

## 2020 Sustainable Mess

Don't waste your time looking for brilliant results from the Population, Sustainability, Climate Change, Water and the Future of Our Cities stream at the federal 2020 Summit. Frankly the output is a pathetic series of motherhood statements. There was hardly a new idea – we were talking about most of this in the 70s – and even the points of contention were predictable. Given my comments in #55, it is no surprise that there were delegates against moving federal funding from roads to public transport.

The recent one day Victorian Climate Change Summit by comparison was a much more successful process with the Premier, eight ministers and numerous advisors in real dialogue with delegates selected for their experience and knowledge. The difference in Victoria was a real harnessing and embracing of good ideas and real communication between the community and the State Government.

## Health, PT & Legibility

"I attended the local summit we had at Monash University last week and joined in the health summit. At the end of the day, we agreed that there needed to be access and equity throughout all of the health organisations. In terms of health, the issue wasn't that there were not enough medical facilities, it was that you couldn't get to them. Everyone agreed that public transport had to be looked at to accommodate the growing health concerns of a whole region. You have heard at our meetings that I bring up the fact that many people of different languages simply do not understand our public transport system. This limits them in every capacity - jobs, schools, medical appointments. etc. I am sure I am not the first councillor that spoke to a community group about services that had to hear that there were bus stops where there are in fact no bus routes!" Ref: Cr Roz Blades, City of Greater Dandenong, 11/4/08

**And Also ...** "Brumby is determined he will not suffer the John Howard fate of being seen to have missed the climate change boat."

Ref: Paul Austin, The Age, 5/4/08



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## Sustainable Advice on Cities

"A leading international city planner is calling for the 2020 summit to consider radical changes to the way Australians live, work and move around their cities. Prominent Danish urban designer Professor Jan Gehl says Australia's obsession with cars comes at the expense of the liveability of its big cities and the health of its citizens. ... But he says it is not too late to change. 'Originally, we made the cities for people but then, in the past 50 years, gradually we've forgotten more and more about that and now many of them have been made more and more for cars', he said. 'I remember a big sign in Perth saying, "Your car is welcome to the city", but we always whispered, "You're not" ... Australian cities - the suburbs and right down to the city centres - have been very, very influenced by traffic engineer thinking, absolutely too much compared to other places in the world. ... When we started recently in Sydney, we found that in certain streets, half the walking time was spent waiting to cross the street ... We are suggesting that it should become much more easy to walk in the cities and that cars generally are parked at a longer distance from where you work or where your shopping opportunities are. Everybody would like a lively city, an attractive city, a safe city, a sustainable city and a city which invites more healthy lifestyles. By being sweet to the pedestrians and sweet to the bicyclists, you can actually accomplish quite a bit of all these goals'... Professor Gehl says Australian cities will undergo a 'very marked change' over the next 10 to 15 years because of concerns about petrol prices, climate change, obesity and its cost to the health system." Ref ABC News Online 18/4/08 <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/04/17/2219693.htm>

## A Better Way to Move People

"New roads, tunnels and bridges are part of the strategy to improve city, regional and rural transport, but there is a growing emphasis on the need to improve public transport. This is particularly apparent in capital cities where commuting by car is becoming increasingly untenable. More buses, an expanded rail network and new trains are either in the pipeline or on the drawing boards. The increased use of fast ferries, a common form of transport overseas, is also seen as a practical measure, as most capital cities in Australia have river access to the central business district." Ref: Trevor Hoey, The Age, 13/4/08

**And Also ...** "A Spanish driver who collided with a cyclist is suing the dead youth's family for \$33,323 for damage the impact caused to his luxury car, a Spanish newspaper reports. Tomas Delgado, who has faced no criminal charges, wants another \$10,000 to cover car hire while his Audi A8 was repaired." Ref: The Age 29/1/08

### UK Test on Traffic Calming

*“Suburban traffic calming and lower speed limits could be hurting the environment according to a study by the Automobile Association in Britain. The study, which looked at the impact of road changes in the 21st century, particularly concentrated on fuel economy and greenhouse gases. The study tested a car capable of returning 4.87 litres for 100km at a constant 60km/h and ran it over speed bumps at the hi-tech Millbrook Proving Ground, used by the country's big carmakers. The driver had to slow for each hump, then accelerate back to cruising speed. The result was a huge hit on the fuel economy, which dropped to 9.11 litres for 100km. There was also a significant increase in the amount of greenhouse gases coming from the car, particularly carbon dioxide. The association says its findings match those from Britain's Transport Research Laboratory. There was also bad news on lower speed limits found in a test that compared a 32km/h limit with a 50km/h mark. The study found emissions and fuel economy rose 10 per cent.” Ref: ‘Good for safety, bad for air’, Herald-Sun, 22/2/08*

*“The recently publicised report from the AA claiming that 20 mph speed limits increases pollution is laughable for both its shallow basis for testing and its failing to understand the wider environmental reasons for, and benefits of lower speeds. The report suggested that rogue drivers who accelerate between speed bumps will emit up to 46% more CO2. Rather than condemning this illegal and fuel wasting practice, the AA claims that this questions the environmental benefits of lower speeds. It also reports that when travelling at a constant 20 mph in 3rd gear a car uses 10 more fuel (and emissions) than a constant 30 mph in 4th gear. Had they done the 20 mph test in 4th gear they would have found very little difference. The AA also misses the point that high vehicle speeds are the greatest deterrent to people walking and cycling instead of using the car.*

*“20's Plenty For Us campaigns for Local Authorities to implement 20 mph as a default speed limit in all residential areas. Rod King of 20' Plenty For Us said: ‘This report seems to be a knee - jerk reaction to the increasing demand for 20 mph on residential roads not only from communities but also drivers. The AA report is not credible and fails to take into account the environmental benefits of modal shift which comes from lower speeds.’” Ref: Media Release 28/1/08 [www.20splentyforus.org.uk](http://www.20splentyforus.org.uk)*

### Federal Funding of PT

*“The NSW branch of the Rail, Bus and Tram Union (RBTU) said the federal government must ‘rethink its role’ and become involved in the funding, delivery and expansion of urban public transport. ‘I think there needs to be intervention in all the capital cities,’ RBTU NSW secretary Nick Lewocki told AAP. ‘Public transport has just become too big a part of state governments and local governments (for them) to handle. Just like education and health, transport is a very important national matter, not just a state issue’. Mr Lewocki's comments come after the NSW opposition released a discussion paper which calls for the state's buses, trains and ferries to be run by a single transport authority. At present, 10 separate agencies fall within the NSW transport portfolio. Mr O'Farrell said one agency would allow for more reliable services that would connect with each other. ‘It's time to ease the transport stress on commuters and provide services that get them to work on time and home as quickly as possible to allow families extra time together,’ Mr O'Farrell told reporters. ‘Until we have an integrated system we won't see any improvement’.” Ref: The Age 5/2/08*

### Problems with the Fleet

*“More than half the new cars bought last year were part of government or business fleets. Despite dire climate change warnings, only 13% of these were rated as low-emission vehicles. None of the low-emitters were Australian made — there are no locally produced vehicles meeting the environmentally friendly criteria. Perhaps not surprisingly given this, the greenhouse emissions per car sold in Australia were almost 50% worse than those in Europe — an average 230 grams of carbon dioxide a kilometre compared with 161 grams.”*

Ref: Adam Morton, The Age 15/4/08

### And Also ...

*“Oil prices have been on a mostly upward curve since 2001, with indications \$100 [a barrel] could look cheap in the rear-view mirror.” Ref: Patrick Mazza, Renewable Energy World, 7/4/08*

### Cyclovia in Brunswick

April 13 - a few moments of tranquilly in Sydney Road. Mr Curly in heaven & trike meets recumbent.

