

FUTURE MELBOURNE

Future Melbourne Forum 4: Change and Social Inclusion

Date: Wednesday 4th July 2007

Time: 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Venue: Prince Phillip Theatre, Architecture Building, University of Melbourne

MODERATOR'S PREFACE – Dr Gael Jennings

Gael Jennings Hello and welcome to this the fourth of five public forums. I'm glad you could make it and I do apologise about the change of venue; there was a flood, wouldn't you believe it, at the Carrillo Gantner Theatre last week and so this is the only one that's got a change of venue. Next week the final of the five forums will be at the Carrillo Gantner Theatre in the Sidney Myer Asia Centre on Swanston Street there by the tram stop. So I hope you've not been too put out by the change of venue.

Now before we continue I'd like to acknowledge that we're on the traditional lands of the Kulin nation. We know it as Melbourne and we know it as a place of celebration and meeting and discussion and for them it was the same, the first inhabitants of this land, and we thank the traditional owners of this land for letting us be here tonight.

How many of you have been to one of these, one of the other three? Hands up. Okay, well I'm going to apologise now to you for giving a little bit of background to those of, the other half who haven't been. As you probably know, the City of Melbourne has a plan for the city every ten years and the current one is called *City Plan 2010* and it's a plan for all the activities and life of the city and it's about to be replaced by this new one called *Future Melbourne* and that will take us up to 2020. And the idea of this series of five public forums is as the central plank of a series of public conversations between all sectors of the community to engage us all in the kind of city we want in 2020 so that a plan can go before the Council to be voted on at the end of next year. So this is one of your opportunities to be involved in this process.

The process sort of starts with these discussion points being led by people, Melburnians and others, who are expert in their areas, around the key themes of the five forums and they're continued online. You can see that—we were pointed out last week in the sustainability forum that we've wasted an enormous amount of energy by having this on so I'll have to turn it off in a minute, but this is the webpage, futuremelbourne.com.au,

and it's interactive and on there you can post your comments and you can follow the debate, you can hear the recordings of all the forums, all of them are taped including this one. And through that process of both online and the public events and discussions, the Future Melbourne team—which comprises a partnership between a few different parties but mostly the City of Melbourne and The University of Melbourne—they'll pull together what are emerging as the key points from these [coessential] and open-ended discussions and they will be negotiated by all of you, by everyone who can, who isn't part of this, into scenarios for the future, desired options, then agreed options and then a future plan which goes to Council. So I hope that that sort of gives you an idea of where we are. So this is really just for all of us to talk today informed by some expert opinion.

I just want to make sure that you've got the opportunity to communicate anyway you want to. Did you pick this up at the front desk? If not, pick it up on the way out because this is just telling you about the forums but in the back of it is a questionnaire which, and a prepaid envelope, and you can fill in also what you think and what you want and send it in. So you've got that opportunity too. So there's mail, interactive website and these public forums and other as yet unspecified public events.

Now tonight we're going to be talking—we talked about values, the first forum was talking about Melbourne's values, our cultural identity and the values that we hold as a community together. And then we looked at environmental—not in this order—we looked at environmental shocks—now I've chaired all of them so I should remember. We looked at—anyway, environmental shock, social inclusion is what we're looking at tonight, building or sustaining our prosperity and the final one will be building a future city together.

So tonight we're going to be talking about social change and social inclusion in Melbourne and each of our speakers will speak for five to six or so minutes and then at the end of that time will be about three quarters of an hour for all of you to have your say or to ask questions or to build on what they've said through me. So there's, you know, a pretence of some kind of order.

Like all cities, Melbourne faces social change and social issues including the ageing of the population, the rapid population growth within the city centre which draws on people from many parts of the world, especially international students. We have a disproportionate number of young students and international students and of course it's got huge benefits to us but it's a really important part of looking at the other aspects like affordable housing which is getting scarcer, jobs are changing, and we need to look at the steps to be taken to plan a Melbourne that ensures that the society that we're going towards is inclusive. So how low income needs be catered for in housing in city arrangements. What new facilities are needed? How do we improve the work-life balance, personal security, mobility and affordability? These are just some of the issues that we'll be discussing this evening.

So let me introduce the first of our speakers tonight. Professor John Wiseman is the

inaugural director of the McCaughey Centre, the VicHealth Centre for the promotion of mental health and wellbeing. He's also on the Wesley Mission Board and he's on The University of Melbourne's Knowledge Transfer Taskforce. He has a long-term commitment to turning knowledge about the causes of injustice and violence into actions that help build healthy, just and resilient communities. So God knows he's needed at the moment. This commitment started when he became aware as a teenage of injustices experienced by blacks and First Nation people in America and also by indigenous Australians. John's worked in a wide variety of academic, community and public sector settings including as Professor of Public Policy at the Victoria University and as Assistant Director of Policy Development and Research in the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Oxfam Australia Public Policy Advisory Committee. So please welcome John Wiseman.

PANELLIST PRESENTATION: Speaker 1: Professor John Wiseman, Director of the McCaughey Centre – the VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Community Wellbeing

John Wiseman

Is that on? Can you hear me at the back? Yes. Okay, thanks very much Gael and for the invitation to be here. In my five or six minutes I thought I'd set the scene by doing two things really: one is a quick opening definition of what the heck we mean by social inclusion; and then really I just want to share with you some recent research about views in the city of Melbourne about strengths and weaknesses in relation to social inclusion which I thought might help us set the scene.

Social inclusion and exclusion are, you know, words that get tossed around. I thought it might be useful to start with this definition from [Monsignor] David Capo, the Social Inclusion Commissioner in South Australia who defines the two terms, and I think they're useful to sit together, in this way: *a socially inclusive society is a society where all people feel valued, their differences are respected and their basic needs are met so that they can live in dignity.* And I guess the flip side of that is that social exclusion is the process of being shut out from the social, the economic, the political and cultural systems. So that might be one way of starting the discussion tonight.

Now what I want to do, I'm going to skip through a couple of slides to make sure I get in under the six minutes and I just want to share with you some recent research, and I just need to introduce it very briefly. As Gael said, I'm the Director of a centre called the McCaughey Centre at The University of Melbourne and one of the projects we're involved with and host is a project called *Community Indicators Victoria* and in a little while, in a week or so, we'll be launching a new website which will provide lots of local information for communities across Victoria. And one of the things we've done in that—and so that's the website we'll be launching in a week or so. And as part of that we ran a large scale survey, 24,000-sample across Victoria, enough to get some core information about the issues that matter in every local government area in Victoria. And I just thought I'd share some of the initial results from that, particularly in the areas we're

concerned about here. So just some headlines really.

Strengths in relation to simply higher or lower than the state average, and I guess if we think about the City of Melbourne we know that its median income, individual income, is higher than the state average and you can see that in the census. And interestingly on some other key indicators on self-assessed health, on internet access, interestingly on perceptions of safety, on support for cultural diversity and on arts and cultural participation, these were all areas, indicators, if you like, where the survey tended to say that the view was that Melbourne was in a way higher than the state average.

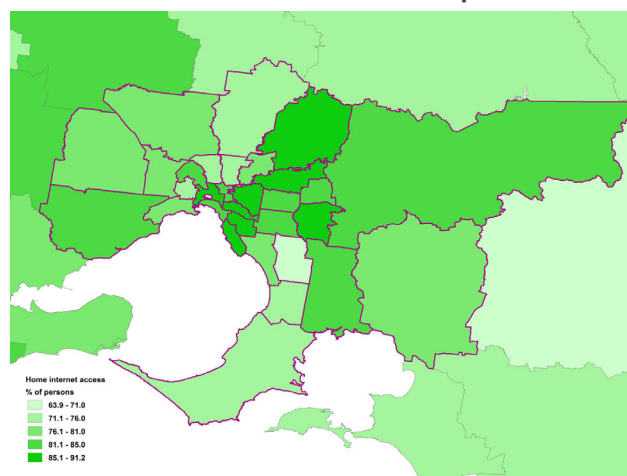
But let me put the flip side as well and I've called this *Room for Improvement*, if you like, and these were areas where residents, people in the city of Melbourne, indicated that perhaps there was room for improvement, perhaps this was lower than the state average. Feeling part of the community, getting help from family and friends, volunteering—all, if you like, measures of, yeah, being connected, being linked to the rest of the community—water conservation and household waste recycling—which may reflect that it's a bit difficult to recycle in the city of Melbourne if there's, you know, it's harder to get to some of the recycling areas—and citizen engagement.

So I guess that's one way of telling a quick story about, you know, we've got a city that is obviously thriving and affluent in a range of ways but also has some challenges in relation to social inclusion.

And let me—I've probably got two minutes left, have I? Yep. I'll just reinforce the story in a different kind of way, instead of through the words, through some pictures. So let me just give you a few maps as well. This is a map of home internet access in metropolitan Melbourne.

Local community wellbeing in Victoria

Home Internet access - Metropolitan



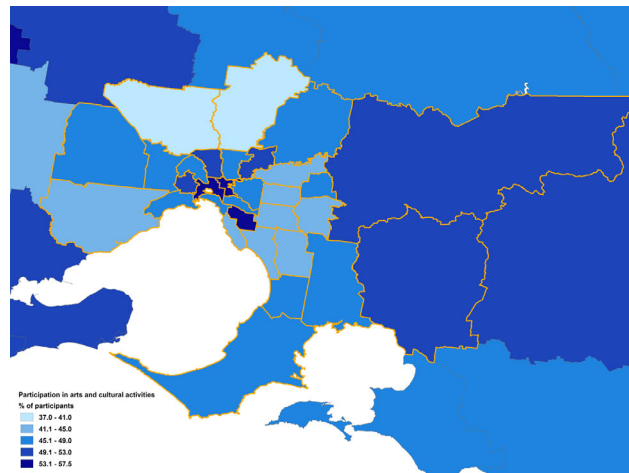
Source: CM, McCaughey Centre, School of Population Health, University of Melbourne



You can see that the dark is greater access and the light is less access and as you go

towards the centre of Melbourne internet access, and I guess this isn't surprising, is higher which would be one kind of measure of people being connected online. And this is another kind of picture. The question here was the extent to which people have participated, not just been an audience, but participated in arts and cultural activities, in dance, in music, in visual arts, across metropolitan Melbourne.

Local community wellbeing in Victoria Participation in Arts & Cultural Activities – Metropolitan



Source: C.M. McCaughey Centre, School of Population Health, University of Melbourne

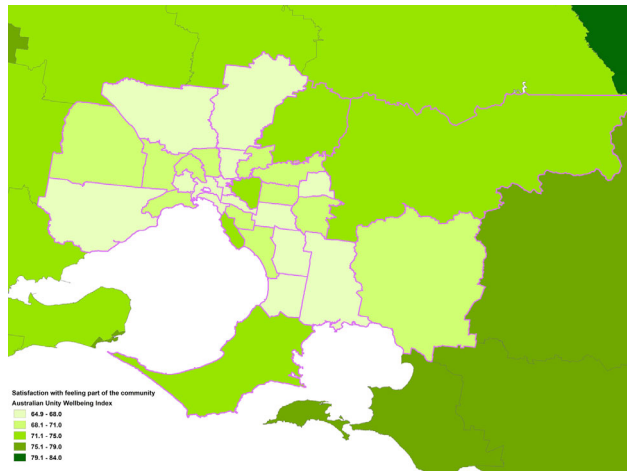


And again you can see this is a kind of area, if you like, of significant strength in the inner metropolitan area and I guess that all obviously resonates with what we think of about a culturally vibrant inner city.

So that again is a picture about strengths but I think when you saw the question, *do you feel part of your community, do you feel connected to your community*, it's a different kind of picture.

Local community wellbeing in Victoria

Satisfaction with feeling part of the Community – Metropolitan



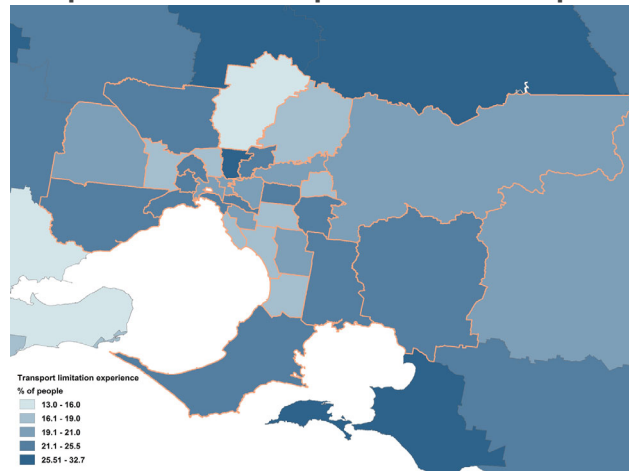
Source: CM, McCaughey Centre, School of Population Health, University of Melbourne



So here dark is, *Yes, I do*, and light is less so. So again you can see that as you move into the inner city areas there's a kind of a less of a sense of a connection with your local community and if I put up a map of Victoria as a whole, interestingly you would see that in rural and regional Victoria there's an even stronger connection to local community. So I think there's an important story there.

And let me just finish with a couple of other slides. I guess it's interesting—I've always felt struck by the fact of remembering that Melbourne, of course, is a capital city and the CBD is the centre of that capital city and so it's important to think about how the central city is linked to, is connected to the rest of Melbourne, and one way of thinking about that is transport.

Local community wellbeing in Victoria Transport limitation experience – Metropolitan



Source: CM, McCaughey Centre, School of Population Health, University of Melbourne

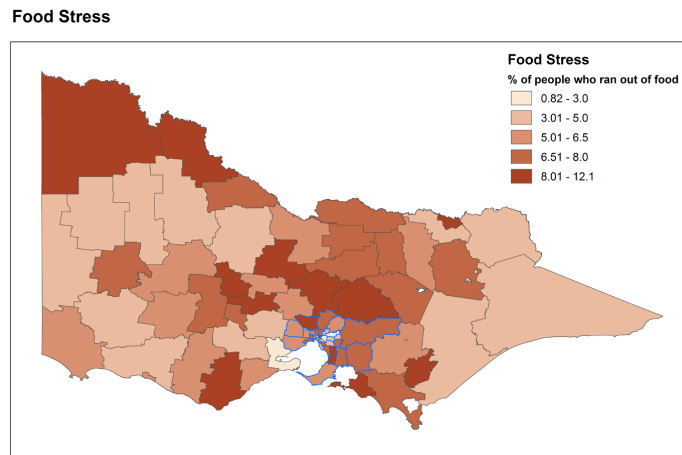


So the question behind this slide was, *To what extent does lack of transport limit you getting where you want to?* So it's a simple question about do you have trouble getting where you want to. And again dark is, in this instance dark is bad and light is good so that the more that—you can see on the whole, while it's patchy, in the outer areas there's probably more concern about transport and I guess that raises the issue about if we're talking about social inclusion in the inner city, how does that connect for people who are coming in from the outer suburbs and from other parts?

And lastly let me put up a map of Victoria as a whole because if we're talking about a central city that is a capital city of Victoria I guess we need to think about how the city relates to the rest of the state.

Local community wellbeing in Victoria

Food stress



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And I guess this I find quite a striking slide. The question here was, *Have you or your family run out of food in the last 12 months and not had enough money to buy more?* And if we're talking about social inclusion that's about as basic as it gets. And I guess to me it's quite striking that in the state of Victoria we're still talking about areas where over 8 and in some cases over 10 per cent of people said, *Yes, my family, my household have run out of food in the last 12 months and not been able to buy more.*

So I guess the story that I was wanting to tell was one about, firstly, thinking about the central Melbourne area and the strengths and weaknesses in terms of social inclusion and, secondly, how that relates to the city and the state. And so to finish with the questions I wanted to throw out, and I'm sure we'll come back to, is what do we know? What do we feel? What do we know from our friends and our research about social inclusion? What are the indicators? What do we think would matter? How would we know we were getting better or worse? How do we create the conditions for a genuinely participatory debate? And I guess the bottom line is what should we do about it? And I imagine they're questions we'll want to discuss later on. Thank you.

[applause]

Gael Jennings

Thank you John. That was extremely interesting. Thank you very much. A very good start to the debate, to the discussion with a lot of, a lot of key points that we can start with. Thank you. And welcome to those of you who have snuck in during that talk; I just saw there were more of you.

Our next panellist is Anne Turley. Anne Turley is the Chief Executive Officer of the Melbourne City Mission and she has the distinction of becoming the Melbourne City Mission's first female CEO in the organisation's 150 year history. It's about time, so well done, but I'll move on to the rest of you, what you've done. You've worked for a long

time in initiating cross-sector partnerships between corporate, government and not-for-profit sectors to ensure that people have access to resources and opportunities that allow them to participate equally in the community. Anne has a Master of Business and studied for a short time at the CG Jung Institute in Switzerland. She was awarded a Swinburne Graduate School of Management Alumni Prize for Distinguished Achievement in the field of management and she's also been awarded an Australian Centenary Medal for her contribution to health and welfare services in Australia. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Public Administration in Australia and she's currently working to update and refine self-assessment tools for not-for-profits with a team from the Leader to Leader Institute in the United States. So please welcome Anne Turley.

PANELLIST PRESENTATION: Speaker 2: Anne Turley, Chief Executive Officer of the Melbourne City Mission

Anne Turley

Thanks Gael and thank you for the opportunity to participate in this evening's forum. I'd like to offer Melbourne City Mission's congratulations to Melbourne City Council for the process that they're adopting in developing their vision for 2020 and establishing these forums. I think it's a great way of getting feedback from the broader community.

Melbourne City Mission's commitment to the City of Melbourne, as Gael said, began during the Victorian gold rush in 1854 and over the years we've enjoyed a very dynamic relationship with the city, responding to the changing needs of people who either lived in the city or come into the city. Each week we care for approximately 4,000 Victorians who experience exclusion or who live with some form of disadvantage and our services cross from aged and palliative care services across disability support services, children, youth and family services, services for people who are homeless, long-term unemployed, people who are exiting prison and employment education and training.

The core principles that have informed our work over the 150 years have been need not creed, and hand-up not hand-out. Similarly when I look at the core principles that the City of Melbourne has used to inform its response to the people in the city, there are similar core principles like a commitment to providing a place for everyone, to embracing diversity and building social and economic inclusion.

A tangible expression of that for us has been the city's ongoing commitment to responding to the needs of disconnected and disadvantaged young people. In February 2001, Melbourne City Mission along with Melbourne City Council and the Department of Human Services established Front Yard Youth Services in King Street in Melbourne. Front Yard provides care and assistance to over 10,000 young people every year who come in to the city for assistance and help. Services at Front Yard include Centrelink—it's about the only Centrelink in the country that is within a not-for-profit—legal aid, a young people's health service, dental and sexual health clinics, crisis accommodation, housing support services, employment education and training, counselling and spiritual care.

Our research indicates that young people using the service at Front Yard encounter

multiple barriers to economic and social participation, things like the things that John mentioned, homelessness, complex health problems, lack of access to training, education and employment and high costs of transport.

We believe that there's a misconception in our community that disconnected young people lack the necessary motivation to improve their current situation. We've found that the majority of young people accessing Front Yard have the same kind of aspirations that young people from more advantaged backgrounds would have. What they want is stable and affordable housing, access to training and education, full-time or part-time work, financial stability and independence. And what they need from us, as other citizens, is a hand-up, a mentoring relationship and support to get their lives back on track.

The services at Front Yard are connected to a pathway that helps young people move out of homelessness, drug addiction and disconnection. Front Yard connects to a next-step program that we run in conjunction with the Melbourne City Council which provides young people with mentoring, support and safe and affordable housing in the CBD. We've only got eight bed sets at the moment and we're planning to expand that in the next year to another 10 bed sets. It also connects to Slingshot Community Enterprise Centre which provides young people education and employment and business incubator opportunities, and that's on the edge of the CBD in one of our old nursing homes.

Over the last year we've been measuring the success of these initiatives and determining whether the return, the social and economic return on investment warrants further investment. I have to say the results are overwhelmingly positive. What we've seen are young people back in school, in training, some have received scholarships to universities, young people have reconnected with families and significant others, some are in stable housing and employment, others have got returned health and are no longer controlled by their substance addictions and many are contributing socially and economically in the community.

These outcomes cannot be achieved by one sector or organisation working on its own. What it requires and what we hope for the future in the relationship with the City of Melbourne and the plan for 2020 and as we move towards that horizon is that all levels of government, the business, the not-for-profit sector and the wider community will work in strong, accountable partnerships to build on these initiatives that are so much needed, that we will continue in Melbourne to lead the way for the whole of the country in creating opportunities for disconnected young people to participate socially and economically.

So that's Melbourne City Mission's dream in particular for young people who are accessing our city, and thank you for allowing me the opportunity to share it. Thank you.

[applause]

Gael Jennings

Thank you very much Anne.

Our next panellist is Daniel Grollo and Daniel is Chief Executive Officer of Australia's largest privately owned development and construction company, Grocon Proprietary

Limited. It was his grandfather, Luigi Grollo, who started Grocon as a concreting business in the 50s and his son, Bruno, transformed that company into the development and construction giant that we know today, of the 80s and 90s, building the Rialto Towers, restoring Sydney's heritage GPO Building at Number 1 Martin Place. Daniel was educated at Thornbury High School and he joined Grocon in the late 1980s and he worked his way up to take over the business from his father in 1999. More recently, Grocon has completed the QV development, Eureka Tower on Southbank and the Melbourne Cricket Grounds redevelopment for the Commonwealth Games in 2006. Daniel is the Director of the Green Building Council of Australia and in October 2006 he was appointed a non-executive Director of the Board of BlueScope Steel. So please welcome Daniel Grollo.

PANELLIST PRESENTATION: Speaker 3: Daniel Grollo, Chief Executive Officer, Grocon Proprietary Limited

Daniel Grollo

Thank you very much. I've planned this speech to strictly stick to the five minutes so I'll be quick.

As the introduction suggested, my perspective on today's discussion is coming from the built environment, the area that I, I guess, practice my profession. Personally I think Melbourne's a great city and, if I look in reflection over the last 10 years, I think it's improved immensely. The growth we've experienced over that time has improved both safety, services and amenity to the city and I think today it's a great place to be. I think we think about our future needs going forward; perhaps it's worth looking in the past and seeing what we've done well over the last 10 years.

In terms of the built form, if we value inclusion and amenity, I think Melbourne City Council and the Department of Sustainability should be applauded for some of the things they've contributed to Melbourne, particularly a good example I think is Federation Square. If you consider the built form, I don't think you could create a greater inclusive product for society. I think the way that that's been able to bring society together to both celebrate and socialise has been a phenomenal success. Importantly that's being used as an inspiration to the private sector as well, so that attitude towards creation has flowed on to the private sector and if I look at some of the things that Grocon's done of recent time, and a great example of that is the QV redevelopment in the city which is a city where—we were steered considerably by Melbourne City Council and the Department of Sustainability in terms of the planning outcome and the way the built form would take shape. And I think it's something that we can all be proud of today because it certainly is an inclusive development, it's an environment where you can both have the BHP CEO and students from RMIT and Melbourne University come together and share the same facility and I think from the built form, that's a great outcome.

So actually I'm quite optimistic of where we're going. If I look at our future developments, our own future developments in terms of CUB which will be our next major redevelopment, we seek to improve on that and reach higher standards. And it's my

view that in fact if the social objectives can be now raised, I think that large corporates are just at the verge of grabbing those objectives and being able to really elevate them at the forefront of their own outcomes that they're wishing to deliver.

I guess in that positive environment and all that growth there's no doubt there's some grey clouds that we create and there's some areas that we leave behind and I think that these are perhaps issues that we need to have at the forefront of our minds as we go forward. I talk about safety but I think that safety, public safety, safety in its broadest possible meaning, is a continued issue for us here in Melbourne and something that we will continue to move the focus on. I could go to another one of lifestyle balance. There's been lots of discussion around lifestyle balance and I think there's a lot of room for improvement in terms of amenity, the way our city caters for the people that work there with the increasing demands in work. Issues like childcare and how we pay for childcare I think will be a greater concern and be elevated as an issue.

Elevating up into bigger issues, I think public transport is a huge issue for our future and how we improve our public transport in a positive way with real investment, investment that makes public transport something that people want to use, as opposed to coming out with concepts that just try and reduce numbers of cars in the city. I think that's a negative approach to the way we improve our transport system. We've got to be proactive and we've got to make our public transport system something people want to use because it's efficient, it works, it's safe and it's aspirational because ultimately what we want to do when we look at public transport is ensure we increase participation for the city as opposed to coming in with restrictive rules that decrease visitations to the city.

From an environmental perspective I think that the built form is a big contributor to the effect on the environment and I think that the built form has a huge responsibility going forward in terms of how it deals with that and how—and the standards that it sets going forward. Can I say that having been on the Green Building Council since its inception five years ago when we set up our rating tools—we set up a standard of one to six where people could rate their buildings in terms of their sustainability level—we really questioned ourselves how the private sector would take this rating tool on and would they really sort of grab it and run with it. I'm happy to say now five years later the reality is, is that any new building being built of any large scale is all at the very top of the rating system and the reality is that the Green Building Council itself, I suspect, will need to perhaps even create greater heights for people to continue to achieve because the private sector has really taken that and ran with it.

And then I guess perhaps one of the other last important issues I'll leave us to ponder on is the one that's had much airplay, being housing affordability. With all the prosperity that the Melbourne city has experienced—and it has been great, we've created a great environment—there's no doubt that we leave many behind and housing affordability is a big issue for people to get a foothold in, into new homes, particularly young people. But I'm optimistic. Can I say that housing affordability is becoming a big issue amongst the

development community and I think lots of organisations are starting to consider ways of dealing with this and providing people with opportunities to share in some of the property developments that are happening in the city. And I know ourselves at CUB, we're coming up with schemes that will provide a portion of affordable housing in that development and I'm aware that others are doing it.

And I think that from setting the social objectives of improvement that we want to create in Melbourne, I quite frankly think that we're just at the verge where we can grab them and really take them up in the same way that the development industry has grasped the environmental issues over the last five years and really started to exceed and achieve very high highs. I think that if we can get the social objectives on the agenda in the right way, agree what they are, I suspect that corporations are just at the verge now to grab them and take them to the levels of excellence as well. Thank you.

[applause]

Gael Jennings Thank you very much Daniel Grollo.

And our final speaker this evening is Adrian Burrage. Adrian is Manager of Student Housing Services for The University of Melbourne so he knows all about affordability of housing. He completed his Bachelor of Arts degree at RMIT and he went on to work with various local government youth and community services departments including as a Youth Services Co-ordinator and Emergency Youth Accommodation Officer in Melbourne and in Hobart. He was with Wayss—W-A-Y-S-S—Limited which is emergency youth accommodation at Redlands residential program for people with intellectual disability and as a Director of [Flair], it's a youth group, before starting at Melbourne University in 1998. Adrian has worked for the University Student Housing Services since 2001 and this year he was awarded a Universitas 21 Scholarship for Professional Staff recognising his excellence and also to provide professional development. So please welcome Adrian Burrage.

PANELLIST PRESENTATION: Speaker 4: Adrian Burrage, Manager Student Housing Services for The University of Melbourne

Adrian Burrage Thanks Gael. I'm going to talk about the experience of social cohesion for 35 per cent of the residents in the city of Melbourne who are students, many of them international, and the factors that impact on that experience, and I'm really excited about my first point actually and the comments made by Daniel in terms of the vision, in terms of housing affordability, is a really promising sort of message you're passing on too.

So looking at affordability as an issue we know that low income earners, that their rent should not consume more than 30 per cent of their budget. So based on the average student budget, students need housing which costs no more than \$92 per week for rent. A one-bedroom furnished apartment in the CBD costs over \$200 and up to \$300 per week for rent. So consequently many students spend 40 to 50 per cent or more of their budget on rent to live in the inner city area.

The second major consideration is the availability of housing. Over the past decade gentrification has reduced the availability of traditional share housing options in the inner suburbs. Currently the rental vacancy rate is only one-fifth of the long-term market average and our noticeboards in our service have been virtually empty for months by comparison to normal.

So what is the impact of that situation and how are students actually living? In our service we see students who share single rooms, sleep in lounge rooms, have little to no study space, no privacy and at times are exploited by landlords who ignore basic tenancy regulations. Landlords are aware that students have limited options and are in fact desperate at times for housing. An example is of a landlord who was sharing her own bedroom and the remaining space in a two-bedroom flat with up to four students; she saw herself as a legitimate student housing provider. On the other hand there are many international students paying premium prices for one-bedroom or studio-type accommodation who are living in isolation from others and are virtually cut off from the close connections to local students and a local community.

So what has been the response at the supply end of the market in terms of housing for students? The past decade has seen a significant change in what's actually available to them. There's been a proliferation of high-density, apartment-style options in premium locations. They're often priced at the high end of the market, over \$250 a week for a one-bedroom. Obviously there's a big gap between what most students can actually afford and what they are being offered. Remember that \$92 a week for the average student budget is what they can afford to spend on accommodation.

There are many things to say about this situation and the impacts on local students and particularly on rural students and some of you may have seen the article in today's Age, it was a pretty good representation of the issues faced by rural students. But for the sake of being brief here I'm going to focus on Melbourne's relationship with international students because it really emphasises some of the points I think.

So what are international students looking for? What are their needs? I've got the words here of a Sri Lankan student who's living in a large commercial student apartment facility—and I will emphasise that these are words he offered to us voluntarily without being asked, he just came forward in an email recently. *I'd like*—this is the words of the student—*I'd like to start off by saying that I arrived in Australia almost a year ago with the intention of experiencing an all new country and having a different experience. In my home country the marketing of Australian universities tells us that as Australia has a rich history of immigration foreigners will be integrated into the mainstream society with ease, and the place is appealing due to the friendly nature of locals. I came over from Sri Lanka with absolutely no family whatsoever here as is the case for many students. Melbourne is the place I have lived in outside of home. Living in Melbourne I am concerned that I have not had the opportunity to mingle with Australians as there are so few in number in my accommodation facility. My exposure to Australian culture lacks the*

experience of living side-by-side with the friendly locals. My first residence outside of home has put the Australian dream to the test in my opinion.

From appeals like this and many others we know that the major complaints received from international students are those of the cost of housing in Melbourne, the experience of being exploited and the fact that they'll often leave this country without knowing any Australians as friends or ever having been into an Australian home. In effect, they're locked within a cohort of international students relocated to an unfamiliar setting where they cannot find a way to meet their own expectations about why they actually came here. It's a generalisation but it is an experience that we do hear in repetition.

So when does it work well for students who are new to the city of Melbourne? One way that works is breaking the mould of the monoculture of a large accommodation facility. Innovative planning and management practices within the facilities can radically change the internal culture, e.g. from a planning perspective, cheaper rooms with communal bathrooms and kitchens would attract a different and more diverse strata of students and give them reasons to know each other. A student at the Melbourne Conversations Forum about two months ago who had a diverse housing experience identified her time in a residential college as the most valuable despite being the most expensive because it offered her a truly integrated social experience. Could some elements of a college model be better integrated into commercial housing developments?

Work is potentially an important way for international students to form relationships with locals. However what we don't need is a poorly regulated employment market which is able to exploit international students in a hidden economy. A student at the recent Melbourne Conversations Forum challenged us to look at who is actually running our city after hours, who is driving our taxis, cleaning our offices, serving at bars and restaurants, packing our supermarket shelves? This workforce is largely made up of students and many international students who are unaware of their rights to, and expectations of, fair dealing from their employers and will tolerate almost any conditions at times. A typical example of exploitative practice is being taken on for a trial period for work, often unpaid, and then dismissed at the end of the trial period.

So what can we do better? There is a lot of work to be done in the regulation of housing and employment sectors to reduce the causes of isolation and social segregation. The scope of Australian research on higher education should also be expanded to include the social and economic realities of international students rather than treating them as outside the responsibility of our government bodies. We could surely come up with a better formula for student targeted housing developments than the towers of apartments designed to meet the needs of investors as the first priority.

Twenty five years ago international students had a barely visible presence at this university. In 1982 there were 883 international students at The University of Melbourne; there are now around 10,000 international students. But in what ways do we recognise them? One international student has told us that if it wasn't for the group assignments

there would be no integration or interaction of international students with locals at all. The universities are often criticised that their interest in international students is motivated by the fee income that they generate. Local community engagement with these students is also largely through a profit motive or a commercial transaction and lacks any clear articulated vision of a relationship which is not economically based. Does it matter? Why would commercial interest not be a sustainable basis for the relationship between Melbourne and this group of residents? Because we can't take it for granted that they are always going to be attracted here if they continue to return home without the things they actually came for. They often go home with limited language development, have only a superficial exposure to Australian culture and can't demonstrate the influence and connection to Australian people and institutions which their employers are looking for.

Back in their home countries these former students are representatives of this city, the city of Melbourne. By definition, if international students go home without ever making friends with an Australian student then Australian students and communities haven't met them and are missing out on gathering insights, opportunities and a richness of experience offered by those outwardly-looking, adventurous individuals which are international students.

So if they stop coming here there is a risk of the sustainability of the infrastructure which has been developed to capitalise on the markets they have created. They, international students, also now underwrite our current education system. But what students represent is more than that. There is a great opportunity for our city and our universities. It has the potential to offer mutual benefits. A key problem seems to be there is a mismatch between the reasons international students come here and the reasons we invite them. We need to demonstrate in action a greater range of mutual intentions about the motivations we share or have in common. Social psychologists tell us that any relationship which does not continue to evolve and grow will fail. Can we afford to have the relationship between Melbourne and tens of thousands of the world's future business people, politicians, policy makers and social architects fail? Social cohesion builds relationships which are sustained over time and circumstance. If we invested our effort in setting and leading this as an aim, the gains might be more lasting and more profitable. Thank you.

[applause]

OPEN DISCUSSION

Gael Jennings

So let me just briefly summarise, for those of you with a short-term memory problem. John sort of set the scene for what we define as social inclusion and exclusion and asked how we can have a genuine conversation about it and we can reach some kind of agreed goals and how we would then quantify whether or not we'd actually got there. Anne gave us a really good model of how disadvantaged youth can be serviced and connected and

invited a linkage with corporate and other sectors to provide this on a larger scale moving into the future for Melbourne. Daniel talked about the possible willingness of the providers of the built environment to take all these considerations into account in terms of the kind of communal spaces, both commercial and residential and things like Fed Square, into the future and opening up conversations about that. And Adrian has very vividly described a particular sector, although it was broader than that to start with, but a particular sector that we're actually doing very badly with and it's a major sector in Melbourne that we're not including and not only to our own detriment but to the detriment of the future that we're looking at in terms of what those students have to provide for us, the imperative to start making that social contract work a whole lot better.

So now we've got about three quarters of an hour for you to have a discussion with our panellists. Who would like to start the discussion, anyone burning to ask a question or make a comment? Well I'd like to ask one then. Daniel, you probably knew it would be me asking you a question, but on the first forum we had a woman called Kate Shaw talking about specifically the CUB site and she was talking about Melbourne valuing its creativity and how important it is to have big public spaces that, when they're in transition between developments, have got a flexible use whereby they can be colonised for ambiguous-ended, open-ended activities, meaning creative activities. So she was saying things like the CUB sitting there all those years and we could have had students maybe living there for a while or we could have had them using it as a performance space or any number of things. Have you been approached about that and what do you think about that whole concept of big developers like you having some of their interim spaces available for more marginalised young and creative people?

Daniel Grollo

I think that's probably going to be a tough task, when you think through the implications and the financial implications of that I think that's probably a pretty tough solution. I think that the solution is going to be more about incorporating social outcomes in what you actually develop, because when you do develop you create wealth and you create, I guess, a degree of money in the system that you can actually provide something. When you're starting with a blank sheet to come along and somehow deal with that blank sheet in a half-hearted interim manner I think wouldn't happen, not at least to the extent of housing. I mean as public use I think something can happen and I think Melbourne City Council did that, you know, I mean if I think back to QV when that was a sort of flat site, you know, there was some use on that but it wasn't anything significant because the concept of parking capital where it's got no way out wouldn't happen. But certainly the concept of incorporating into the development I think's got a very bright future.

Gael Jennings

Alright then, well that's very interesting, if it's incorporated in the development—I'll get to these in a sec. Did one of you want to add to that at all? Did any of the panel want to discuss that? Yes—I should remind you that this forum is being recorded and if you want to say something then we'll have a mic come to you, if you just stand up and state your name and your affiliation that would be great.

Austin Lee Austin Lee, City of Melbourne. Thanks Gael. John you mentioned that social inclusion, one of the key things is providing for the needs of people in society and obviously food is one of those critical ones but shelter is obviously another one. From previous forums we've found that with climate change and various other things occurring there's going to be that problem with perhaps even transport and people living out on the fringes trying to get into Melbourne so it's clear that this whole issue of housing affordability is a major one for us to have to deal with. The question is, and I think it goes to the point about students as well, everyone needs affordable housing; it's becoming increasingly more unaffordable. But how do we break that? What is it that we do? Clearly Daniel's mentioned it's a supply issue and we need to build more but at the moment even if we build more I think that suddenly it's still hard to actually afford to buy them. There has to be some mechanism presumably to actually enable people who can't afford housing to purchase or at least rent accommodation at a reasonable level. One of the things that occurs to me and I'd like to put to the panel to consider is we have huge superannuation funds, money going into superannuation funds at the moment, they're looking for investments and they have to go overseas to find things. Surely a society that has this money built for its future should be looking for alternatives and maybe through some sort of corporate social responsibility side this could, this money could be brought back into this whole equation so that society benefits from the funds in the future by providing affordable housing.

Gael Jennings Who'd like to start with that? Yes John.

John Wiseman Well I'll make two quick comments and I'm sure the others have got things to say about this. I mean clearly affordable housing is, you know, number one, two, three, you know, right up on the list about social inclusion in the city of Melbourne, and I guess [Andrew] has indicated some of the challenges. I suppose the two quick comments I'd make is that it still seems to me there is an important role for public housing as part of the mix, that would be my first comment, in both new developments and across the city of Melbourne. I think that remains an important part of the answer.

But secondly yes, my understanding is that Australia still lags the US, Canada, the UK in thinking sensibly about the kinds of tax incentives, the types of incentives in relation to superannuation schemes for people to invest in high quality, low income housing as part of a mix of broader development. So I think that's got to be, you know—and I suppose the third element there is investment in community housing as well, and creative community housing solutions as well. But I think all of those are going to be part of the answer.

Adrian Burrage I'd like to comment on that public housing aspect too. I mean the Federal Government policy for a long time now for assisting people with housing has not been building more public housing but has been providing rent assistance through social security payments which ultimately is going into a market where there's a profit motive. If the return isn't there for the investors on rental properties, which typically has been the case for quite

some time, that market, it really isn't there for those low income earners. So it hasn't really satisfied that need to supply housing; the investment in other areas has been more, there's been more of a turn so the profit motive isn't always a great motivator for people to be building affordable housing.

Anne Turley I think one thing that's been explored by a lot of, a number of not-for-profits in Melbourne is the concept of people with wealth actually either purchasing housing or building housing but then renting it out to low income people so actually having a preference and a commitment to making housing affordable and accessible to low income people. And that's their contribution back to the community and there's quite a lot of interest in that as we talk to people of wealth in our community.

Gael Jennings Can I ask before we proceed, like who actually is going to make these decisions and make them accountable because presumably it's the State Government's plan largely. What's the Council's input into it? Do we know? Daniel, you'd—or John?

John Wiseman Well there's probably some people from the Council who ought to answer that but Daniel, do you want to have a go?

Daniel Grollo Yeah look I think that we might be on the cusp of a solution around what you're talking about with superannuation investment in retail because, for a myriad of reasons, superannuation funds in Australia haven't directly invested in residential development the way they do it around the world and that's driven mainly around tax issues. And there's a, we're just about to change that now, I think we're just on the verge of superannuation funds investing directly to residential and that's what I said about before, if you can make the social objectives clear to them I think they will take them and make them part of their investment strategies going forward to ensure that the business unit they're getting into there is a sustainable one for them. So I think that opportunity does exist and I think the benefits are good.

In terms of where Melbourne City Council can leverage it, I think there's probably the opportunity for Melbourne City Council from a planning perspective to potentially look at planning bonuses where people are being able to deliver to a set criteria in terms of affordable housing. And it's important that's real and sort of really tangible as opposed to something that's a little bit grey.

[Connie Wesley] My name's [Connie Wesley] and I'm from Melbourne City Council. In terms of social and affordable housing we do a couple of things. First of all we participate in an inner city response that is not just Melbourne but the inner city councils in a coordinated effort to look at the issue not just within the boundaries of the city but in the inner urban area.

And secondly we have a local strategy that looks at the issues of social and affordable housing and we have a strategy under that that councils are committed to that is about not only increasing the supply but working with a number of partners, housing associations, to support them in their efforts to increase the number of units of affordable housing.

There are also discussions internally about a variety of ways that we can work with the associations, professional associations, lobby the Commonwealth Government for the kinds of tax changes that are necessary to urge investors or housing providers to make their own contribution.

Gael Jennings Thank you very much Connie.

Male Is anyone thinking about the connection between social inclusion and economic health, the overall economic health of the society? I mean the conversation here tonight, we're all in favour of social inclusion because it's worthy but can anyone make the argument that social inclusion is a good thing because there will be a net economic benefit to society?

Adrian Burrage If I can respond to that initially, I mean that's what I was trying to say in the latter part of my presentation really, that for the sustainability of this, you know, billion dollar industry of international students, for example, if they're not going home with what they're hoping to get in terms of that sense of social inclusion and cohesion, then the sustainability of that market could be, you know, debatable. So there is an economic argument that could be developed to look at the sustainability of that industry. There is a, it's a huge local economy: 35 per cent of the population of the city of Melbourne are full-time students. There's a lot of businesses, as I said, including the universities, that are very dependent on that income so it makes a lot of sense to try and meet the expectations of that group.

Gael Jennings Anne?

Anne Turley At the moment in Victoria we have 17 per cent of our young people between the ages of 15 and 19 not in school, not in work and not in tertiary education and many of them are on income support as a way of living and providing for themselves. With the kind of program that I was talking about with the employment learning centre that we've established we've just done an evaluation of what that might mean. Of the 172 young people that have been through that in the last year 27 per cent of them were on welfare support of some kind and now at the end of a year none of them are. And so we're going to the Federal Government, after having the [NAUS] group having done an evaluation, a very rigorous evaluation, to say *Look at the economic benefit here with this program. Can it not be scaled up and replicated across the country and actually put money in at the front end in early intervention to actually help young people in a pathway out of homelessness?* Because that 17 per cent of young people that, you know, drop out of school, the statistics show they're more likely to become homeless, dependent on income support, enter the criminal justice system, be long-term unemployed. So the drain on our community long-term is huge, if we can actually turn that around there's a huge economic benefit.

Gael Jennings Thank you. Now John.

John Wiseman Just one quick comment on this response or, I mean if we look at cities around the world that are kind of seen as successful and prosperous and thriving, I mean surely they're

the ones which don't separate out the social and economic; they're the ones that say a successful city is a place that is socially and economically thriving and it also gets the environmental and the cultural signals right as well. I mean the four things go together. And they're also cities that encourage and celebrate diversity and that they get that right and I think they're not either/or's, they're things that fit together.

Female I'm just worried about our dependence on tourism, you know, because it doesn't seem to be a sustainable thing and it's—in Prahran, you know, they're still building hotels and things like that and I'm presuming that Melbourne's sort of a bit dependent on that. And I'm just, I don't know, raising that as an issue—you can't, I've actually asked to object to a hotel being built but you can't, you can't object to that. It's sort of, even though five months ago they declared climate change you can't actually, there's no legal thing to that and that worries me.

Gael Jennings So the question is about chain hotels? Sorry I didn't ...

Female You sort of said that, like our jobs are changing and I think that's sort of a thing—a lot of our, the way we think and the way we live is about tourism and I'm just, I suppose, concerned about that, you know, that that is a big industry for us and just raise it again as an issue. I don't know whether, I don't actually think anyone here is in that area but it is written here that jobs are changing so I've just said it.

Gael Jennings Okay, so tourism leading job changes for, within the city and how we plan for that. Would anyone like to discuss that? It might be more—are you involved in that at all Daniel?

Daniel Grollo Yeah and, but I come from almost a 180-degree different view because hotel, the creations of hotel are actually, well tourism I think is a great thing for any city in terms of creating prosperity for itself, but more importantly hotel development itself. Hotels are one of the best multipliers you can get in terms of creation of jobs in any form of development you can get so I think as a multiplier it's about 3.5 jobs per room which is the basic rule of thumb so actually hotel development is actually a great thing for creating jobs. And actually you go around the world and you see sort of cities that are huge hotel creators actually have low unemployment, they get the balance right and it's because of that job creation and that flow effect that you get from hotel developments so. I wouldn't have the concerns that it's going to have a negative effective on the city; I think it's going to have a positive one, personally.

Female How do you see that in terms of, you know, that February this year they did declare that, you know, that human activity is linked to climate change definitely and that was definitely declared? How do you see that?

Daniel Grollo Yes, I'm an optimist, in a world of pessimism I'm a bit of an optimist particularly on the environmental front as well because I think the issues that we raise for ourselves on the environmental front are actually just a challenge for our scientists to overcome and I think we do have the intellectual capacity to overcome them. But I do think it's an issue, I'm

not proposing that we put our head in the ground on these issues; I think you've got to tackle them front on. And the issues around the effect of the environment from tourism I think is something that needs to be tackled so, you know, carbon out of planes and those sorts of things. But from an economic point of view, they're a big tick. The environmental impact, well I think that's something that we really need to work on but there's some great work going there, I mean some of the science that's looking behind that is reducing that carbon impact by exponential amounts and I think that's something we'll see flow in the next three years.

Gael Jennings If I could just direct you to the website, in the second forum, Professor Chris Ryan talked a lot about ways in which we can have environmental sustainable economies and buildings and so on. It was really interesting about how small but widespread changes, if you like, like changes in the way in which we practice and do things—we don't need huge, new technologies, we need to use the technologies we have in judicious manners. It was extremely interesting, and then last week's forum too which was actually about environmental shocks, it was very much about those issues and it was very informative so you might want to hop on there and have a look and have a conversation about it too.

Catherine [North] Catherine [North] at the Melbourne City Council. My question is for John Wiseman. My experience of living in the city, and I live in Collingwood now, has been about a much stronger connection with the community that are living out in the suburbs. So I was wondering what were the indicators used to measure the population's sense of feeling part of the community? I was actually surprised that your data has shown that that was the opposite.

John Wiseman A quick answer to the question is, I mean there was a series of questions like: do you feel part of the community; questions about volunteering, you know, to what extent do people volunteer; questions about if you were in trouble, you know, are there friends and neighbours and so on that you could turn to if you needed help in a hurry. There's a range of questions like that. Yeah I mean I think it raises the issue of what do we mean by connected? And perhaps if I can use that as a way of posing a question back to the audience too about different age groups and different kinds of groups in the City of Melbourne. I mean what does it mean to be connected, say, for a family with young children as opposed to young people as opposed to older people? And when I think of being a student in Collingwood or Fitzroy I certainly feel quite connected but some of the research I've seen for example about older people, maybe it's a different story. So I think yes there's a question of what are the best indicators if you like of being connected; I can only say that that was the answers we got from the survey but I'd be interested in other people's thoughts on that.

Nerida Hi I'm Nerida, I'm a Sociology Honours student. I just wanted to address Adrian and just ask about, you talked about how there's a lack of opportunity for international students to integrate and be socially included in Melbourne. I don't know a great deal about international students but I just wondered about—the way you describe it, it's like there's

not any opportunities for them. Is it also the other side of the coin that they're not actively seeking these or utilising these services? Do you know what I mean? Is there another side to that as well? Is it—what you're describing, it seems like they're victims and they don't have the, or ...?

Adrian Burrage

Yeah, I'm not trying to describe them as victims but the information that comes back from a lot of research in terms of even just simply students coming into the university is that if they don't make a friend, or if they come from a rural community as much as from overseas, if they don't make a friend within the first six weeks of commencing in their course the sort of social clicks have commenced and they often end up feeling quite excluded from that. For international students, as I was saying, sometimes it's about how they're actually living. If they're living in self contained apartments they're not sort of forced into an interaction with other people in a way and in fact our service, and another service in the uni, has run a session called *More than just 2 minute noodles* and its focus is trying to help looking at those independent living skills but also those interactions with other people that happen.

In terms of the spaces and the way that they're living, they tend to end up grouped up with other students from their own country of origin and speaking their own language. Many of those students will say they put a lot of effort in that first, you know, semester or whatever of study to try and meet other people but, you know, they find it difficult when people form into clicks that are just sort of natural. So we need to have a much more sophisticated approach to bringing those groups together. I mean we talk about the compulsion of study groups, for example, as a result of their academic requirements to working groups; students are actually saying, you know, that's one of the few things that's actually forced them into a situation where they have to interact at a level with an Australian student.

If we even look physically on campus at who's using what spaces, the international students tend to dominate the student union building and if you look at the South Lawn area, that'll be local students. I mean they're generalisations but there are big separations and things like the night market that runs on this campus once a year, which is an international student initiative, it tends to be marketed really well to international students through all the networks that are there for them through newsletters, through services and other things, but it doesn't often reach local students. And yet when you go to the event it's extraordinary and in fact any local student that's thinking of backpacking in Thailand or wherever over the break, walks, then stumbles into this event goes *Wow, this is amazing!* You know, *This is so much better than the beer keg which is put on in the traditional sort of student context of recreation.*

So there's a lot of things that are there that have real potential to bring people together but we've just got to find other ways to actually market them and involve people in organising them. It's more about that than it is about the effort I think. The message from international students ...

- Nerida ... there's a relationship between the two maybe? It takes a certain type of person to actively—like I've lived overseas myself, not for student reasons, for work reasons, but I tend to, I'm the type of person that will actively seek out those type of, you know, regardless of whether it's there or not. I mean it would help so I guess it's a relationship between the two maybe?
- Adrian Burrage I think it's true to say that many of the international students that come here are genuinely people seeking new experiences. I mean we're seeing, you know, people from their country who are 17 or 18 moving overseas for six years, I mean I don't know how many of us in our, in this room could say they've taken on that quest. They put a lot of effort into it, it's not an easy thing to do and initially when they are coming with some language and cultural barriers it can be quite difficult to make that integration. And as I said, if it doesn't happen reasonably quickly and there are embedded problems like isolated housing experiences then it only contributes to a few failures [which] when you've got the pressure of academic performance and the need to earn extra money and a range of other things it can be difficult to move on from that. So they tend to hang with who they know they can communicate with and that will be their own students from their own culture.
- Gael Jennings Can I ask Anne if perhaps there might be some kind of lateral thinking here because the situation that you described for the disadvantaged youth, the solution didn't lie just in building houses, it actually lay in providing services and linking them and therefore facilitating self help, in a sense. So, you know, is there something to be said Adrian, for similar, you know, lateral thinking as well as looking at affordable housing obviously, but in getting some kind of crucible going of services and self help and linkage and so on with international students?
- Adrian Burrage The university is really interested in developing the community within the university but actually interacting more with the external community as well. Only six weeks ago or so I was in a really healthy discussion about the orientation period when so many students are new to the university and how can we look at that in a different way to bring together local and international students but also the local community. And there was all sorts of ideas in a 40-minute discussion that offered great opportunities to do that and like I say, things like the night market that I described, it's really a collection of students and representatives of different cultures cooking food in one spot in an atmospheric kind of environment. There'd be opportunities to do that with the local community for example, I mean, you know, close down the end of Faraday Street and have that as a community festival at that period perhaps. You know, there's all sorts of things that could be done, there's lots of ideas and I suppose we need to have a combination of resourcing and commitment to actually try those things. I think international students will follow the lead really easily. I don't think there's much concern about them wanting to participate, it's just finding the mechanisms.
- Gael Jennings Thank you.

Michael O'Hanlon A comment really. Michael O'Hanlon from Community Development at Council. I'm just a little concerned that the issues of locational disadvantage have been ignored in this discussion or haven't been highlighted. If we look at—the Department for Victorian Communities tells us that some of our scores in neighbourhoods of Melbourne are amongst the lowest in the metropolitan region in terms of the [CIPHER] index and that we really have some areas of, you know, where there's a high public housing, a component of the population where there's incredible diversity and where people feel the stigma of being disadvantaged and also being right juxtaposed next to some very advantaged individuals and communities as well. And Melbourne has this wonderful mix of, you know, people of different socio-economic background but I think we need to address the areas that are falling behind. And that's very clear when you look at the data and certainly Carlton is one of those areas where we have a problem and that evidence is coming both from the service delivery end and from the data.

Further to that, I actually studied a course with John many years ago, social work at Melbourne, and one thing that we learned about were the settlement houses where groups of students lived in the local community and contributed to up-skilling that community and creating opportunities for them. And I just wonder whether it might be time for a settlement house in reverse where we actually offer some opportunities for students to live among some of our very advantaged vertical communities, and there's some terrific examples of those, and where we get some real interaction going around and around a group of students having an opportunity to really meaningfully contribute and be supported by the local community.

Gael Jennings In fact if you look at the statistics which you've obviously done, it's sort of building—and Daniel [...]—is going the opposite way; there have been more and more of these ghettos in a sense being built for international students. John, yeah.

John Wiseman I absolutely agree with Michael about needing to highlight, you know, we've got a city area which has lots of people who are really well off and overall have a high income. And we've also got significant numbers of people who are not well off, and just to pick one obvious example is homelessness. We haven't seen the census results from this census yet but we know that five years ago there was 25, 26,000 homeless people on any one night and a particularly high number of those, as I understand, were young, homeless people. So just for starters just to pick one area, if we were talking about social inclusion, an inclusive city, then really addressing issues of homelessness in general, youth homeless in particular, would be absolutely a threshold question I would think. Anne you might have thoughts on that.

Anne Turley Well of that 10,000 young people that I mentioned at Front Yard 90 per cent of them are homeless or at risk of homelessness, so homelessness in the city is a huge problem. The issue of building community and building inclusion. I think the example that I gave of the [next steps] program, which is the bed sets that we have established in conjunction with Melbourne City Council and the Myer Foundation and the Gospel Hall Trust, we've

had 122 kids through that program and they're the young people who have got back into reconnecting with family and reconnecting with school and employment. But in that we've got mentors coming into the bed sets; one of the bed sets is for a mentor so we've got a residential mentor and we have people of wealth coming in there to teach kids things like basic budgeting, financial skills, life skills. We've got businesses helping young people develop the skills to get a drivers license. And so in that way we're doing a number of things: helping them sort of participate but also building in a very real way a sense of community within the living area and the capacity to then move on in a much more sort of holistic way where they can build relationships and relate socially and connect to people.

And we're looking with the City of Melbourne at the moment in addressing some of the needs that are in the Docklands with lots of the international students living on sort of different levels of the Docklands apartments and really isolated because they come into the reception area and then just use a keycard to go up to their floor and they don't often see or relate to other people living in the community. How can we use internet access and how can we use the facility to build connections? Good examples.

Gael Jennings So it's a multilevel problem or challenge, isn't it? Yes.

Peter McEwen Peter McEwen, planner. I'd just like to move the discussion if we could with the panel just a little bit beyond; we seem to be talking an awful lot about the issues that Melbourne almost as a municipality faces but Melbourne has also got a capital city function and of course is Victoria's effective inner city state. And so if we look at the issue of social inclusiveness we could also look at it in a much bigger scale and at that point, if you look at how we're connected, we could have another debate about social inclusion. What I mean by this is I mean why does the city exist in the first place? Why does the CBD exist? It exists traditionally because it's the point of highest accessibility and that accessibility has been maintained by massive investment in public transport over the decades but that public transport infrastructure has aged, it's at capacity and if we don't respond to the issue of public transport, which is inherently about connectedness, then Melbourne will lose its place as the point of highest accessibility and therefore social inclusion for all Victorians.

Gael Jennings That was a point partially alluded to by the first question was a huge part of the discussion of the second and third forums which is public transport is creating a new poor who are those who won't be able to afford to move in because of peak oil and all the rest of it. So John, do ...

John Wiseman I mean I'll be very clear about that, I think the single biggest investment that's needed in not just the city of Melbourne but Melbourne in relation to social inclusion is public transport, you know, I'll be as clear as that. That is the most important investment over the next 10 years to really make this city work as an inclusive connected place.

Gael Jennings How does the rest of the panel feel? Is that a lot of nods? You're all saying yes.

Adrian Burrage Oh yeah, nodding furiously.

Daniel Grollo Absolutely.

Anne Turley And I'd like to see it accessible and affordable for young people so they can come into the city and ...

Gael Jennings Well I'd have to say that is the single most dominate theme in all the discussions of all the forums so I hope that that's recorded because it's clearly incredibly important. Would someone like to answer their phone and then we'll—or are we ringing in a question? Up there, thank you.

Ernesto [...] My name is Ernesto [...]. I think that Melbourne has a, the city of Melbourne has a big problem, is [it's centralised], everything is centralised in the city. This produces [...] a lot of problems: people spend a lot of money trying to go to the city. Has the City [think] that, you don't think that this is the moment to create another centre inside Melbourne, well communicated? I heard for example that the university, RMIT, is moving—but this university has a facility outside the city of Melbourne and actually it's moving to the centre of, to the city of Melbourne. So I think that instead of trying to solve the problem we are increasing the problem; we are concentrating everything in the city.

Gael Jennings So you're thinking that we should be doing some decentralisation as a way of solving some of these problems?

Ernesto [...] Yeah.

Gael Jennings Does the panel think that that will solve some of the problems? Is that a good idea? This was discussed at the second forum if you want to log on and hear the second forum, it was discussed and the general consensus of the panellists there was that decentralisation will probably be forced on some of the big regional centres but that Melbourne will, because of continuing population growth, Melbourne will still have these same difficulties, that seemed to be the consensus of that forum. I don't know?

John Wiseman I mean, as the point was made there, I mean the city of Melbourne is obviously part of a larger metropolitan area and a larger State of Victoria and certainly investing in and making sure that the central city area thrives doesn't mean that we forget, you know, all the other parts of the city or the State. And it doesn't mean that we forget that they need to be well connected and that they need to have, you know, good services and so on, I mean clearly that's, you know, that's vital. But I don't think that means that we forget that the city of Melbourne is a kind of a heart of the place as well and I don't think the two things again are contradictory; I think, you know, you want an inclusive, central city area and you want to make sure that Frankston and Bendigo and Ballarat and Geelong thrive as well.

Gael Jennings And we'll undoubtedly have the same problems in time if we don't all plan for the future now, I suppose by these discussions. We've got about another three or four minutes so some more comments. Up there, and then down here.

Clara Boyle Hi. Clara Boyle, architect and project officer. I grew up in London and I've lived here for about five years and I noticed at the Commonwealth Games there was an extraordinary opportunity for Melburnians to reach out at all sorts of levels. One of the things that I noticed in the middle of Melbourne, in a Melbourne city, coming back to place-making are opportunities to reach out and many of the issues across all our forums of course have been about connectedness and community. And Anne, the work you've done with Front Yard and Daniel, the work you've done with building QV, I mean it's a great sort of iconic shopping centre, it's a place to go shopping and to eat. I was just wondering in terms of community, cyclically how people physically get an opportunity to reach out to people from other countries in Melbourne? I think architecturally there aren't nearly enough examples of those perhaps in the city and I was just wondering in terms of the work that Anne you do with meeting with industry and the work you do Daniel and the work you do Adrian, Melbourne Uni being a microcosmic precinct perhaps for communities to work and the city being a bigger version of the same thing, how this cross-sectoral, practical application might feasibly work where Melburnians get to talk to people from other countries and those people that spend that very potent amount of time here and then return to their countries, might make the most of it.

Gael Jennings So a bit of brainstorming by the panel, multi-sectoral to come up with how we're going to get vivid communities working in our built environment.

Anne Turley Can I say that I think we have the community we vision and that one of the things that we need to recognise is, you know like in Australia at the moment we have 2.4 million Australians estimated to be living in poverty and experiencing disadvantage and we seem to be saying as a country that that's okay. And I think if we talk individually we'll probably all say *no, it isn't okay, but what can we do to make a difference?* And one of the things that we encourage people to think about is what are the capabilities, what are the capacities that you could offer and join that with other people so that you could build a tapestry of response. And that's the bit about the cross-sector engagement: business brings to the partnership something that the not-for-profit can't bring; government brings something else; volunteers and people in the community bring other things.

And if we actually have a vision of building cohesion, like Daniel was saying, let's be optimistic about it and actually take forward a vision of saying that it's not okay for these people to be left behind and we'll work together to build more inclusion. And then think about how we individually might be able to do that and commit to that because there are all sorts of ways that people can do that: mentoring kids who are being left behind in school; picking up kids who live with a disability and encouraging them with homework clubs; providing walking buses for kids whose parents can't afford to pay for an actual school bus trip so, you know, people in the community walk kids to school. There are all sorts of things that we can do to build that cohesion.

Gael Jennings Would Daniel and Adrian like to comment too?

Daniel Grollo I'll try. I just think there was a good question asked before about how do you get a

connection between valuing social improvement and I look at some of the objectives, although the social is much broader, but if I look at some of the objectives—I [liken the] social debate, what we're having here, is where the environmental debate was perhaps 10 years ago and it's about elevating the discussion. I think Anne's right. Now there's lots of corporates out there that actually don't know how to help; they know it's the right thing, they know in private it's the right thing but how do they do it? How can they meaningfully contribute to this process? What can they do?

And you know, there's people like Anne out there who have had groups and discussions groups in Melbourne and I think it's working really well and raising the objectives. And I guess I'm being a little bit repetitive but I do see it as the key, I mean if you can raise a cohesive set of objectives that you're trying to deliver, some outcomes, then you can give that to the corporate community, they will grab it, they will grab it and make it happen. And I think that's what, that's the goal ultimately, it's as Anne said, ultimately you create what you think about and if you think about something much higher and you're optimistic about achieving that and you can communicate that you can bring people along with you. And I think that's the key that we've got to do.

Adrian Burrage There is a research project that's being coordinated through the Faculty of Architecture called the *Transnational and Temporary Projects*, and it's looking at the spaces and places that students are using around central Melbourne. And they are looking at it particularly from an architectural and design perspective but they are looking at the social consequences of those designs. And as a pretty high level research project running over three years it's delivering some pretty interesting information and opportunities to see, you know, that cohesive set of principles that could be grabbed by, you know, the corporate entities that are interested in putting money into development. So ...

Gael Jennings Adrian, what's it called again? The Transnational ...

Adrian Burrage Transnational and temporary place-making for students and the community in central Melbourne. It's not my project.

Gael Jennings What a stupid name. Great project but a great ...

Adrian Burrage A bit of a mouthful but a really good project.

Gael Jennings We should put a link, try to get a link put onto the Future Melbourne website so that people can go into it because that's, I think, a really pivotal point: look at things that are already working and build on them as well as have conversations.

Adrian Burrage Yeah. And they're doing, you know, they're working in a lot of focus groups with students and external bodies to the university to look at, you know, what their motives are for the type of development they've done, how successful it's been, where they think the vulnerabilities are. It's a good project.

Gael Jennings Now I promised just that one last question, which now—oh it was here, this gentleman here and then we'll have to leave it because time is up.

Simon Macpherson Thank you and I'll just make it quick. Simon Macpherson's my name and I'm an urban design practitioner. I guess in relation to a couple of the earlier questions, Melbourne does have other centres, it's got lots of them of course and Melbourne 2030 is about making better use of them and the infrastructure that goes along with them. And so I guess particularly for Daniel and for Adrian, if there might be opportunities for less focus on central Melbourne and more focus on middle ring Melbourne, which traditionally resists any change? And also outer suburbs and suburban centres where international students could be housed in other areas that have pretty decent public transport and other good facilities and could also provide some mutual benefit to those locations also.

And also just touching on a point that Anne made about tall buildings and isolation, I think tall buildings are isolating by their nature and there's a lot of research and comment on that point. And so perhaps international students and non-students also could be housed in lower-rise buildings, perhaps four, five, six storeys in some of those other suburbs, perhaps Sandringham or Preston or Balwyn or Footscray or those sorts of places where the transit cities are really struggling to effect any real change currently.

Gael Jennings Brief.

Adrian Burrage It's a great question.

Gael Jennings Yeah that was a good one, a short question with a million different arms on it which requires a lot of response.

Adrian Burrage Yeah, there is a, within the uni there's a desire and a recognition that there's a desire to get students in on campus and make it function out of university hours to some extent. But there is also a really strong argument and Kate Shaw actually from the project I talked about before would question why we have to have students—and I would too—question why we have to have students living, you know, within a tennis ball throw of the campus. From an affordable housing point of view, building accommodation on premium sites in Carlton and the CBD is a very expensive way to provide accommodation. So there are some really good arguments to be looking at what you're describing in terms of following successful, safe public transport routes and developing opportunities there. It's happening overseas and actually as part of a project that I'm looking at I will be going overseas next year to look at some of those things so hopefully we'll be able to bring some dialogue and thinking back in that will encourage that sort of development as well.

Gael Jennings But it hinges on the public transport otherwise they're disconnected from what they're here to do which is to study.

Adrian Burrage Yeah.

Gael Jennings We'll have to leave it there I'm sorry to say. I just, I would like you though all to take the opportunity to do some of this mixing and mingling with our international and other students because between now and next week's forum—you might want to take a walk to Melbourne Central Skybridge which is that walkway between Myers and Melbourne Central because there's an M: Urban – Modifying the City exhibition which is joint project

between RMIT Architecture and the Committee for Melbourne's Future Focus Group, which showcases the RMIT students' personal readings and perceptions of the city. And it includes speculative design proposals for some of Melbourne's underutilised, vacant and most intriguing sites—Daniel, I hope you're taking note—such as Docklands Esplanade or Fed Square vacant carpark rooftop. It doesn't say CUB site but I'm sure they meant it, and it goes until the 11th of July. So that's on Level 2, Melbourne Central Skybridge between Melbourne Central and Myer across Lonsdale Street and it's open from 6:00 pm from tomorrow tonight, Thursday.

Please don't forget to fill in these questionnaires if you want to have more say on your way out. Thank you all so much for coming and thank you very much to our panellists, all our panellists for coming tonight and contributing their expertise and their time. And I'd like to remind you that the final forum is next week, or the final announced forum, I'm sure there'll be other public events. It's at the Carrillo Gantner Theatre at the Sydney Myer Asia Centre, which is in Swanston Street, as I said before, opposite the tram stop, and this is bringing it altogether into Building our City for the Future. So I hope to see you, well I won't see you there, there's going to be another moderator because I'll be overseas but thank you very much for coming to this fabulous series and please keep contributing because it's such an important planning stage for our city. Thank you and have a good night.