

Go-Ahead for Urban Sprawl

"The Victorian Government has all but given up on a long-standing pledge to contain Melbourne's urban sprawl, announcing another big expansion of the metropolitan boundary for new housing. Six years after setting a 'clear boundary' for the city in the Melbourne 2030 policy, the Government has succumbed to a booming population, a housing shortage and resistance to high-density development in established suburbs. ... 'It's no good providing affordable land if that benefit is eaten up by transport charges', [HIA acting CEO Robert] Harding said."

Ref: Marc Moncrief, The Age, 3/12/08

"Melbourne is already a struggling megalopolis and this rather dumb State Government is going to stifle it more? Policy failure is what I would call this latest Melbourne-centric move: whatever happened to the concept of decentralisation? ... Oh, sorry, I forgot the roads. They are a priority as we are all about ensuring the car industry is propped up, aren't we?"

Ref: Tom Joyce, The Age, 4/12/08

"Anyone who has visited Europe knows that cities can be liveable, dynamic and compact."

Ref: Cam Walker, The Age, 4/12/08

State of the Victorian Environment

"A damning report on Victoria's environmental health has called for a halt to urban sprawl and dramatic changes to the 'unsustainable' materialism and consumption of the state's citizens. Just two days after the Brumby Government announced an extension of Melbourne's urban boundaries, the state-appointed Sustainability Commissioner has warned of serious environmental damage on the city fringes and called for the boundaries to be fixed." **Ref: Peter Ker, The Age, 5/12/08**

"The Age commends the recommendations on energy-and-water-efficient building standards, public transport provision, renewable and low-emission energy sources, the protection of biodiversity. ... But the overriding message is this: the Government 'must lead and become more strategic and future-focused' so that all areas of economic and social policy are made consistent with environmental sustainability as a matter of course. If Victorians continue to insist on living in a fools' paradise, our own wellbeing will eventually suffer as badly as the state's environment." **Ref: Editorial (commenting on the Victoria State of the Environment Report), The Age, 5/12/08**

Melbourne's Transport Plan

"Good transport solutions connect us seamlessly, drive down greenhouse emissions, improve our health, make good economic sense and remind us that we are citizens of a great city. Poorly conceived transport leaves us isolated, out of pocket, trapped and infuriated.... A transport plan has to sit within a vision of how the city will work, and the Bracks government gave us such a plan with Melbourne 2030: a more compact city where public transport, walking and cycling would play a larger role; a hard edge against urban sprawl. The Brumby Government's practical commitment to this vision is uncertain. Its prelude to the transport plan release was to relax the urban growth boundaries to signal that the sprawl was on again. So it's not clear that the Government understands transit-oriented development, and the new freeways it proposes on the urban fringes suggest that it sees no problem with further sprawl. If the Government really believes that greenhouse can only be tackled by making cars more efficient and that it is there to serve what it refers to as 'Cranbourne Man', then a plan that delivers more fringe freeways would be the way to go."

Ref: Bill Russell, The Age, 5/12/08

Age Polls

☞ *"Should Melbourne's growth boundary be expanded? Yes - 26% No - 74%
Total Votes: 1312 Poll date: 02/12/08*

☞ *"Do you agree with Robert Doyle's proposal to return cars to Swanston St? Yes - 16% No - 84%
Total Votes: 2922 Poll date: 01/12/08"*

Swanston Street

"I am dismayed at Robert Doyle's ascension to the position of Lord Mayor. I object to his policy of reopening Swanston Street and somehow 'revitalising' it with more traffic. How do cars equal vitality? A true revitalisation of Swanston Street would involve better landscaping to include more open and green spaces, urban sculpture and street entertainers, and safety measures to protect people. ... Those of us who choose to use public transport, a bicycle or our own feet are no less important than motorists. We are the people who bring life and movement to the city. But we are the people who will suffer if Swanston Street is reopened to cars."

Ref: Emma Sandford, The Age, 2/12/08

And Also ...

"Doyle wants to reopen Swanston Street to cars. ... Firstly, Swanston Street and the cars. Where do I start? You're an idiot, Doyle."

Ref: Catherine Deveny, The Age, 3/12/08

Public Support Public Transport

"Almost two thirds of Victorians are unhappy with the State Government's handling of public transport, and an equal number say new public transport should be given priority over roads. ... Victorians have sent a clear message of frustration to the Government over its handling of public transport. A special Age/Nielsen poll found 61 per cent of people are dissatisfied with the Brumby Government on public transport — and only 27 per cent are satisfied. And the poll, of 1009 Victorians taken between November 10 and 14, found 62 per cent want the Government to give public transport priority over roads, compared with 24 per cent who want roads to have priority. In Melbourne, support for public transport was even stronger, with 68 per cent wanting more funding directed to it instead of roads; just 19 per cent support roads as the priority."

Ref: Clay Lucas & Jason Dowling, The Age, 25/11/08

And Also ...

"I understand for disabled people and some people it is easier to get on the tram ... I just think the proliferation of them has done a lot to congest the city." **Ref: Robert Doyle, The Age, 3/12/08 on DDA compliant tram stops.**



Robert Doyle – Mayor and Motorhead

Indigenous Road Safety Forum

"One area of public policy I'm particularly keen to see progress is in the area of road safety. To get a picture of this problem, we need only look at the statistics. Road crashes account for about a quarter of all Indigenous deaths. Indigenous people are around one and half times more likely to be seriously injured and almost three times more likely to be killed in a car crash. Besides the tragic loss of life, health and well being, Indigenous communities bear a very heavy emotional burden of grief and suffering. We cannot afford to shrug our shoulders and say the problem is too hard. It won't be easy, but we must do all we can to turn these statistics around." **Ref: Anthony Albanese, Federal Minister, 29/10/08**

Disability Parking

"Ministers endorsed a national framework to progress the Australian Government's commitment to harmonise disability parking schemes across Australia. The framework provides for the creation of an Australian Disability Parking Scheme to achieve national consistency in disability parking across all States and Territories. The national scheme will improve opportunities for eligible people with disability by providing common eligibility criteria, entitlements and a national parking permit. Key elements

that will be developed through 2009 include a national consultation strategy and communications framework." **Ref: Australian Transport Council, Communiqué, 7/11/08**

Brisbane Ferries

"The latest CityCat to join Brisbane's fleet of ferries was christened with a shower of bubbly today by Brisbane-based swimming star Stephanie Rice. ... Lord Mayor Campbell Newman said the CityCat's launch brought the council a step closer to its goal of 19 ferries in service by 2012. 'Ladies and gentleman, we started the year 2008 with 10 CityCats. And this is number 13 and the year is not yet over', he said. 'What it means is seven extra services each day and improved frequency of services, for example at Mowbray Park most CityCats will be coming in every four minutes during peak hours', he said. Another CityCat will be launched by April or May next year. Cr Newman said the council was also seeking expressions of interest for private contractors to provide at least three more, possibly up to five, CityCat terminals. The new terminals may be built at Milton, Newstead, West End and Hamilton." **Ref: Georgia Waters, Brisbane Times, 13/11/08**

Taxis in Victoria

"The latest price on the only licensed market for trading and leasing taxis, BSX Services, shows a deal about to go through at \$462,000. ... Trading of taxi licences is still in its infancy in Australia, having only started in a regulated form in late 2006, but in the official market, sales and leases worth almost \$130 million were handled in the year to June 30 and \$120 million the year before. ... Since the BSX market began, according to figures from the Victorian Taxi Directorate, the prices of licences have moved up from under \$400,000 each to between \$470,000 and \$500,000. The Essential Services Commission's recent report into taxi fares had a table showing the average revenue per taxi ... in 2007 was almost \$143,000." **Ref: Ian McIlwraith, The Age, 18/10/08**

"Nearly half the state's taxis checked during an audit last week failed to meet industry standards." **Ref: Nick Higginbottom, Herald-Sun, 17/11/08**

TOD Reduces Vehicle Use by 44%

"A survey of 17 transit-oriented developments (TOD) in five US metropolitan areas showed that vehicle trips per dwelling unit were substantially below what the Institute of Transportation Engineer's Trip Generation manual estimates. Over a typical weekday period, the surveyed TOD housing projects averaged 44 percent fewer vehicle trips than that estimated by the manual (3.754 versus 6.715). Vehicle trip rates of transit-oriented housing projects were particularly low in metropolitan Washington, D.C. and Portland, Oregon, both known for successful TOD planning at the regional and corridor levels. Trip rates also generally fell as neighbourhood densities increased. Local officials should account for the lower automobile use of those residing in TOD housing through such measures as traffic impact-fee adjustments and reduced off street parking requirements."

Ref: Robert Cervero and G. B. Arrington, Vehicle Trip Reduction Impacts of Transit-Oriented Housing, 2008 (See link below) Journal of Public Transportation Vol 11, No 3

TOD in Western Australia – Pt 1

"The priority strategies of the [WA] Network City Action Plan seek to foster land use and transport integration to form a network city: a city based on a series of interconnected TODs. The plan aims to limit urban sprawl by providing 60 percent of required additional dwellings in existing urban areas and 40 percent in new growth areas. To achieve this goal, a holistic governmental approach will be required, including partnerships between the state and local government to set and achieve targets. ... Since inception, the TOD committee has reviewed the TOD potential of every station on the network (including major bus-only centres) and prioritized TOD activity in accordance with the following six criteria:

1. Strategic significance of location (i.e., metro centres, university, or hospital).
2. Potential for maximizing ridership, through increased catchment of residential, business, or park and ride.
3. Infrastructure need.
4. Potential for socioeconomic benefits (i.e., community activity, public safety, jobs).
5. Partnership potential (i.e., local government or private sector willingness).
6. Development opportunities (i.e., significant public or private land parcels adjacent and potential number of dwellings) ..."

{to be continued in #90} **Ref: John L. Renne, Smart Growth & TOD at the State Level, 2008 Journal of Public Transportation Vol 11, No 3 <http://www.nctr.usf.edu/jpt/pdf/JPT11-3.pdf>**

Safety Jackets

"Legally, motorcyclists are only required to wear an approved helmet. There is no requirement for protective gloves, jackets, pants or shoes. But the Victorian Road Safety Committee and medical experts say helmets alone are not enough protection in an accident. Twenty-eight riders have been killed so far this year - three more than at this time last year - and the latest Transport Accident Commission figures reveal riders are 34 times more likely to be severely injured than car drivers. Inflatable jackets are becoming increasingly popular overseas. Motorcycle police in Italy, Spain, Japan and Brazil now wear them as part of their uniform. ... In most of the styles available in Australia, the airbag - linking neck, torso and lower spine cushions - is concealed between the outer motorcycle jacket and the lining and is connected to the bike via a rip-cord. When a rider is thrown from a bike, the rip-cord triggers the airbag, which inflates within half a second to protect the rider before he or she hits the ground. Yvoir Hingee, from inflatable jacket manufacturer Hit Air, said only a few hundred had been sold in Australia compared with more than 4000 each year in Japan. He said many riders either did not know the jackets were on the market or did not think they needed them. 'The problem is motorbike retailers and manufacturers strongly prefer not to make riders aware of the riding dangers and need for airbag safety as obviously it affects their sales', he said." **Ref: Mark Russell & Georgina Dimopoulos, The Age, 14/9/08**



Jacket showing inflated airbag. Similar jackets can be used for cycling, horse riding, snowboarding, skiing and canoeing.

Ref: <http://www.motoair.com/>

And Also ...

"A Japanese company has unveiled a wearable airbag for the elderly that pops out if they fall. The bag looks like a traveller's waist pouch but inflates in a fraction of a second when sensors detect the wearer has taken a tumble. It protects the back of the head and the buttocks." **Ref: The Age 26/9/08**

Congestion Thinking - Pt. 5

"I said that facilitating travel is a good thing, all other things being equal. But all other things are today not equal. Other things are changing rapidly. One of the things that is changing is the global climate. If we successfully solve congestion, the distance people travel will increase. People will take the advantage of increased travel speed not to save time but to travel further. Any future improvement in vehicle fuel efficiency risks being swamped by the increase in distance travelled, adding to greenhouse emissions.

"It is perhaps worth noting the sober assessment of a recent report by the US Environmental Protection Agency. Mui et al. (2007) consider that 'travel demand management' must be

a part of any wedge strategy, particularly in the light of past failure to improve vehicle fuel efficiency. Under the heading 'travel demand management' (TDM) they include not only reduction of total travel but also transfer of travel to less greenhouse intensive modes. In their report (from the Transport and Climate Division of the US Environmental Protection Authority) they write: 'By far the most significant factor to past growth in GHG emissions has been increases in the number of vehicles on the road and in vehicle usage. While the average fuel efficiency has remained virtually unchanged over the past twenty years, the number of passenger vehicles in use has increased by roughly 50% over this time. Each vehicle on the road today is also, on average, being driven more than in the past. Total vehicle travel from passenger vehicles is projected to grow by another 60% between now and 2030, due to the increasing number of drivers and the mileage driven by each driver. The fuel efficiency of new vehicles, by contrast, is projected to improve by only 12% on average over this time frame. Options that have significant, long term potential for reducing vehicle activity include such approaches as regional land-use planning, transit-oriented development, shifting travel to more energy-efficient modes, or increasing vehicle occupancy rates.' (Mui et al. 2007 p.16-170).

"Yet, astonishingly the Victorian Government is relying for its greenhouse reduction strategy in the transport sector on just one factor: the improvement in fuel efficiency of vehicles. There is no account taken of the effect of congestion-relieving strategies on distance travelled. The target of 60% reduction on 1990 levels of greenhouse emissions has been reduced to an



'aspirational' one (i.e. a target that can be broken with impunity, like a non-core promise). The real target, even on the highly optimistic assumption that there will be a 60% improvement in fuel efficiency of the vehicle fleet starting in 2012, is a 39% reduction of greenhouse emissions on 2000 levels by 2050. Even that seems unlikely to be met and will in time become 'aspirational' (Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2007). ...

"My conclusion is simple. We cannot afford solutions to congestion that exacerbate global warming and endanger the planet and all it contains. What is to be done about congestion? Congestion is not the main problem for transportation systems today, greenhouse emissions is the problem. We need our highly skilled engineers and planners to begin tackling it urgently, with all the evidence at their

disposal, and with all the ingenuity they command. Perhaps in the process we might also just solve the problem of congestion. We need transparent modelling, open to expert scrutiny and real attention to the management of public transport systems. We need energy sources to power electricity generation from low carbon sources. In dealing with congestion we must abandon the well worn tropes and confront the coming reality."

Ref: Professor Nicholas Low, Director, GAMUT, University of Melbourne, October 2008

For the full paper and the references contact:
steve@goingsolar.com.au

Congestion Charging Report

"Congestion charging is gaining favour internationally as an option for dealing directly with rising congestion costs. While there has been a number of successful congestion charging schemes around the world, it was the introduction of the London scheme in 2003 that focussed the world's attention on congestion charging as a traffic management option. Transport is not alone in utilising advances in technology to enable direct time-of-use charging for community resources: water and electricity charges, for example, are increasingly reflecting fluctuations in supply and demand. However, with congestion charging for transport there is also the twin attraction of revenue generation and environmental gains."

Ref: Phil Potterton, Executive Director, Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, in the forward to *Moving Urban Australia: Can congestion charging unclog our roads?* Working Paper 74, September 2008

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (Canberra),
http://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/80/Files/BITRE_WP74.pdf