State Government**

The Victorian State Government demonstrates an active ongoing interest in issues affecting outer suburban Melbourne in a variety of ways, including through Parliament directly and also through the ongoing work of its Departments. To what extent this interest translates into effective “joined up” government responses to the effective planning and delivery of State Government infrastructure and services into Growth Areas is somewhat debatable. This research project was initiated and is supported by Growth Area Councils on the basis that, in fact, State Government funding for and delivery of the necessary services and infrastructure is at best patchy and not planned in a manner that meets the needs of new Growth Area communities in a timely fashion.

State Government interest is evident through the Outer Suburban/Interface Services and Development Committee (OSISDC) that was established in 2003 under the Victorian Government Joint Investigatory Committee

*to inquire into, consider and report to the Parliament on any proposal, matter or thing concerned with:*

- a. the provision of services to new urban regions;*
- b. the development or expansion of new urban regions.*

([www.parliament.vic.gov.au/osisdc/function-of-the-committee](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/osisdc/function-of-the-committee))

A number of Parliamentary Inquiries relevant to this project have taken place, or are in progress, including

1. Inquiry into Liveability Options in Outer Suburban Melbourne (current)
2. Inquiry into Growing the Suburbs: Infrastructure and Business Development in Outer Suburban Melbourne (current)
3. Inquiry into Local Economic Development in Outer Suburban Melbourne 2008
4. Inquiry into Building New Communities 2006
5. Inquiry into Sustainable Urban Design in Outer Suburban Areas 2004

All the completed Inquiries have made extensive recommendations, often identifying action by Local Government, to address shortcomings in the services and infrastructure available in outer suburban Melbourne.

Of particular relevance to this research project was the 2006 Parliamentary Inquiry into Building New Communities that stated that a

*..... core finding in this report is that good urban design alone is not enough to build successful new communities in the context of rapid growth and demographic change. More can be done to assist and empower communities*

*to work through their own issues by supporting the individuals and community groups that sustain social cohesion, by removing impediments to community action and by encouraging and being more open to engagement by citizens.*

What is also evident is the extensive amount of resources in the form of advice, legislation, research, guides and guidelines that have been developed by a range of State Government Departments and agencies such as the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Growth Areas Authority, VicHealth, VicUrban, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Two State Government statutory authorities have a particular charter to support urban development at the outer edge of Melbourne.

### **Growth Areas Authority**

The goals of the Growth Areas Authority (GAA) are to:

- Develop communities in growth areas that are socially, environmentally and economically sustainable.
- Work with industry and local Councils to ensure economic, employment and housing priorities are achieved in Melbourne's five growth areas.
- Improve the operation of regulatory and administrative processes over time to reduce costs and increase efficiencies for developers and local Councils. (Growth Areas Authority)

The Growth Areas Authority was established in 2006 and states that it *works in partnership with local Councils, developers and the Victorian Government to help create sustainable, well serviced communities.*

As the authority charged with fast tracking the delivery of new residential development in the outer suburban belt around Melbourne the principal focus has been on the land use planning aspects of designing and gaining approvals for the spatial organisation of the economic and community infrastructure of the built and natural environment. This focus is reflected in the challenge of delivering Precinct Structure Plans that invariably have a spatial orientation. Consequently they are an organisation that is future oriented to the extent that they plan for future development so the backend, post approval, task of developing the civil society and community interactions that define a functioning community is not their priority. While there is recognition by the GAA of the social infrastructure ingredients needed to build "community" the complex and time consuming task of building durable and effective partnerships with the people and the organisations of a local area that really makes up a local community requires enduring effort and resources over many years. This nominally falls to Local Government to coordinate and resource.

In relation to planning for community, education and health services Councils identified the important brokerage role that the GAA plays in coordinating State Government Departments coming to the table to assist collaborative planning for new residential estates.

## **Places Victoria (until recently VicUrban)**

VicUrban, or the recently renamed Urban Places Victoria, is the Victorian Government's land development agency. VicUrban state that they have

*been successful in developing sustainable, affordable communities in Melbourne and regional Victoria*

While VicUrban declare that they are refocusing on supporting more housing in established areas they have current significant Growth Area developments at Epping North (Aurora) and Officer in Melbourne's South East

Aurora, VicUrban's Urban Growth Development in Epping North, is described:

*Aurora is VicUrban's flagship sustainable housing development. When complete in 15 - 20 years this innovative 630 hectare, development will be home to:*

- *over 8,000 households*
- *two town centres*
- *five schools*
- *community activity centres*
- *approximately 148 hectares of public open space and conservation areas*

*These new residential developments will demonstrate high quality, affordable and sustainable housing. (VicUrban)*

As a developer of a green field site VicUrban has chosen to employ Community Development staff to work with residents to build the basis of a future community at Aurora. This is in line with the larger and more progressive of the private developers and indicates a recognition that hard infrastructure itself will not create the sustainable communities of the future.

#### **4. Private Sector Developers**

The urban development industry has an overriding interest in ensuring that the dream of “community” they base many of their marketing campaigns on becomes the lived experience of their customers and translates to ongoing demand for their product into the future. As recent social research into master planned communities found

*Many (residents) had made deliberate decisions to live where they did because of the promise of community; this was particularly the case for residents of planned communities. (P.Williams, 2009)*

The business model of developers is predicated on there being sustained end purchaser demand for their residential products that justifies the long term “sunk costs” of broad acre acquisition; the time consuming process of estate design and obtaining development approvals; and the upfront capital costs required in constructing the hard infrastructure that enables urban development. Investment horizons for developers are often measured in decades, particularly for the purchase of potential residential land, so poor Greenfield development that generates negative residents’ perceptions and undermines broader future consumer demand also negatively affects the overall investment cycle. Ultimately this can play out on the balance sheets of development companies. Importantly, this is well recognised by the larger developers and increasingly we are seeing a focus on not only the urban form and physical amenity of new master planned estates but also on investment in “social infrastructure” through community building initiatives such as community development workers.

In their evidence to the State Government Parliamentary Inquiry on Building New Communities 2006 Delphin Lend Lease put this clearly

*We at Delfin Lend Lease very much regard our business as the development of communities rather than simply the development and sale of land in the marketplace. As a business we adopt a long-term view and believe we must focus on building community rather than simply selling and developing land. We have a long-term focus as a business, and because we undertake projects that are typically large scale and lengthy in duration it is therefore important to build community and have a strong community evolve. It reflects on your success in the marketplace. The advantages as we describe them ... are the elements that we consider are essential to deliver for each and every one of our projects. At the top of the list you see ‘A sense of belonging’. That goes very much to the creation of community.*

This study has highlighted the growing interest of prominent developers and the accompanying investment in the social sustainability of their master planned communities. Developers such as Stockland have a number of examples of working with State Government, Councils and research organisations to better understand the social and economic challenges and opportunities facing newly developed communities at the urban fringe. They also have examples of funding community strengthening programs and opportunities for colocated services in Growth Areas. Delphin Lend Lease equally demonstrate examples of active

involvement in developing residential estates that are more than agglomerations of new housing but rather multi layered communities that attempt to balance a variety of lifestyles and life stage cycles with economic and environmental demands.

Interviews with Local Government officers that informed this study supported the increasingly active role that some of the larger and more progressive developers such as VicUrban, Stockland and Delpin Lend Lease play in funding community strengthening activities within their residential estates. The Local Government respondents saw significant merit in the active and early engagement by developers with residents in their master planned estates around local community needs, and then the locally tailored responses to this engagement in offering community linking programs and activities. These community development activities can take on differing shapes depending on local circumstances and needs. While Local Government was highly supportive of developers taking a proactive role with their residential communities there were some inherent shortcomings identified with a system of fully developer led community development. These include

- *Integration.* For those developers that do provide community development their overriding interest is obviously with the residents in their own estates and this potentially creates problems for integration with other community development activities that are offered by Local Government or the not-for-profit sector. Inward looking community development activities can weaken the effectiveness of the programs in terms of the longer term integration into a broader community. Mention has already been made of tensions that can sometimes exist where a new residential estate develops alongside an established area. If the new estate is further resourced through community development to advocate for that particular community in a resource constrained environment, then tensions are potentially exacerbated.
- *Timeframes.* Developers will only fund and support community development for the period they are on-site and actively marketing the estate to prospective residents. Commonly, a particular stage of a residential estate may have a timeframe of around 5 years when lots are being sold, houses built and new residents moving in. In most cases identified through this study where developer provided community development was provided the timeframe was often 3 years and not exceeding 5 years. This significantly constrains the effectiveness of community development that by its very nature is long term and relies on building local contacts, networks and trust relationships. While the literature often highlights the importance of early engagement with residents, equally there also needs to be sustained engagement over time for the necessary relationships to form and on-the-ground results to be realised. A timeframe for sustained community development is considered to be ideally 10 to 15 years, but at least 5 years to achieve long lasting benefits.

- *Limited scope of community strengthening work.* Due to the primary commercial focus of the developers sometimes what might begin as a broad, equity based model of community building ends as a much narrower service, not different to what a Body Corporate might do. This might entail simply running a website for the residential estate or allowing self appointed residents to become the voice of the broader community.
- *Scale.* It is only residential estates of significant scale, often comprising over one thousand lots, are seen to justify the developer investment in a community development program. The issue of scale also applies to the organisational orientation and capacity of the developer with only the larger developers, like Delphin Lend Lease, with an eye to their broader market positioning, being prepared to offer more sophisticated added-value services such as community development. Equally, a recognised problem with smaller scale development of less than 100 lots is that developers most often do not have the economies of scale, timeframe of development or the organisational interest to invest in many of the better aspects of master planned estates, including community development activities.

The benefits of scale are described by a prominent developer

*Larger scale master-planned communities also enable the ability to approach things differently. Scale allows for initiatives to be more viable and will often enable developers to consider an alternate approach in the knowledge that there is greater scope to drive the outcomes they are seeking.* Lend Lease Submission into Inquiry into Liveability Options in Outer Suburban Melbourne April 2011

The experience of private sector developer provided community strengthening initiatives suggests several ways in which this valued service can be improved.

A Good Practice guide for developers, utilising the collective experience of developers, Local Government and the not-for-profit sector could define the scope, roles and even have a draft position description to assist key partners, particularly Local Government and developers.

Defining the roles of a community development program that, while allowing more commercially oriented objectives to be met by developers, also allows for a broader and more inclusive approach to community development that has equity as an underlying principle is considered an important feature by Local Government.

## Planning and Delivery of Personal and Community Support Services

### **Introduction**

The lack of community support services to residents of new estates, locally accessible and available when people need them, was a problem frequently cited by the six Growth Area Councils. This gap in service provision, for both clinical services as well as preventative type services, places additional stress on individuals, families and weakens the fabric of an emergent community.

As put by the larger group of Interface Councils in their joint submission to the 2005 State Parliamentary Inquiry into Building New Communities

*New and established communities under financial stress require support services and opportunities to participate in their communities. There are (sic) a range of human services essential to any community building or strengthening which should be considered in the planning of any community.*

This issue has also been recently advocated to State Government through the National Growth Areas Alliance that succinctly put the case, not only for a system of growth funding that keeps pace with rapid urban development but also highlights an important related issue affecting Community Service Organisations

*Achieving additional recurrent funding is always regarded as too difficult. However, it stands to reason that if the population is growing, additional services and programs will be required. It is possible to increase available funding based on a growth factor, as occurs with some programs. For services such as Family Support or for some of the Youth Support Programs, however, there are no standards for provision per population or a growth factor built in. This means no certainty for agencies which could provide the services and no incentive for them to locate in growth areas. (It should also be noted that office accommodation in these areas is also required for agencies to locate there). (National Growth Areas Alliance, 2011)*

Equally, private sector developers recognise the delays or non-provision of community support services as important issues for their planning of new residential estates.

*The timely provision and health and social services into new communities is always a challenge. When is the most appropriate time and what is the balance between prevention, education and information versus interventions. A process needs to be developed to ensure that real needs and not perceptions are incorporated into the planning of these communities. This is a vital component of the master-planning process to ensure community involvement at the beginning, but to be able to then bring all*



*stakeholders together so that expectations and reality are combined.* Lend Lease Submission into Inquiry into Liveability Options in Outer Suburban Melbourne April 2011

The particular characteristics of new residential estates can make the residents vulnerable to having adverse events occur in their lives which, if not addressed in a proper and timely fashion, can lead to outcomes for individuals and families that can cascade downwards. The demographic profile of Growth Areas is predominantly families with younger children; most often with sizeable mortgages; carrying additional cost burdens associated with motor vehicles due to their reliance on road based transport; and often time poor due to extended commute times to work. (P.Williams, 2009) Research has also highlighted particular challenges for sectors of the population of new residential estates, notably young people. As just noted, new estates are primarily designed for families with young children and often inadequate attention is given to meeting the needs of older teenagers/young people. If young people need assistance, especially outside the support of their families, the lack of public transport compounds the impact.

*The position of young people has been identified as particularly challenging in growth areas, as they may also experience a sense of constrained opportunities. However, the location of these suburbs made many of the young people feel safe and protected. Nevertheless, the shortage of community services means that they may face challenges if specific needs arise.* (Robson, 2010)

For example, the dire shortage of mental health services generally across Australia, and in particular for young people, has been the subject of extensive media attention. Young people living in new residential estates requiring these services are even more disadvantaged. As stated in a recent relevant study

*.... a Victorian Department of Human Services (DHS) study showed that risk factors associated with poor mental health were over-represented in the Interface municipalities. In particular, depressive symptoms were generally higher in youths living on the fringe compared to youths living in other local council areas in Melbourne.* (Access Economics, 2008)

It was often commented on by Local Government respondents that several important family support services such as family counselling and financial counselling are under resourced at an overall program funding level by State Government, that funding allocations do not keep pace with changing patterns of need resulting from rapid urban growth and that the delivery of these services is further exacerbated by additional challenges facing NFP agencies who have service contracts for the delivery of these services. This project introduces this issue by highlighting the views of Local Government professionals and recommends that the array of funding and organisational cultural factors that lead to this situation could be explored in greater depth through a series of case studies that are proposed.

The review of literature supports the critical role that timely, effective and collaborative planning plays in building sustainable communities in Growth Areas.

*The findings from the case study of social planning in Seaford add weight to the argument that well-integrated urban and social planning has contributed to the development of social capital and positive mental health through:*

- *timely planning for human services facilities and infrastructure prior to the arrival of new residents*
- *co-location of services including a multi-faith ecumenical centre, school and health service*
- *community development programs in local government to facilitate interaction between new and existing residents*
- *physical planning that took explicit account of the social impact of the environment. (Baum.F, 2011)*

However, the inadequacy of planning for community support services in Melbourne Growth Areas is highlighted by SGS Economics and Planning in their 2009 report

*An integrated plan for better provisioning growth areas with jobs and services is rare indeed. The plans that exist relate to envisaged land use and cover infrastructure servicing requirements at a broad level only, and generally do not integrate responsibilities across government tiers and/ or agencies.*

*No widely accepted benchmarks exist for “standard” or “minimum” infrastructure service levels in growth areas. While some progress has been made on thresholds for when new capital facilities are required, very little progress is evident with recurrent servicing levels. (SGS Economics and Planning, 2009)*

A major thesis being explored over the three stages of this project is the possible development of a dynamic funding model that is responsive to known but unmet community needs in areas experiencing rapid urban development occurring in the outer suburbs but where those needs are not being properly recognised through current State Government service planning models.

This first stage examines whether interstate or international jurisdictions have developed dynamic funding models, probably based on benchmarks of population growth numbers, that would provide a model for better and the more timely funding of services in outer metropolitan Growth Areas. The literature review, supported by feedback from professionals in the sector, indicates that comparable benchmarks for these community support services do not exist and so it is the intention through case studies to build a model. However, what the literature does contain are examples of good practice in relation to improved planning for a social services system for Growth Areas.

This section of the report explores three of the examples. That said, articulating a community support service system in Growth Areas is a subject far too broad

and complex to deal with comprehensively in the context of this report. However, some of the key issues will be canvassed to instruct subsequent stages of the project. The identification of several of the key issues will be discussed under the contexts of service planning and service delivery.

In order to better describe the issues around what is perceived by Growth Area Councils to be falling short if not failing in the planning and provision of community support services, service planning issues are discussed separately from service delivery. The services that are mostly being referred in the literature include Family and Early Parenting Support services funded by State Government but often delivered by community service organisations that *promote the safety, stability and development of vulnerable children, young people and their families, and to build capacity and resilience for children, families and communities.* (Department of Human Services) These services should also be seen in the context of a set of other services, including health services (both clinical and preventative) that provide support to individuals and families to enable people and their families to properly function in society.

### ***The Service Planning Model – some issues***

Service planning occurs utilising a broad range of inputs, both informed by practitioners and other evidence sources, and includes local government for many preventative services.

The inadequacies in available community support services and the need to improve the existing service planning system was reinforced by a private developer:

*To change the existing model of development from future planned infrastructure to timely delivery of community services and infrastructure, governments at all levels need to be at the table initially in the master-planning phase. This allows all stakeholders to have early buy-in and gives time for budget and business planning processes to be followed and achieved in a timely manner.* Lend Lease Submission into Inquiry into Liveability Options in Outer Suburban Melbourne April 2011

Several reports reviewed through this project point to improvements which could be made to integrated service planning and delivery for the community support service sector in Growth Areas. This includes the need for the early planning to begin that results in what can be described as a comprehensive Social Infrastructure Strategy or a Social Interagency Infrastructure and Services Delivery Plan for the area.

The experience in planning community services for Caroline Springs, Armstrong Creek and in the Shire of Redlands, a South East Queensland Growth Area municipality, suggests approaches that may yield better outcomes for Growth Areas.

## 1. Armstrong Creek

Armstrong Creek is the recently approved Growth Area for Geelong and proposes a new suburb of 22,000 lots and a population of around 55,000 people. In this instance the City of Greater Geelong initiated a collaborative planning approach with 15 agencies including State Government Departments to prepare the Social Interagency Infrastructure Delivery Plan. As the Council describes:

*Council, in conjunction with the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) and Government agencies, ....developed a comprehensive Social Interagency Infrastructure Delivery Plan (SIIDP) in order to ensure that planning for the growth area is properly considered and is able to deliver on Council's vision for the growth area as a liveable and sustainable community. Council, the State Government and agencies have recognised that they have a shared responsibility to plan for future community needs, along with recognising that community needs extend beyond that of hard infrastructure. This SIIDP will ensure that the growth area will be provided with the timely delivery of infrastructure and services, in line with the direction of Government which has, since March 2000, sought to emphasise the importance of the economic, environmental and social spheres.*

*The strength and viability of these new communities is underpinned by focusing on the establishment of social networks, the availability of community and civic activities, the creation of opportunities for cultural and recreation participation and the encouragement of a very fundamental element – the operation of this community life through volunteering, civic pride and community leadership.*

*Community facilities are focal points for this community interaction. They are places where people can build relationships and a community identity; where resources are required to strengthen the life of the community and deliver community services. The layout and distribution of these facilities can influence sustainable behaviour patterns. That is, people walk or utilise public transport to access local opportunities and services and as a consequence build social networks that form the basis of strong, healthy and sustainable communities. **Armstrong Creek Social Interagency Infrastructure Delivery Plan (SIIDP).** (City of Greater Geelong)*

A shortcoming of this example on reading the published plan is that it appears the written plan ended up focussing on hard infrastructure only, by forecasting the need for the buildings to accommodate services but excluding the services to be provided - who would be responsible for providing services and what might be the triggers for when these services commence. By implication the plan for developing the community life of Armstrong Creek will only be realised through the provision of community facilities, which appears limiting.

## 2. Caroline Springs

In the case of Caroline Springs, a case study was written up that described the model of planning for the range of service that would be required for the new suburb.

*The partnership model was focused on developing new systems for the integrated planning and delivery of services and infrastructure in Caroline Springs. This is an example of what is called a place-based initiative and represents a significantly different way of planning and delivering government services. The model involved the partnership employing a “broker” (titled the Director), who was jointly funded by the Council, Delfin and DVC (the then Department of Victorian Communities) and whose work was overseen by an advisory board of the three stakeholders. The Director’s role involved two major activities. The first was to build and mediate relationships between partners and other organisations and act as a conduit of information between parties. This included advocating on behalf of, and showcasing the work of, the partnership. The second activity was to set up and run planning working groups to focus on the development of community, education and health infrastructure. The planning groups included a health services and a recreation working group and pre-existing library services and education services groups. The Director assisted the working groups in problem solving and in particular, accessing government departments and identifying funding sources. A key feature of the planning undertaken in the working groups was that every attempt was made to maximise joint funding and joint use of services and facilities. For example, when libraries were being considered, they were joint funded and designed for use by both schools and the general public to minimise the costs of infrastructure and service delivery. The Director’s focus was on coordination and capacity building within member organisations, so that over time they could confidently undertake these type of planning activities and governance on their own.*

*Organisations involved in the partnership reported the model has been a success and met its objectives of increasing capacity for planning and delivering better quality, timely and sequenced community infrastructure and services in Caroline Springs.*

*The success of the partnership was put down to the broker, the relationship building he undertook across the life of the partnership, having committed partners that were willing to contribute (including finance) and a shared vision. Clear processes that defined roles and responsibilities from the outset were also seen as critical.*

*The Caroline Springs Partnership has shown that a place-based planning model can be an effective way to deliver services and infrastructure. Although partnership work takes effort, all partners agreed that the benefits are significant. They have created a group culture characterised by openness, willingness to work together and confidence to try doing things differently. It appears this has had a significant impact on the creation of a community in*

*which people are happy to live.* (Department of Planning and Community Development, 2007)

### 3. Redlands Social Infrastructure Plan

The third example is the Shire of Redlands, at the edge of Brisbane with significant Growth Areas, who have adopted a Social Infrastructure Strategy for their municipality that

*goes beyond the requirements outlined in planning guidelines. It is based on a rich understanding of this city's people, needs, strength and aspirations. It looks beyond bricks and mortar, recognising the importance of services, activities, groups and networks in our lives.*

*This strategy includes some key shifts in how we meet social needs.*

- *We will develop new programs and link up existing groups as we develop precincts around existing and new facilities to create living hubs in our new and established communities.*
- *We plan to increase our emphasis on community development to support our people and organisations and communities to grow their own responses to their needs and aspirations.*
- *We will support social enterprises – groups or programs that use business models of operating to deliver social outcomes.* (Redland City Council)

As they say elsewhere in the Strategy:

*Around the world, government and communities are developing new ways to address social infrastructure needs. Increasing populations, changing aspirations and scarce resources mean that innovation is required. To plan for social infrastructure in the Redlands we have looked at trends and practices around the world that fit with our communities' strengths, needs and aspirations.*

*Some of the major changes in approaches to social infrastructure that have influenced the Redlands Social Infrastructure Strategy include:*

- *more emphasis on investing early in greenfield communities*
- *more emphasis on prevention and early intervention*
- *emphasis on supporting service systems*
- *creation of hubs*
- *a shift to place management and joined up government*
- *increased use of schools as community centres*
- *emergence of research about age friendly cities and child friendly cities*

- *move to sustainability and thinking locally*
- *use of partnerships and alliances to deliver infrastructure.* (Redland City Council)

The three examples are raised as they highlight some key characteristics of successful planning, not because they are directly replicable in all Growth Areas. These common success factors include:

- Leadership is needed to initiate the process and in both instances this leadership came from Local Government and this was backed up by the Council CEO being integrally involved in overseeing the plan.
- Begin early i.e. at the same time as the land use planning, and recognise that the planning will take a sustained effort over time.
- People made the planning successful i.e. it was not the “plan” but the planning
- Bring the broad range of stakeholders together. These stakeholders should obviously include the Community Service Organisation that would have responsibilities in the plan but also relevant Government Departments.
- The planning process itself establishes critical relationships and partnerships that can have benefits well into the future.

This approach also appeared to underpin the success in one of the cases identified in the literature.

*Document analysis and interviews with informants confirmed that the Seaford case, while based on the emerging theory of social and physical planning, was distinctive because it was implemented in a way that conformed closely to prescriptions for effective social planning, by involving human service agencies very early on in the process of planning the physical aspects of the suburb.* (Baum.F, 2011)

Cross government/ cross departmental/ cross-sectoral integrated local area planning is also reinforced in a further report commissioned by the State Government

*Government departments and agencies will need to deliver services and measures to promote community strengthening in a holistic way, cutting across disciplines – the way life does. This means working across departmental demarcations and in new forms of partnership between local, state and federal tiers of government, and with other agencies. To give a practical example, new master-planned communities (or suburban refits) should give equal consideration to community strengthening, cultural life and the sense of place as to road layouts, sewers and shopping malls.* (Montgomery.J, 2006)

The perspective of a private developer sector neatly summarises what they see should occur to improve service planning

*...the master-planning process is tried and tested, the major failing is not having the other key State Government stakeholders at the table from the outset for initial planning purposes in a spirit of facilitation. This does not necessarily require a long-term ongoing involvement but does allow for the initial planning phase and construction of the overall plan to include all relevant players.*

*Once the planning gets to the next level of detail stakeholders are again engaged to firm up the proposals and then commence the budget bidding and business planning cycles for the respective stakeholders.*

*The Growth Area Authority (GAA) is having an impact in this area, but really needs to perform a facilitation role as well as the reviewing and approval instrument rather than the producer of the planning documents.*  
Lend Lease Submission into Inquiry into Liveability Options in Outer Suburban Melbourne April 2011

### ***Service Delivery – Issues for Community Service Organisations***

The inadequacy of community support services to vulnerable families in Growth Areas is considered a threat to the development of long-term community resilience. This has most often been considered a problem arising from the funding model employed by the Department of Human Services which, it is argued, does not provide timely and adequate funding to meet emerging needs in rapidly developing Growth Areas.

However, Local Government managers have also identified potential organisational issues in Community Service Organisations (CSOs) as having implications for service delivery into Growth Areas. Organisational governance and culture; the critical shortage of modern office accommodation in Growth Areas; the ability to attract and retain staff; and the lack of funding certainty in Growth Area locations are some of the issues that have been nominated as potentially limiting service delivery effectiveness.

CSOs are funded by the Department of Human Services to deliver family, youth and children's services to nominated communities. Many CSOs have originated in Melbourne's inner city region where and when social disadvantage was traditionally concentrated. There is an argument that these geographic origins still resonate across the sector today as some CSOs struggle to locate themselves fully in Growth Area locations as agencies that not only deliver services and programs but embed themselves more fully as integral parts of the community fabric. Organisations that are more "of the community" as well as "for the community" have the advantage of developing local links and networks to more fully understand local community needs and so provide more responsive and effective services.



Few State Government funded services in the community support services sector care are funded on a full cost recovery basis and CSOs often use their own funds and organisational infrastructure to augment the service system. As a rule, capital funding is not available to CSOs to develop their own facilities that may be purpose designed to collocate services so they rely on renting what space is available locally for the delivery of services. Feedback from Local Government suggests that commercial office space that might meet these needs is not often constructed locally, and whether CSOs could necessarily afford commercial office rents if it was available is yet another issue.

It is noted that most new community centres being constructed in Growth Areas appear to provide consulting rooms for visiting services. The extent that this is considered as adequate by CSOs for the delivery of their services on an ongoing basis has not been determined in this project and could be explored in a subsequent stage. It is hoped that a subsequent stage of this project can explore these issues through case studies and so make recommendations on improving the service system design beyond the provision of shared consulting rooms.

### **Examples of Service Collocations**

Local Government has sought to address this gap through promoting collocated services in a single place while in some cases in more established areas other examples have come from the community. Innovative examples of these local responses in Growth Areas include:

#### **“Services Central”, Cardinia Shire**

Services Central is a co-location of community services and agencies, each with a common goal of strengthening and supporting the community.

It is a modern facility with a range of rooms for hire at competitive rates and has office space available for lease.

It is conveniently located in Pakenham with easy access to public transport.

#### **The Wyndham Youth Resource Centre, City of Wyndham**

The Wyndham Youth Resource Centre is a multi-purpose youth facility for young people aged between 10—25 and their families. It offers a range of youth services, information and activities for young people in the Wyndham community. It provides

- An information, referral and advice about matters concerning young people such as employment & career advice, income, entertainment & leisure, health matters and family issues.
- Various support services are on hand at the Centre such as a youth counsellor and young parents’ counsellor who provide counselling & support to young people and young parents under the age of 25.
- Resources including computers and internet, photocopier and printing

- A music rehearsal studio is available for bands to practice their music as well as sound and recording equipment.
- Weekly youth and holiday programs offering activities for young people after school and during school holidays.
- Other activities include teenage excursions, Battle of the Bands, Movie Nights and Under Age Dance Parties.

### **The Casey Community Resource Centre**

The City of Casey has been advocating for funding to allow the construction of the Casey Community Resource Centre in Narre Warren to *allow community support services to remain and extend their services by providing a community services hub to house and facilitate a range of information and support services including financial counselling services, legal advice, advocacy and civic participation.* (Advocacy brochure, City of Case October 2010)

### **Whittlesea Community Connection**

Whittlesea Community Connections is a not-for-profit community based organisation that has been providing services in the City of Whittlesea since 1973. WCC was started by the community to meet community needs and has a history of working in partnership with local people. WCC operates out of premises in Epping Plaza, but delivers outreach programs and services in a range of other locations and in partnership with other community organisations.

There are six core areas of the agency including information, support and referral services; the Whittlesea Connect Community Transport Service; the Whittlesea Volunteer Resource Service; an Emergency Relief Service, the Whittlesea Community Legal Service; and the Settlement Support Program.

The core areas cover a broad spectrum, from prevention and early intervention work undertaken through community education, grounded research and support programs to the provision of short term emergency funding and case work support for people in crisis. Specific initiatives and services undertaken include,

- Crisis intervention, support and assistance
- Direct casework and client advocacy
- Targeted community education, information and training
- Research and consultation with members of the Whittlesea community
- Partnerships with other agencies and organisations that share our goals and aspirations in providing services to communities within Whittlesea
- Community development initiatives that resource and support disadvantaged communities and new arrivals

- Advocacy on behalf of, and with, members of the Whittlesea community to build capacity, and to contribute to increased access and equity of service provision in the municipality. This is also done through a number of other initiatives such as the Whittlesea Youth Commitment.

## **Hume Global Learning Centre**

The Hume Global Learning Centre, located in Broadmeadows, was created as a multipurpose lifelong learning centre. It is important to note the while the apparent focus is a facility there is a network of some 800 organisations and individuals with an interest in learning in the City of Hume that implement a Learning Together Strategy.

*Council takes the view that economic and social development issues are inextricably linked, and that partnerships and innovative collaboration benefit the community.*

*The learning vision articulated for Hume City in the Council Plan 2030 is to*

*Enhance life experience, employment opportunities and contributions to the community by inspiring and facilitating the participation of Hume residents in lifelong learning, regardless of age, ability or ethnicity, resulting in reduced disadvantage and improved quality of life.*

*The vision was developed by Hume City Council, residents and members of the Hume Global Learning Village (HGLC) and emphasise the importance of valuing learning in all its forms (formal, informal and non formal) and embedded in many different settings – the family, the community, the school and the workplace. Learning involves change which is undertaken on an individual basis or as a social activity (Wheeler and Faris, 2006).*

*Lifelong learning fosters the lifespan and life-wide learning, that is, all the phases of life from early childhood, to school years, to the adult learner and the older learner, and all areas of learning. It cultivates democratic values and ... should build human and social capital including aboriginal value and knowledge base (Faris 2006). (Wheeler.L, 2010)*

## The Role of Employment Contributing to Sustainable Communities in Growth Areas

The world of paid work permeates any consideration of the more holistic sustainability of Growth Areas and the ability of new residential estates to develop as fully functional communities. What work exists for residents, the nature of that work in terms of utilising the skills available among residents, the ability to create business opportunities locally, hours worked and, critically, where work is located and the time and costs expended by households to access work define many of the issues confronting those attempting to plan for sustainable communities.

There is now a solid body of research that reinforces the poor economic, social and environmental outcomes that result from creating dormitory suburbs where residents must spend far too much time commuting large distances that also costs them too much money. Time spent commuting often comes at the personal cost of not spending this time at home and within the local community, undertaking the type of activities that build “community”. The situation is exacerbated by lack of public transport that can rapidly and efficiently connect people from residential areas to workplaces or services. This is captured well by the Work, Home, and Community Project when they observe

*The spatial fit between jobs and homes matters across the life-cycle. Teenagers need access to jobs while still at school, young Australians seek access to study and employment opportunities, middle-aged Australians are putting together jobs and families and looking for good spatial and temporal linkages between work and family, and older Australians increasingly want and expect to have some access to employment as they gradually step into retirement. Both time and space overshadow how jobs and homes come together – or fail to fit well. (Williams.P, 2009)*

Precinct Structure Plans in Growth Areas allocate land for economic uses, but the extent to which employment outcomes can be created beyond the population driven customer base for the local retail and service sectors remains the key challenge for economic development. Setting aside tracts of land for economic development purposes by no means guarantees that the land will be developed for a productive economic use and even if it is, the number and quality (spread and depth) of jobs is variable.

In their research into the relationship between work, family and home the research found that

*Work affects life through more than just “having a job”. For good work, home and community outcomes, people need access to a labour market that has depth: that is, offers a variety of job choices, and preferably some occupational depth and breadth. (Williams.P, 2009)*

Private developers also support the importance of local economic opportunities but argue that not enough is occurring to plan for local jobs.

*The planning for and provision of employment both in and for these communities is again vital for liveable and sustainable new communities. Not only does local employment provide an economic driver for the community it reduces the carbon footprint of these new communities by having local ongoing employment available in a timely manner in these communities.*

*Local employment opportunities provide a base for communities to prosper and reduce car trips in the long term, but current policy and planning frameworks do not mandate employment levels nor facilitate the integration of significant employment opportunities within new communities. Lend Lease Submission into Inquiry into Liveability Options in Outer Suburban Melbourne April 2011*

Economic development trends in outer suburban areas beyond those that are driven by localised population needs often point to developments such as large scale warehousing that is land hungry but job poor. In terms of planning for jobs to support Growth Areas, as observed by the recent analysis of investment in Growth Areas

*An integrated plan for better provisioning growth areas with jobs and services is rare indeed. The plans that exist relate to envisaged land use and cover infrastructure servicing requirements at a broad level only, and generally do not integrate responsibilities across government tiers and/or agencies. (SGS Economics and Planning, 2009)*

While the importance of economic opportunities and work for newly established suburbs is often acknowledged as critical, achieving the spread and depth of economic opportunities in outer suburban areas poses many difficult challenges, as it has historically proven to be the case in stimulating regional economic development across different parts of Australia.

The Growth Area Councils all place a strong emphasis on economic development, often including commendable targets such as matching job creation with new residential development.

The approach by Growth Area Councils to economic development is typified by Wyndham's commitment under their heading of Economic Prosperity.

*Enhance the potential for developing Wyndham's competitive strength, attracting a diversity of increased employment opportunities for local residents.*

- *Wyndham's economy will shift to a balance between blue and white collar employment to match the resident workforce through new investment in "high value-adding" industries.*
- *Wyndham will increase local employment opportunities for its residents.*
- *Wyndham will be a place for long term business attraction, retention and expansion.*
- *Wyndham will be a place that nurtures new business enterprises.*

All the Growth Area Councils, other levels of government and key private sector organisations play varying roles in what they consider they can to make a positive difference in building local economies. The overriding question is their ability to really influence the development of a local economy to create broadly the same number of jobs as there are local people needing jobs. Clearly, the inherent dynamism of regional, Victorian, national and international economies make the task of local economic development that much more unpredictable. The changes currently affecting the Victorian economy as it shifts from a history of manufacturing to a more service oriented economy affects local economic development, particularly in Growth Areas where their workforces tend to be more biased toward “blue collar” occupations than the service sector.

At the national level it is observed that in terms of where jobs growth has been occurring and the nature of those jobs

*The core of Australian jobs growth has been in CBDs – in the fields of management, administration, the professions and other service industries, much of this feeding on growth in Asia (Currie)*

A profile of the key features of economic development and for employment related information in Growth Areas has been undertaken by the Growth Areas Authority through an analysis of ABS data. It highlights:

- There remains a significant gap of 154,000 jobs between the 355,000 workers resident in Growth Areas and the 201,000 jobs that exist in these areas
- Melton is the metropolitan municipality with the longest Journey to Work, followed by Wyndham
- The employment mix in Growth Areas between the very generalised types of work show that some 62% of jobs are “white collar” and 38% are “blue collar”. This compares with the Melbourne metropolitan averages of 74% and 26% respectively, indicating a greater bias toward “blue collar” jobs being available in Growth Areas.
- A greater percentage of residents in Growth Area work in manufacturing; retail; education and training; construction; and transport, postal and warehousing than the metropolitan averages. Conversely, residents from Growth Areas are underrepresented in the following occupations – health care and social assistance; professional, scientific and technical services; financial and insurance services; and information media and telecommunications. As noted earlier, this
- Local jobs do not particularly match resident skills

For young people from Growth Areas there are additional areas of concerns for their future effective workforce participation as outlined in the Staying Connected report that shows that:

- Year 12 retention rates are falling and the gap for retention rates compared with their metropolitan counterparts is increasing

- There is lower participation in post-secondary education, especially among boys, compared with metropolitan averages
- Young people in Growth Areas are largely employed in the manufacturing, construction, retail trade and accommodation and food services industries.
- Compared with their other metropolitan counterparts there are higher rates among young people from Growth Areas of:
  - disengagement from work and school
  - incidence of depressive symptoms
  - rates of deliberate self-harm
  - risk of homelessness
  - levels of unemployment (SGS Economics and Planning, 2009)

In conclusion, the sustainability of newly forming communities in Growth Areas is partly marked by access to economic opportunities for residents including the spatial relationship between employment and where people live. The lack of local jobs imply the need to commute, often long distances, to access jobs which in turn weakens the ability for people to participate more fully in their local community. At a more general level, the employment skills profile of Growth Area residents and poorer school retention and training outcomes for young people indicate a mismatch with broader changes occurring in the Victorian economy. No ready transformative solutions are obvious beyond what Growth Area Councils seek to achieve through their advocacy, strategic land use planning and local economic development programs. These are limited in the face of broader macro-economic forces that determine many of the parameters of local economies. As will be explored in the following section, Information and Communications Technology offers one opportunity to break down the barriers of geographic distance that act as an additional barrier to economic participation by Growth Area residents.

## The Role of ICT in Building Community in Growth Area Communities

While this project did not seek to specifically examine the role of how Information and Communications Technology (ICT) might affect and benefit building sustainable communities in Growth Areas, there is evidence through the literature and particularly through a recent Federal Government Inquiry that ICT continues to open up an already large and growing number of positive social and economic opportunities. Growth Areas at Melbourne's urban fringe can expect to benefit more than other areas of metropolitan, regional and rural Australia.

The ICT revolution currently being experienced will have significant implications and provide many benefits for Growth Area residents through

1. Improving the spectrum of services – commercial, education and training, health, government - available to local communities, including community support services,
2. Better information and community engagement and participation opportunities, and
3. Expanding employment opportunities, particularly home based or in localised settings, and therefore reducing the amount of commuting for residents

The extent to which the benefits of ICT can be fully harnessed for Growth Area residents may well be a key feature of the long term durability and sustainability of the dispersed suburban form that characterises Melbourne. It becomes hard to imagine how the projected continued rapid growth of Melbourne's population within the current suburban development patterns, and the accompanying road congestion, is sustainable without breaking the current reliance on travel to employment of services.

As reported in the Victorian Parliament's 2008 Inquiry into Local Economic Development in Outer Suburban Melbourne, referring to an OECD report

*ICTs and broadband are facilitating the globalisation of many services, with broadband making it feasible for producers and consumers of services to be in different geographic locations.*

*ICT-enabled globalisation of services is having a fundamental impact on the way economies work and on the global allocation of resources, contributing to productivity growth by expanding markets, increasing business efficiency and reinforcing competitive pressure.*

The pace of change in the ICT area, including the broadband system roll out and technological innovation, is so rapid that to attempt to provide any fix on what may be currently available, let alone forecast what the next five years might look like, is speculative. However, it is fair to conclude that ubiquitous community use of ICT is proving transformative for society. Arguments will exist about the degree to which this transformation is all positive but it is fundamentally altering the means by which people communicate with each other, acquire information and gain access to services.



Community ability to use a range of ICT forms is now widespread across all but the oldest age groups. To the extent that this builds the nature of a localised “community” in new residential estates in Growth Areas is not yet fully tested over time but is generally seen by most respondents to the recent Federal Government Inquiry, referred to below, as overwhelmingly positive. The pervasive use of “smart” mobile telephones with web-based applications is one obvious example of the widespread and mushrooming use of ICT that is transforming people’s ability to communicate.

The National Broadband Network rollout that will act as the critical platform for a range of beneficial ICT applications to business, government and then community provides the forum for the most current informed opinion on the potential of high speed internet that permits ICT applications to benefit differing sections of the broader community. While the projected costs and possibly the form of the internet connections system may cause some debate, what is universally agreed is that a pervasive high-speed internet system will bring social and economic benefits to communities.

Computer ownership and internet connection rates are high and growing rapidly with the latest ABS statistic of nearly two years ago indicating that

*72% of Australian households had home internet access and 78% of households had access to a computer. Between 1998 to 2008-09, household access to the internet at home has more than quadrupled from 16% to 72%, while access to computers has increased from 44% to 78%.*

*The number of households with a broadband internet connection increased by 18% from the previous year, to an estimated 5.0 million households.*

*Broadband is accessed by close to two-thirds (62%) of all households in Australia and 86% of all households with internet access. (ABS 8146.0 - Household Use of Information Technology, Australia, 2008-09)*

While no fully current figures exist for the Melbourne’s Growth Areas, an earlier analysis from 2006 ABS figures indicate that internet connection rates in these areas are slightly higher than Victorian figures, which also reflect the Australian average. And we also know that households with children, the predominant household type in Growth Areas, have higher connection rates suggesting current connection rates to households in Growth Areas will be above 80%, and rising. Therefore, there is confidence that the vast majority of households in Growth Areas have access to internet connections that will allow them to participate in community and civic life. A challenge for local people with an interest in improving civic engagement as a means of building community is to translate a latent capability into more active engagement. Certainly, the possibilities exist for community intranets, community “apps” and locally relevant blog sites that provided information and foster engagement. Wyndham Council cited the positive example of the role “the (optic) fibre to the home” rollout is playing in the new residential estate of Alamanda at Point Cook where the “Alamanda on line” community intranet is allowing new residents to interact with each, even before they move into the area.

In August 2011, the Federal Government's Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications tabled its report on the inquiry into the role and potential of the National Broadband Network entitled "Broadening The Debate". There were a number of submissions and findings from this Inquiry that are instructive as to the benefits of ICT through the NBN platform. The report noted

*the capacity of the NBN to facilitate social and community benefits in many different areas. For example, the NBN will enable improved access to health, education and other government services in regional areas and contribute to more economically and environmentally sustainable communities.*

*... other social and community aspects, namely, the capacity of the NBN to:*

- *contribute to improved levels of social inclusion and social interaction;*
- *enable new methods of community interaction;*
- *promote more flexible working arrangements and improved work-life balance;*
- *enable new ways of participating in recreational and cultural activities; and*
- *facilitate better access to information and digital media. (page 181)*

For Growth Areas, often suffering relative geographic isolation from ready access to jobs and services, the potential of ICT is more important and, in fact, could well become a competitive advantage as new residential estates are now often equipped with broadband ahead of many other metropolitan areas as a policy priority of the Federal Government.

In December 2010 the Commonwealth Minister announced

*.... the Fibre in New Developments Policy, which means that residential and business owners in new developments will be among some of the first in Australia to enjoy the fast speeds offered over the National Broadband Network.*

*During the National Broadband Network rollout, an estimated 1.9 million additional premises will be constructed across Australia. NBN Co is the wholesale provider of last resort and will install fibre into new developments of 100 premises (dwellings/units) or more...*

*NBN Co, ...(is) working with developers to deliver fibre broadband infrastructure into these New Developments. .... (and) plan to connect approximately 250,000 premises in New Developments by June 2013.*

*(National Broadband Network Co)*

Even aside from the as yet largely unrealised potential for innovation in creating community interactivity from the very high internet speeds promised by the NBN, the general range of new technology that connects people and provides access to information is exploding. While the benefits of these technological innovations are by no means limited to locally geographic communities it is apparent that they can be of strong benefit in local communities, particularly for those such as young people and people with disabilities, who may be excluded from other opportunities for community interaction because of reduced mobility

options.

This point was made to the Federal Government Inquiry

*The Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) told the Committee that the internet has a powerful role in overcoming social exclusion: The history of the internet is evidence of the impact that better and more diverse access to information has on improving social capital. We know from experience that online access to information and services plays a vital role in reducing social isolation and increasing social cohesion. The last 20 or so years of the internet is evidence of how disenfranchised and isolated individuals and communities have been reconnected through the internet and virtual communities of interest. (Page 183)*

Another dimension to the benefits that high speed internet based ICT can bring to Growth Areas that can mitigate some of the barriers to the development of “community” is improved flexibility in employment, making the possibility of workers from Growth Areas undertaking more work from home or in more localised settings, and enabling them the time and opportunity to engage locally. There are great downsides for the development of “community” in Growth Areas because of where jobs are located and the time and costs associated with people accessing these jobs. Employment in Growth Areas as a substantive issue is dealt with in another section of this report but in the context of the possible benefits to employment and employability that dramatically improving ICT can bring to Growth Area residents it is worth noting the following.

The recent Federal Government’s Inquiry reports

*An Access Economics report into tele-working in the context of an NBN identified such benefits as follows:*

- *personal savings on travel in time and money;*
- *greater choice in place of residence;*
- *greater access to family;*
- *reduced impact on road and public transport infrastructure; and*
- *potential for greater involvement in their local community by the tele-worker (Page 198)*

Increase flexibility to work from home or locally is also explored in other relevant research

*Flexibility dominates people’s accounts of successfully integrating work and home. For women in particular, flexible working hours and working from home meant they were able to participate in the labour market, and often pursue a career, at the same time as caring for children. (Williams.P, 2009)*

It should be noted that not all trends associated with home-based tele-work are considered universally good. An article in The Economist states

*The industry also has to overcome frequent criticism that it is running little*

*more than "digital sweatshops" that drive down wages and humiliate workers.*

At the same time not all home based tele-work is at the exploitable low end and there is a

*notable trend: the range of work available on "e-lancing" sites is growing to encompass more complex and better-paid tasks. "We're starting to see legal and financial work coming online," Mr Swat (The Economist, 2010)*

If there is a conclusion to draw from recent research and opinion into the effects of improved ICT and high speed broadband in the world of work and how this might impact on Growth Areas is that we are likely to see significant if not dramatic changes in the way work is performed. This will create far greater flexibility in where and how work is performed. This flexibility will bring benefits for many people, particularly those who have marketable work skills but whose life situations covering where they live and who they care for, dictates their ability to participate in the workforce on the terms they wish and need. Greater flexibility for these people means greater opportunity for them to participate in civil society and become more included in their local community. The spread of home based workers also raises opportunities for Local Government Economic Development and Community Strengthening practitioners to respond to individual ICT based workers needing to connect locally with each other for social and professional development networking which replicates some of the advantages of traditional workplaces.

Access to services is the other notable impact that advanced ICT and high speed internet is already bringing. While e-commerce through on-line retailing and internet based service delivery is now becoming entrenched, the sphere of ICT person-to-person service delivery is only commencing. It is generally recognised that the very nature of personal and community support services depend on the establishment of trust relationships between professional and client that underpin the service delivery model. However, once that trust relationship is established possibilities exist for differing ways of service delivery including a hybridised model of part face-to-face, part ICT "real time" interactivity. Certainly those aspects of support that are more "information giving" lend themselves to ICT applications, as does some forms of group interactions. Clearly, this field is only just emerging and will evolve in line with technological and interactivity application advances. It does highlight that traditional service delivery models will change over time and the design of personal and community support service systems in Growth Areas will need to be alert to the different types of opportunities and challenges that ICT affords.

## Conclusion

The literature review undertaken for this report did not discover population driven benchmarks or standards, either in Australia or overseas, for the timely provision of community support services into Growth Areas as these areas develop. Similarly there were no benchmark systems found for the provision of Community Development services within Growth Areas.

However, there is substantial evidence to indicate that successful and sustainable new communities in Growth Areas can be fostered through what can be described as Social Infrastructure. i.e.

*those processes, programs, events, services, networks and activities that support individuals and families meet their social and personal needs in a particular place through personal growth, social interaction, social services support and community development.*

There is an apparent gap in the way planning occurs for Growth Areas with the primary focus still on the physical and spatial environment but a shortfall in planning and support for social sustainability, particularly in the critical formative period when the foundations for “community” are set.

Due to the nature of Growth Area communities with their relatively high mortgage levels compared to household income, reliance on private transport and long commute times there is particular exposure to changes in external factors such as interest rates and fuel prices. This is exacerbated by the undeveloped nature of the community support service system and the lack of civic and social structures that provide the network of supports in an established community.

Local Government is confirmed as the natural level of government to drive integrated local area planning and while other agencies such the Growth Areas Authority can be major contributors and “door openers” it is Local Government that has the governance structures, long term interest in developing sustainable communities and the organisational capacity to undertake and drive this planning.

This report has identified four areas for future investigation that could address gaps:

1. establish a benchmark system, in all likelihood with population trigger points, for State and Federal Government services in order to attract "growth" funds into Growth Areas in a timely fashion that meet the needs of residents when they are required. This would require significant and high level "buy in" from State and Federal Governments as a benchmark system would require changes to their current planning practices and the consequent improved resourcing of community support services.
2. document practical Community Capacity Building tools (facilities, events and programs) that can be used to assist new communities in Growth

Areas e.g. community gardens, street parties, new resident welcome kits, local resident community participation groups. This would be a Good Practice guide for use by Councils and others. Many of these tools are already in use by various Councils and other agencies but are not necessarily brought together in an accessible format. The on-line resource "Future Communities" established by the Young Foundation in the UK contains both a framework and ideas for assisting new communities developing in fringe urban areas.

3. develop a "model"-planning framework for Social Infrastructure in Victorian Growth Areas that combines the desired community support services as well as the facilities needed to deliver the service system . There was little evidence that any Victorian Growth Area Council has developed an integrated Social Infrastructure plan, ideally municipal wide and even taking account of regional services and facilities, similar to the Redland Council Social Infrastructure Strategy.
4. examine and recommend organisational and governance support to the NFP service provider sector to improve their capacity to plan and deliver services as partner organisations to government.

The outer suburbs form a critical part of Melbourne's future. How we plan for and resource emerging communities in the outer suburbs will have implications well beyond the people who choose to make their home in these locations but will resonate through time and subsequent generations because "There's Something About ..... Community."

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## Appendices

### ***Appendix 1***

#### **Local Government Act 1989**

3D. What is the role of a Council?

(1) A Council is elected to provide leadership for the good governance of the municipal district and the local community.

(2) The role of a Council includes-

- a) acting as a representative government by taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision making;
- b) providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring their achievement;
- c) maintaining the viability of the Council by ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner;
- d) advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments;
- e) acting as a responsible partner in government by taking into account the needs of other communities;
- f) fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

## **Appendix 2**

### **How to make a community.**

The findings in this study suggest that particular characteristics can assist in the creation of stronger local communities. These include:

- Time – a proportion of the local residents who have time to interact, whether retirees, young people, or those who are not exhausted by work, or working long hours;
- The passage of time – making a community takes historical sediment. Relationships are built over time, and suburbs themselves have a life-cycle, so they cannot all have the same depth of community given differences in their age;
- Spatial opportunity – this is facilitated by “third places” like libraries, cafes, skate parks and dog parks. Planners need to think creatively about third places for different groups of people such as teenagers and older residents;
- Community-makers – the presence of people who strive to connect with others, including the provision of support to stimulate such types of people to create connections;
- Funding for relationship-making activities like local festivals and celebrations, mothers groups;
- Social bridges: for example jobs, dogs and children;
- Educational facilities that bring students into communities (as workers, students and consumers) and create age, socio-economic and ethnic diversity;
- Formal support for particular “life-cycle related events for example, for new mothers, new residents, retirees, or teenagers;
- “Community-creating house frontages that create front gardens, and facilitate opportunities for time at the street frontage;
- A streetscape that facilitates interaction through open sight lines, and good visibility and the corner shop (i.e. people can see and meet each other);
- Schools and corner shops near home, or facilities that imitate the characteristics of these, that encourage children and adults to walk, talk and reduce school congestion;
- Planning of facilities that circulate residents, workers and/or students around adjacent communities, enlarging social opportunities and networks (for example, desirable sporting facilities in low income old suburbs adjacent to new planned communities, and good retail facilities in the latter which do the same in reverse).

***From “Linked up Lives: Putting Together Work, Home and Community in Ten Australian Suburbs - Overview Report”.***

***Authors: Philippa Williams, Barbara Pocock and Ken Bridge***

## **Appendix 3**

### **Community Ingredients**

*Successful new communities will be built by a partnership of practitioners working with future and existing residents. Consideration of how the high quality of the new settlement will be maintained in the long term must influence the ways in which places and buildings are planned for and designed, and will benefit from the ongoing involvement of local people.*

#### **1. Residents in control: governance, engagement and accountability**

New settlements provide a huge opportunity to govern communities differently - with residents in command of what happens locally. Neighbourhoods can be planned, designed and established where people are able to articulate their views, where these views are taken seriously and where they are encouraged to play an active part in the life of their community, provide better living environments and ultimately more sustainable communities.

Achieving this will require appropriate structures of governance that allow residents to drive what happens in their communities. It will also require less formal opportunities for residents to express themselves and, through the various contributions they make, to shape the future of their localities.

#### **2. Early Engagement of Future and Existing Residents**

The conversation between people who will live in the new settlements and those involved in building them should start well before the first brick is laid.

Early engagement helps to foster a culture in which people expect to be involved in shaping their neighbourhood so that sharing their views and aspirations becomes a way of life. While this is difficult to achieve, it is essential for getting a new community off to a good start. It can help bring new and existing residents together and is far preferable to trying to turn round a poor reputation further down the line.

#### **3. Facilitating Social Networks**

Communities where many residents have strong social links with others living nearby and where people are more likely to get involved in community orientated activities tend to be places with higher levels of resident wellbeing.

'Social capital' refers to the ability of members of a community to form social relationships and networks between neighbours, community and shared interest groups and the wider population.

High levels of social capital have been linked to a number of positive community outcomes, such as better educational achievement and resident health. There is also evidence linking high social capital, or sense of community, to lower levels of criminal activity. These positive outcomes are more closely related to residents'

sense of community (connection to other people) rather than their attachment to a physical place, which suggests that even entirely new places will benefit from the development of a sense of local community.

It is difficult to measure the degree to which residents have formed relationships with each other and therefore consideration of social capital is rarely overtly included in plans for new communities. However, practitioners involved in the creation of new settlements are able to encourage the development of these social networks through their use of design, community events and groups and by helping to build shared values within the new community. Beginning this process early in the life of a community will ensure that these networks are able to develop more fully into the longer term.

#### **4. Choosing a Stewardship Approach**

Planning for the long-term management or 'stewardship' of an area has been found to contribute significantly to the popularity and success of new communities in the past. The sort of stewardship required in an area will vary depending on the nature of the community, and should be considered at the earliest stages in planning for the community.

Stewardship is the process of managing and nurturing communities in the long term and typically involves a number of different activities that may change over time. It is a particularly important part of the picture for new communities because they need focused attention to help them to quickly develop an identity and energy. Many different types of stewardship bodies have been used in previous settlements and these may work well for new communities.

Long-term stewardship of a new community can take many forms, ranging from traditional management by a local authority through to the creation of a wholly new organisation with a specific responsibility to maintain the quality of the new community into the future.

Stewardship vehicles can add more than 'the sum of their parts' to a new community by combining the management of community assets and the provision of services with building strong engagement with local residents.

#### **5. Community Ownership and the Management of Assets**

Transferring assets, such as community centres or parks to local people can give communities a greater opportunity to shape the way these assets are run to ensure that they provide the maximum benefit to local people.

Community ownership and management of public assets are means of empowering communities. There are many benefits, including providing revenue streams to use for other community purposes. Wealth creation through the new use of an existing facility, be it a centre, a shop, a housing estate, or a school, can help improve confidence in that place. It can help to restore the viability of local businesses, and it can help to restore land values and attract new investment.

While fixed public assets in a community - the roads, parks, publicly owned land, buildings and facilities - are key resources for communities, the full benefits will only be realised if they are used to their full potential. Community ownership and management generates its own demands upon community groups in terms of time, skills and capacity, and will not always be the best approach. However, at present community groups and social enterprises are not always able to make the most of their potential and could potentially do much more to benefit their communities if they had more control over assets and received more support from local public and other agencies to own and manage them.

## **6. Maintaining High Quality Public Space**

The quality of the local environment is a key element in what makes somewhere a good place to live. Whether a place looks clean, tidy and pleasant can affect property prices, economic investment and health, and linked to this, there is evidence that it is a key element in how satisfied people are with their neighbourhood.

Maintaining a good quality local environment from the beginning will be important for the new settlements. Ongoing building programmes throughout the early years can give a place a messy and unfinished appearance and will present an additional challenge to those involved in developing and managing the community in the longer term. However, there is scope for planning well ahead and for tackling the issue from many angles in order to maintain a good quality environment both in the early days and as the new community matures.

Once a new community has been developed and residents have moved in the quality of public spaces will affect how satisfied local people are with their neighbourhood. Many neighbourhood management initiatives in existing neighbourhoods have often found that residents' top priority is for a safer, cleaner and greener neighbourhood.

There is a clear continuum from litter to more serious environmental crime. Left unchecked, dirty streets and neighbourhoods affect the perception of the local community which can lead to anti-social behaviour and eventually serious crime.

## **7. Promoting Environmentally Friendly Behaviours**

Building regulations already require new homes to perform to higher environmental standards than most existing housing. The specifications will continue to rise. These technological improvements will help to reduce energy use but in themselves they are not enough. Environmentally friendly lifestyles and behaviours - such as the use of sustainable transport, more efficient appliances within homes and waste recycling where possible will also be needed to meet national targets. This can be encouraged by creating an environmentally friendly culture, providing green alternatives and incentivising green behaviours.

## **8. Achieving Good Design**

Good design throughout the neighbourhood will help a new community to develop its own character and identity. There are various methods that project partners can use to ensure that new settlements are attractive and desirable places for residents.

## **9. Economic Development**

Economic development is a key ingredient of the overall sustainability of communities. Areas already identified for housing growth are places where new residents will have opportunities to access employment locally. However in the long term communities will need their own strategies for ensuring that all residents have opportunities to develop their skills and competencies.

Each new settlement should have an economic strategy and should be able to tell a story about its purpose (or purposes) from an economic point of view. Understanding this rationale will help those involved in building a community to respond better to the needs and aspirations of its residents.

New residents will be attracted to a new development for a number of reasons, which might include:

- affordability of the housing
- accessibility to a place of work and/or place of cultural significance, through good transport links
- quality of the place
- quality of the residential offer
- the desire to make a new start in their own lives or to be part of something new

There is evidence to suggest that the quality of place - including the quality of the residential offer - is a factor in choice of location both for businesses and for individuals, particularly for workers in the knowledge economy. New towns need to be quite large (between 150,000 and 300,000 population) if they are to attract employers.

Where there are existing residents, they must also be part of the economic story for the place. This could take the form of more affordable housing options for young people growing up there - which may help to retain a workforce - or it might take the form of better opportunities for employment and skills development.

## 10. Community Builders

Local authorities have a strategic role as place-shapers in their area. This will mean that in most cases they will take a lead role in driving forward the creation of new communities. In some areas local authorities may pursue this role through their involvement in an Urban Regeneration Company or other independent partnership organisation.

All local authorities already have experience of and structures for engaging with local residents, such as ward committees or neighbourhood management structures. Local authorities may wish to use a combination of these structures and other methods to engage and consult existing residents.

Local authorities are the primary place-management body in any area. They could choose to manage new settlements in the same way they manage existing communities within their boundaries, including maintaining public space and providing local services such as refuse collection. They and their partners may wish to consider another stewardship option for new settlements.

Adapted from The Future Communities website [www.futurecommunities.net/](http://www.futurecommunities.net/) that .... is aimed at anyone interested in building the successful sustainable communities of tomorrow.

*The Future Communities consortium explores the practical ways in which new and existing housing developments can succeed as places where people want to live. This is done by encouraging the right mix of social engagement, networks, mutual support, public institutions, leadership and shared identities, to make sure that communities in transition can thrive. The programme draws on local and international ideas from architects, designers, and the academic community..*

*Consortium members include the Young Foundation UK, the Homes and Communities Agency, LG Improvement & Development, Birmingham City Council, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Aylesbury Vale District Council and Peabody Trust.*



## **Appendix 4**

### **The benefits of having a Community Development worker early in the development of growth area**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to collate the anecdotal leanings of Community Development (CD) workers in growth areas, using Epping North and Mernda as a snap shot, and document the well-understood benefits in placing a CD worker in growth areas early in the development of new communities.

#### **Background**

This report was compiled based on the “on the ground” experience and anecdotal evidence of the City of Whittlesea’s Community Development Officer for Epping North in consultation with the Community Development Officer for Mernda.

At the time of writing in 2011, Epping North has a population of 7 081 residents having grown from 727 in 2006 and is estimated to rise to 44 097 by 2031<sup>1</sup>. The CD Officer for Epping North has been in that role since April 2010 at 0.4 EFT.

Mernda/Doreen has a population of 20 497 in 2011, having grown from 3 562 in 2006 and is estimated to rise to 51 274 by 2031<sup>2</sup>. The CD Officer for Mernda has been in that role since March 2010 at 0.6 EFT and an additional CD Officer at Doreen will be allocated at 0.4 EFT by the end of 2011.

There have been some differences in the roles of these two CD Officers, including

The Epping North role being established prior to any Council owned infrastructure and at an early stage of development in the community than Mernda.

The Mernda role has been located within the community at the Mernda Community Activity Centre and the Epping North role based at the Council offices in South Morang

Despite these differences there are many common threads of experiences and clear benefits to the community as outlined below.

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<sup>1</sup> All population forecasts are sourced from the City of Whittlesea’s population forecast website <http://forecast2.id.com.au/Default.aspx?id=131&pg=5210>

<sup>2</sup> All population forecasts are sourced from the City of Whittlesea’s population forecast website <http://forecast2.id.com.au/Default.aspx?id=131&pg=5210>

## **Benefits of early Community Development worker in growth areas**

There are many benefits for having a CD worker in a community in the early stages of its development and whilst this is not an exhaustive list of all those, it does outline some of the major benefits:

- Builds the foundation and culture of the community
- Provide links for new residents early in development
- A central contact
- Information sharing
- Community engagement
- Maximise limited resources and avoid duplication
- Improvements for planning and infrastructure
- Maximise opportunities to be innovative and creative
- Support advocacy
- Support emerging leadership and community groups
- Support and promote business/employment opportunities and needs

### **Builds the foundation and culture of the community**

Having a CD worker early in the development of a community supports the shaping of the tone and feel of the precinct development. It allows the worker to create links with existing and emerging agencies/stakeholders that move into the area and set the tone of how these services will work together, encouraging a partnership approach and promotes the importance of creating a precinct/village approach within the community.

They foster a sense of connection and community, one that goes beyond each Developer's boundaries.

### **Provide links for new residents early in development**

The growth in new areas happens incredibly fast, so having a community development worker on the ground in the initial stages of development ensures that new residents are more connected with one another, and also with programs and services available. This may help reduce the isolation that is often anecdotally reported in new growth areas early in development stages.

## **A central contact**

It ensures that one person is there as a central contact between the diverse agencies and stakeholders within the geographical area. They have knowledge about what the needs are, the services that are on the ground and the gaps. They support the service providers to work together, strengthen connections and link them to each other. It is vital that new stakeholders can connect with other existing stakeholders. These stakeholders can come from diverse places and agencies and often do not have the knowledge, the resources or make it their priority to link into the community.

## **Information sharing**

In growth areas there are often significant communication challenges. Simple things such as the local paper may not be delivered. New residents are often not connected well with their neighbours and just hearing about what is happening can be hard. Getting the word out about services to the community can be challenging. Having a central person who is well known within the community as a resource and referral point maximises the communities' connection with what is going on in the area.

## **Community Engagement**

The CD worker's knowledge and anecdotal evidence about the needs of the community is also vital. They hear the voice of the community and are able to pass on trends as they emerge and act as a reference point for Council and other service providers.

Engaging the community in new growth areas is often a very informal and grass roots process. It is about attending local events, repeatedly being seen in the area, being available and responding to questions as they arise, linking the community with other services and agencies. It can be helpful to run information sessions where other stakeholders answer questions about issues concerning the community, facilitate informal getting to know your neighbour sessions, supporting emerging community groups to source a venue to meet or just answering individual enquiries. It requires flexibility and responsiveness to the community's needs and issues as they arise.

If the CD worker is a Council employee they can raise the profile of Council within the emerging community and strengthen the link and understanding between community and Council by increasing the communities understanding of Council's role and feeding information about the community back to Council.

So this is a two way process, information to the community and information from the community

### **Maximise limited resources and avoid duplication**

By supporting and encouraging a precinct approach in growth areas the CD workers can maximise the limited resources that are in the new area. They refer to services that are operating, link service providers to work together to provide a more robust service and reduce duplication. This encourages the wise use of the limited available resources. The CD worker can also link community members and other stakeholders into other services that are not yet within the growth area but are available outside the immediate growth area.

By having a CD worker on the ground it also maximises the follow through on any Developer contributions that are given in the early stages of a community. They provide a link to the information that is gathered and assists to keep the momentum of any established activities going. When the Developers leave the area having completed their time, the momentum is not lost. CD workers employed through Councils can provide municipal wide connections and work to link communities across estate boundaries from the outset.

### **Improvements for planning and infrastructure**

By having a CD worker in place early it allows for a strong link between the existing communities into infrastructure projects and maximise opportunities to build a connected community hub. The worker acts as a link for information about what is happening for the community members but also enhances the capacity of the community to input into the planning processes. This includes supporting agencies to maximise placement and frontages of their buildings to enhance the community feel and connection. They can build connections between sites such as schools, preschools and childcare centres to strengthen connections and transitions between these services. It also allows for smaller businesses to be involved in this process based on the individual communities rather than just being limited to 'the usual' service providers such as schools, large supermarkets and preschools.

### **Maximise opportunities to be innovative and creative**

The CD worker has grass roots connections. They have capacity for faster response to needs as they develop. They are on the ground, connected into local service providers and stakeholders and can respond faster to the needs as they emerge. Often in growth areas a service may be scheduled to come into the area at a later stage, but with these flexible resources there is capacity to look to establish cost effective short-term solutions to needs as they arise. To maximise any underutilised resource in the short term to meet a need. This may mean using school classrooms to run playgroups whilst school enrolments are not high and the community hall has not been built. Or source space for Maternal and Child Health services to be introduced before permanent facilities are built. There is capacity to respond to opportunities in an innovative and creative way

when responding to need. This provides better outcomes both in the short and longer term.

Being on the ground they have more capacity to see unanticipated needs as they arise. Sometimes the communities that develop are not always anticipated. For example Epping north has a high Sri Lankan and Indian community that was not anticipated. The Epping North CD worker has raised this profile more broadly and made links into other appropriate services.

### **Support Advocacy**

Being on the ground and connected with the diverse stakeholders the CD worker has capacity to collate and raise the needs of the emerging community, support advocacy for services that are needed. This can be for simple needs such as the delivery of the local paper, securing a street posting box or assisting to raise awareness of the need for increased public transport.

### **Support emerging leadership and community groups**

A CD worker can support community groups as they emerge, link other members of the community with similar interests together. They have capacity to mentor and support leadership of new groups as they are emerging, which supports a robust foundation for the groups and builds their capacity for sustainability in the future.

### **Support and promote business/employment opportunities and needs**

A CD worker can support, promote and strengthen the connection into the community of new businesses as they emerge. They can support local employment opportunities by promoting them amongst the community. They can also be aware of challenges new businesses are facing and seek to communicate and advocate for these issues to the appropriate agencies. They can link new businesses into appropriate training and support services, thus strengthening their sustainability.

### **CD worker needs to be supported and connected**

One of the challenges a CD worker in this role can face is isolation and disconnection. It is vital that the CD worker is supported and connected to a broader multidisciplinary team and links the community to that team. That is, they are connected to a variety of staff with varying expertise and responsibility for a diverse range of services including planning, all of life stage services, infrastructure and transport.

To assist the CD worker to be well connected it may be beneficial for them to co-located between the growth area and a more central office, such as the main Council Offices.

## **Conclusion**

It is very clear that there are many measurable benefits for a community in having a CD worker within a growth area early in its development. It follows that the earlier the worker is in place the more opportunities there are, and the better the outcomes. Having the worker sets the foundation for how the community will develop and strengthens connections between the stakeholders. These benefits are gained with minimal resourcing. With an EFT of 0.4 and 0.6 in both Epping North and Mernda it is clear that with minimal resources much can be achieved. But it is vital that the CD worker be well supported and connected to a broader multidisciplinary team.

## **Appendix 5**

### **City of Casey Community Development Principles**

#### **Aim:**

The aim of the City of Casey Community Development Principles is to provide a framework for Council and its staff to use in its everyday practices to ensure individuals, communities and networks are connected with one another by:

- Providing opportunities for residents to meaningfully participate in decision making processes that affect their community.
- Supporting individuals and communities through the provision of resources and fostering of partnerships between individuals and within communities.
- Assisting with the development of strong and resilient communities that have the ability to identify and meet the communities' needs, achieve self-reliance, contribute to solutions and support their own advocacy efforts.

#### **Principles:**

It is intended that the following principles will be reflected in the practices of Council and its staff.

**Inclusiveness** – Provide the wider community with opportunities to meaningfully participate in information gathering, planning, direction setting and decision making regarding outcomes that affect the communities' development. An ultimate goal is that communities would drive this process.

**Collaboration** – Establish and foster partnerships that aim to achieve positive outcomes for all residents. Council aims to assist communities in finding solutions to issues that are important to the lives of individuals, families and communities. This includes developing networks between people, encouraging different communities to work together and building relationships with and between those different communities.

**Capacity building** – Support and strengthen individuals, families and communities to identify needs and develop solutions at a local level. This may involve advocacy, empowerment, education, awareness raising and distribution of resources to individuals and communities.

**Equity** – Ensure that opportunities and resources available to the community are distributed in a just and equitable manner according to community needs. In addition, all communities should have the right to access all Council services and resources without discrimination. This includes ensuring Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islander and marginalised groups in the community have an equal say.

**Responsiveness** – Ensure the evolving nature and constancy of change within the community are responded to efficiently and effectively in line with community development methodologies and practices. This will enable the demands of the community to be met in a relevant and timely manner.

## Appendix 6

### Redlands Social Infrastructure Plan 2009: New approaches for Redland City Council

- **developing hubs and precincts** as hearts for our communities – many of our communities have a number of facilities such as schools, halls and sporting clubs. We will undertake community development and place-making work to link these facilities with local groups to form community hubs and precincts that are focal points for local activity.
- **fostering social enterprises** – we will support local organisations to apply business methods to meet social objectives. A new youth enterprise facility at Capalaba is one example of how we will do this.
- **emphasising community development**– community development means working with communities to help them find ways to be active and sustainable, and to overcome barriers to participation and social inclusion. This work is as important as physical facilities, if not more important. We will refocus Council's community development effort on high-impact programs and projects, and will advocate for more community development capacity in government and community organisations working in our area.
- **supporting the service system in new ways** – there will be increasing dependence on a range of human services to meet the needs of older people, families and vulnerable people. This Strategy looks at advocating to fill the gaps in the service system, improving the quality of services, and supporting services to be more effective as demand increases. The focus is on the critical areas of respite, youth and emergency housing.
- **working from our strengths** – the Redlands is a strong community with natural and social assets. This Strategy builds on those strengths.
- **investing in catalyst projects that will have multiplier effects** – projects like the Minjerribah Knowledge Centre or our Community Foundations program will have benefits across the whole community. The catalyst projects contained in this strategy will position the Redlands as a leader in developing social infrastructure.
- **supporting and fostering networks** - Networks connect people and bring positive opportunities for them to shape their communities. We will prioritise formation of networks and facility sharing in emerging communities.
- **working from a strong evidence base** – establishing local research partnerships with local organisations and universities to investigate local issues and develop integrated responses,



Partnerships will be future focussed and will build Redland City's reputation for leading edge policy and practice.

- **advancing digital technologies** – economic prosperity as well as the health and well-being of individuals, businesses and communities is increasingly dependant on access to new technologies . We will need to ensure the city's physical and social infrastructure is able to support and adapt to the digital technology evolution whilst not compromising efforts to provide face-to-face opportunities where people come together for commerce, citizenship, learning, leisure and social interaction.

## **Appendix 7**

### **The Impact of Community-based Prevention and Early Intervention Action**

This report analyses the literature addressing the impact of community based prevention and early intervention action

*Although there are some quite significant differences between the four major areas of programs that have been examined in this study, there are also several key issues that may be identified as general findings that span the field.*

*First, there is a clear predominance of programs either based in schools or working through schools as a community resource. Not only are schools essential for the development of future generations of citizens (investing in social capital), but also schools are a focal point for most communities. Networks develop around focal points, shared interests and opportunities for people to meet.*

*Second, best practice in prevention and early intervention and best practice in community building have much in common. Not only are prevention and early intervention best located in community settings and most effective when they respond to local conditions, but community building too may be more effective when it is addressed at the early stage of identifying community problems.*

*Third, inheritance of social capital requires that it is actively 'passed on' between generations and nurtured by older members of communities. The intergenerational programs discussed should not be seen in isolation, but many of them could be viewed from the perspective of the other main areas. Communities consist of all generations and strong communities show evidence of positive intergenerational relationships.*

*Fourth, community involvement and participation is a factor in all community-based programs. This includes local leadership, volunteering, civic trust, networks and partnerships between people and between institutions. Where professionals are involved, they are more effective from a community-building perspective if they respond to local context, work in multi-disciplinary ways and adopt facilitative approaches as much as possible. It is also an indicator of strength in communities when the various sectors (government, business, non-government welfare, community groups and individuals) work together towards positive social outcomes.*

*Fifth, government support for programs is appropriate for two reasons. It is important as seed money, especially in communities where the erosion of civil society can be seen to have had an impact (through rising crime rates, high levels of child abuse, isolation of seniors, and so on). At the same time, there is strong evidence that by adopting an active role in community building, there is great potential for government to make downstream savings on the projected levels of spending on resolving social problems. Early intervention programs that encourage community building are cost-effective.*

*Sixth, although many of the programs reviewed in this study have a family focus, this is not in contradiction with community building. The programs that were examined all achieve the promotion of stronger communities, and many of them do so through the interventions with families on which they are based. Families are a key element to strong communities because they are a primary building block of the social fabric.*

*Through a meta-analysis of available evaluative literature, this study has demonstrated the value of prevention and early intervention programs. These are a key dimension to promoting stronger communities that display the characteristics of a civil society in which social capital is nurtured for the benefit of the whole community.*

Number 11: A meta-analysis of the impact of community-based prevention and early intervention action - June 2001, by Erin Gauntlett, Richard Hugman, Peter Kenyon and Pauline Logan on website of Families, Housing, Community services and Indigenous Affairs

## ***Appendix 8***

# **Social Infrastructure**

## **Planning Tool**

## **Project**

***A tool for building and  
shaping strong communities  
in the process of growth***

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**March 2011**

# Project Brief

**Social Infrastructure Planning Tool Project: A tool for building and shaping strong communities in the process of growth.**

*This project aims to deliver a dynamic flexible planning tool to guide the shaping of growing communities in Growth Areas.*

## 1. Project context: Profile of Metropolitan Melbourne Growth Councils

According to the Department of Sustainability and Environment's *Victoria in Future*, Melbourne's population will be rapidly and steadily growing to over 5 million by 2026. Most of this growth is set to occur in the six designated growth municipalities of

- Hume
- Melton
- Whittlesea
- Wyndham
- Cardinia
- Casey

More than 30% of Melbourne's population will live in these municipalities by 2026 and most of the growth will consist of families with children and young people while at the same time the population will continue to age in line with projections for Australia as a whole. These growth councils are also distinguished by having

- significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations
- a high proportion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- pockets of significant socio-economic disadvantage.

## 2. What is the problem?

Growth municipalities face many challenges including:

- responding to social disadvantage in the context of rapid growth
- inadequate social and physical infrastructure to cope with growth
- geographically large with both urban and rural areas
- older established areas and new rapidly developing Greenfield sites.

Many individuals and families are experiencing significant disadvantage without access to the services and supports they need in a timely fashion to assist in their health and wellbeing. Increasingly, community indicators are showing that residents of growth municipalities are geographically isolated from social support programs and present with the inevitable social consequences associated with this, including family breakdown, mental health issues, disengaged young people and socially excluded communities.

### **3. What has to be done to address this problem?**

New models and timing of service delivery are needed that are appropriate and sustainable during the process of growth. Residents need opportunities to naturally connect to each other and to access social support systems and services. This is particularly important to prevent unaddressed issues from becoming long term and entrenched with the accompanying social and economic consequences.

### **4. How will this project contribute to the solution?**

The Social Infrastructure Planning Tool Project will develop a strengths based, flexible and dynamic tool to guide the building of strong communities through the provision of social resources that creates self-sustaining families and liveable neighbourhoods. This planning tool will outline, for all stakeholders who have a role in building communities, what social resources are needed, when they are needed, how they should be delivered, and by whom, in the process of growth or renewal.

Social resources include

- services and programs to support individuals and families, and
- capacity building processes and programs that assist in the building of strong and resilient communities.

Stakeholders who may have an interest in this tool include those from the public and private sectors including social planners, community service system builders, urban designers and property developers. This tool will be specifically located from the perspective of the role of local government in the building of communities and managing population growth.

Once developed, this tool should also be of interest to those stakeholders responsible for the delivery of the physical infrastructure to communities as it will help to inform the physical infrastructure needed.

## **5. What do we mean by ‘social infrastructure’?**

For the purposes of this project, Social Infrastructure refers to all forms of social requirements, opportunities, and services that individuals and families need to thrive. They are the events, programs and services identified by the community and other stakeholders as necessary. It is important, for example, that these are available, in some form, to residents in new growth areas as soon as they take up residency. It is also important to evolve the support system as the community grows. This will require the development of new models of service and program delivery that are comprehensive and sustainable in the long term. Delivering Social Infrastructure will require considered practices and evaluation of outcomes.

- ***Community capacity building***

Central to creating strong communities is the capacity of community builders to listen to, learn from, and respond to the needs and interests of all individuals and families. Practices will include community engagement, community empowerment, community development, tapping into community assets, and community governance. The *desired outcomes* of this method are significant community capital, community inclusiveness, connectedness, community ownership, empowerment and belonging.

- ***Service provision***

Communities need to have access to a range of services to support individuals and families through all the stages of development. These may include access to family support services, education, employment, appropriate natural and built environments, aged services and so on depending on the requirements for the community.

## **6. What do we mean by a strengths based tool?**

Strengths based, as it relates to this planning tool, means methods and approaches that are informed by preventative measures. This requires ensuring that actions are taken whereby problems are avoided and issues are addressed early in their conception to prevent them from becoming long term and entrenched. The results from this approach have both social and economic positive benefits.

## **7. Project Plan**

### **Planning for Social Support Programs in Communities Experiencing Rapid Urban and Population Growth**

#### **Aims and Outcomes of the Project**

The aims of the project are to:

- Identify national and international best practice models in the area of the social development and support of growing communities.
- Identify population growth and service demand trigger points, based on best practice models, to enable rapidly growing communities attract the provision of accessible, relevant and timely social support programs and community capacity building resources.
- Identify and describe the differing roles and responsibilities of community, public and private sector stakeholders involved in initiating and responding to rapidly developing growth communities including the local community leadership, three levels of government, non government organisations and the development industry.
- Identify and describe best practice models for stakeholder partnership and governance for the evaluation of priorities and delivery of social infrastructure.
- Develop a theoretical framework and practical strategies to assist Councils and State agencies plan for and support growth area communities to develop strengthening characteristics within their emerging communities.
- Develop a set of demand indicators and service benchmarks that will inform the adequate and timely provision of social support programs, including social support service planning and provision and community capacity building resources, for all identified stakeholders.
- Understand the organisational issues (e.g. funding agreement requirements, geographic spread, attraction and retention of staff, historical focus, service delivery points) affecting non government service provision agencies that may impinge on their ability to adequately respond to the particular needs of growth area communities
- Encourage a consistent approach by State agencies and the growth Councils to the planning of social support programs.



The expected outcomes of the project are:

- A documented framework of principles, standards and benchmarks for the planning of social infrastructure in growth area communities
- A recommended process for determining social infrastructure priorities and planning the building of strong communities.
- A selection of robust case studies that are accepted by all parties as representing accurate depictions of the challenges and opportunities affecting a growth area communities and which provide a replicable methodology for the provision of social infrastructure into urban growth areas.

#### Methodology

#### **Stage One – January to July 2011**

A literature review of contemporary published studies examining social development issues in rapidly growing urban fringe areas; resource allocation of social services to urban fringe communities; and community capacity building issues in rapidly growing urban communities

A review and comparison of service planning and community capacity building strategies (or community “resilience” development) processes in the Melbourne metropolitan growth area Councils

A review of service planning and community strengthening development processes in growth area Councils in other Australian States

A review of service planning and community “resilience” development processes and benchmarking methodologies in comparable international jurisdictions (e.g. local government in Canada)

A description of current and emerging social infrastructure models in growth area Councils and a discussion of the other factors that may influence these models in the future.

#### **Stage Two – Timing Dependent on Funding** (to be further developed)

A description of the learnings from three case studies of growth areas in various stages of development in terms of service provision and community capacity building processes.

#### **Stage Three – Timing Dependent on Funding**

The development of a framework and a set of standards for the planning and provision of social infrastructure in growth areas and a review of the application of these standards to a “hypothetical growth area”.

#### **Stage Four – Timing Dependent on Funding**

A Demonstration Project: applying the Framework to a new community and evaluating it.

A draft report will be prepared for consideration by the Project Reference Group before finalisation

### **Management of the Study**

The management of the project will occur through a Project Reference Group but also, importantly, be supported by a separate but subordinate Working Group to oversee the case study.

**Project Reference Group** comprising representatives from

- City of Whittlesea (Lead)
- Growth municipalities (2 or 3 representatives)
- Melbourne Community Foundation
- GAA
- VCOSS
- Federal Government's Social Inclusion Board
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Planning and Community Development
- Department of Treasury and Finance
- RMIT
- National Growth Areas Alliance
- Property development sector

The Project Reference Group to be chaired by the City of Whittlesea which will also be the single point of contact in the first instance.

**STAGE ONE:**

<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Task</b>
A literature review of contemporary published studies examining social development issues in rapidly growing urban fringe areas; resource allocation of social services to urban fringe communities; and community capacity building issues in rapidly growing urban communities	<p>Identify and critique key published studies that inform the broader project's objectives but with specific focus on rapidly growing urban fringe communities</p> <p>(Note: this could be a much more extensive task but important to have this proportionate to study's outcomes focus)</p>
A review and comparison of service planning and community capacity building strategies in the Melbourne metropolitan growth area Councils	<p>Obtain participation commitments from the 6 designated growth municipalities of Wyndham, Melton, Hume, Whittlesea, Cardinia, and Casey.</p> <p>Obtain and review relevant documentation from each municipality regarding their planning and delivery strategies for community infrastructure, social services support system and community capacity building</p> <p>Conduct interviews with key personnel from each Council to expand on experiences, opportunities and barriers in relation to planning and delivery strategies.</p> <p>Conduct interviews with relevant State Government Departments –DPCD; DEECD; DHS; DH with respect to service planning and community capacity building strategies.</p>
A review of service planning and community strengthening development processes in growth area Councils in other Australian States	Identify and critique published studies and planning frameworks from interstate that may inform the project.
A review of service planning and community strengthening development processes and best practice examples in comparable international local government areas	Identify and critique published studies and planning frameworks that are considered best practice from international experience that may inform the project, with a particular focus on cities that are similar to Melbourne (high levels of immigration, rapid urban growth, disadvantaged Indigenous population, high levels of population mobility) E.g. Canadian experience
A description of current and emerging social services infrastructure models in growth area Councils and a discussion of the other factors that may influence these models in the future	

<b>STAGE TWO:</b>	
A description of three case studies in different stages of development (to be further developed)	To be further developed
<b>STAGE THREE:</b>	
The development of a framework and a set of standards for the planning and provision of social infrastructure in growth areas and a review of the application of these standards to a “hypothetical growth area”	The development of a framework would be an extension of the case study analysis. To move from a case study and reach agreed benchmarks would necessitate refinement and negotiation with the range of primary stakeholders (State Government, growth area councils and the NGO service provider sector)
A draft report will be prepared for consideration by the Project Reference Group before finalisation	Respond to significant changes required by Project Reference Group