

# FUTURE MELBOURNE

## **Future Melbourne Forum 5: Building our City for the Future**

Date: **Wednesday 11th Jul 2007**

Time: **6:00pm - 7:30pm**

Venue: **Carrillo Gantner Theatre, Sidney Myer Asia Centre University of Melbourne, Swanston St Carlton**

### **MODERATOR'S ADDRESS AND WELCOME – Peter Mares**

Peter Mares            Good evening ladies and gentlemen and on behalf of the City of Melbourne and Melbourne University and the Future Melbourne project, welcome to this evening's forum, Building our City for the Future. I'm Peter Mares and my day job is Presenter of The National Interest on ABC Radio National, which you can hear every Sunday at midday. But I'm not here in my ABC capacity; I've been given a job tonight by Future Melbourne which is to introduce our speakers, to keep them to time, to direct the traffic when it comes to questions from you in the audience and to explain what Future Melbourne is all about and how this forum fits into the Future Melbourne process.

I'd like to begin by noting that we're meeting on the land of the Kulin nation, the traditional owners of this place known to us today as Melbourne. And in making that acknowledgement we remind ourselves of just how rapid change is. It's only 170 odd years ago that John Batman sailed up from Tasmania to attempt to secure some choice parcels of land for his Port Phillip Association, just a handful of generations ago, a tiny fragment of time, particularly when measured against the continuous occupation of the Kulin nation over tens of thousands of years. But in that short time a huge urban centre has developed here, built by people searching for security, for a safe place to live and a decent income, searching for profit perhaps with ambitious plans to build a business or perhaps driven by naked greed and just wanting to make a quick buck. Others who have built this city arrived here seeking a sense of adventure to make their fortune, some perhaps motivated by an artistic sensibility, searching for their creation or hoping to help create something of beauty.

In short, Melbourne's been shaped by the full range of competing human aspirations and ideals, interests and needs and the economic and social forces that they give rise to and as the city grew and became more complex so did the efforts to guide and steer those social and economic forces. And so the City of Melbourne has developed over time blueprints for the future, city plans and this is the current one, towards a thriving and

sustainable city. And we're here tonight because this plan runs out in 2010. Future Melbourne is a process of consultation and debate towards developing a new plan for Melbourne in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

So can I just ask how many of you have been to other forums in this series, just stick up your hand if you have? Quite a lot of you which is very encouraging. For those of you who haven't been, there have been four forums so far, the first looking at Melbourne's Cultural Identity, what do we value about this city and what makes it special? The second, Sustaining Melbourne's Prosperity and not just in the sense of allowing business to thrive but also ensuring that we, the city's residents, are prosperous and that that prosperity is shared around. The third forum, Meeting the Environmental Shocks of which there was plenty of discussion of climate change, water scarcity and the end, the looming end in many people's eyes, of cheap oil. And last week's forum on Change and Social Inclusion, how well do we deal with homelessness, with creating opportunities for young people, for marginalised groups, how well do we welcome international students who are now such an important part of the city, particularly the inner city.

All those forums are available on the Future Melbourne website as podcasts and I can tell you because I've listened to two of them—I've been to two and I've listened to two. Those podcasts do make it all come alive; you get a very good sense of the range of issues and opinions that were canvassed. So if you missed forums and you want to look at them then, to listen to them then you can and I think there will be transcripts in due course.

Tonight our topic is Building our City for the Future and I guess this can be read in both a literal and a more figurative sense. In literal terms of course we're talking about the built form, what kind of buildings get built and how do they affect our public and private spaces? How do they affect our interactions? Are they convivial? Are they energy efficient and future proof for a warming planet? In a figurative sense the question is about the process of building the city, how do we settle the differences that inevitably emerge between us? How do we share and compromise on our competing visions for what Melbourne is and should be?

Before we hear from our four speakers—and I've kept them waiting a long time already—a few housekeeping matters. First if you haven't already done so, switch off your mobile phone or at least put it on mute so we don't have to hear it. Secondly, when it comes to your questions and comments, put your hand up; there's going to be a couple of roving microphones, Peter and Rose will bring them around to you. We need the microphone because we want to record this for the web so everyone else who isn't here can hear it. And also I'd ask you to be concise. I can tell you now that not everyone is going to get to ask the questions they want to ask or make the comments they want to make, going on past forums, we'll quickly use up the time available. So I'd ask you to be democratic about the time we have and keep your comments concise. Thirdly, if we don't get to your question or comment then please fill in one of the forms that are on the desk outside

there and hand it in before you go home or take it home and put it in the reply paid envelope. And fourthly, when you do get home, fire up your computer, log onto the net and log into the Future Melbourne website [www.futuremelbourne.com.au](http://www.futuremelbourne.com.au) and leave some comments there because this, people from the Future Melbourne team will be looking at those comments, bringing them altogether, because this is what it's all about, it's about a public conversation ensuring that voices are heard and that discussion is generated. So if you have a really strong view about the future of Melbourne, and the fact that you're here suggests you might, then this is your chance to shape the city: get your friends involved, form a lobby group, write letters, hit the website, get active.

With tonight's fifth forum we're very much still at the beginning of the process of developing this plan too, so if you've missed the other forums don't worry, there is, there are many more events to come and I'll give you some more details at the end. From this, these five forums have been designed to identify values and issues for Melbourne for the future. From here we'll move onto scenarios for the city, that will promote a new round of public conversations looking more concretely at the choices we face in Melbourne before negotiations around producing an agreed document, a new plan for the City of Melbourne which is envisaged to be ready around September next year. So it's an ongoing process, a transparent process, fully documented on the website and your input is both invited and welcome.

So enough of the introduction, let's get down to business - Building our City for the Future. Each of our eminent panellists will speak for about five minutes and then the rest of us will engage them in conversation and debate. Our first speaker is Tom Kvan. He's Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning here at the University of Melbourne and he's been a leader in the development of digital design tools for architects. He has degrees from Cambridge and from the University of California and Tom has practiced architecture in big and small firms in Africa, in Europe, in Hong Kong and in the US so he really has a world of experience to share with us here in Melbourne. So Tom also has some slides so please welcome Tom Kvan.

**PANELLIST PRESENTATION - Speaker 1: Professor Tom Kvan – Dean, Faculty of Architecture Building and Planning, University of Melbourne**

Tom Kvan

Thank you very much. Being an architect I can't talk without colourful wallpaper behind me, slides are always essentially so I beg your tolerance here. One of the hardest things to imagine is the unknown, especially that which we have never experienced becomes a very difficult thing to craft. This is what designers do; the art of design is the art of asking the unaskable, imagining the unimaginable and thinking beyond that which we can conceive. So one of the tasks that I'm going to ask you to do tonight is to undertake a little bit of designing. In other words, push yourself so you think beyond that which you are comfortable with and see what comes out.

Imagine a city in which you want to live. Imagine a city in which all citizens can enjoy

their lives better, have access to those facets of the city which they want to gain access to, use resources effectively, they enable, the citizens are enabled to achieve their goals for cultural, economic and social goals. This is what we would call a sustainable city. It is a city in which there is diversity, it's a city in which those who wish to achieve something in that environment have the opportunity to access it and have the ability to live there in a comfortable and sustainable manner. How is that city different to what we see behind me today?



<http://www.jccv.org.au/images/melbourne.jpg>

That is Melbourne on the screen, it sprawls out a long distance and it covers a vast territory. It houses a relatively few number of people for the area that it covers and it consumes a considerable amount of resources just to sustain it and keep it ticking over.

What would we do to this city to make it a place that we would think would be better for several generations down the road? In each of our contexts we might be able to come up with an answer. I put this image up purely as provocation, it's not a proposal so don't take it as such. It is an image of a proposal I put together a few years ago for what a high-rise city might look like in Japan, which is not Melbourne. But in this exercise what we were doing was trying to imagine what future possibilities could be: how could you bring together the diversity of what a city is—its economic base, its production base, its consumption base, its cultural base, its economic activities—and integrate these into a form which allows people to access them more readily and yet not to be put under such pressure that they have to give up an enormous amount to enjoy it?

We are fixated in our understandings of cities by certain things. These are things that we come to love, come to enjoy, things that we get dedicated to and they tend to narrow our vision of what might be. We can consider these and try and build from them but one of the challenges in design is to conceive of that which we haven't experienced and to

conceptualise what it might be that we could give to somebody else as a different choice.

In the discussions of cities however most of our experience seems to be polarised into a binary choice, a rather difficult binary choice: there's the quarter acre lot or there's the point tower and the podium. And this is my image of Melbourne, I've only been here for five months, I'm a newcomer to the city, but it is striking.



[www.stanford.edu/~grg/australia/melbourne/cbd.html](http://www.stanford.edu/~grg/australia/melbourne/cbd.html)  
[www.aaha.ch/sections/melbourne-sommaire.htm](http://www.aaha.ch/sections/melbourne-sommaire.htm)

It's one of the most striking cities in the world for this binary comparison: you go through a very long, flat landscape and then bang, you come to very tall towers and there's nothing in between. And I suggest that point in between is somewhere we might explore because it might be in that in between area that we have an opportunity to create a nature of a city which is different.

There are benefits of point towers, there are benefits of quarter acre lots. There are those who wish for point towers, there are those who wish for the quarter acre lots. However with demographic change we have to recognise that expectations of our society are different today than they were in the past. Demographic change is coming from ageing, the age profile change is coming from cultural differences, people are immigrating from all sorts of other cultures. And we are creating our own environment as well. Melbourne is remarkable in its love of the lanes and the alleyways, it's remarkable in terms of the cultural diversity and vibrancy of such spaces, and it's the spaces that we might explore.

I have on the screen here an image of a city of 200,000 people that we were asked to conceive of and design in Hong Kong a few years ago.

Justyna Karakiewicz, Thomas Kwan,  
Kwu Tung-Hong, Kong  
A new city of 200,000 people



We were able to put 200,000 people into a very, very small space, in exactly the same space that would have been occupied by podia and towers in the more normal Asian model. And yet by modelling the space, the city in a different attitude we were able to create a landscape where people walked over and through buildings and no building was more taller than 10 storeys high and yet we could get the population of 200,000 in very few hectares.

By trying to imagine what a city might look like which is different to that which we've experienced today I suggest that we have an opportunity to create a Melbourne which we would love to live in. In order to do this we must change our legislative and planning frameworks, we must move away from descriptive constraints and move more towards performative expectations. What we want to do is to create a city which has opportunities for all.

This is not an image of Sydney just as a provocation in Melbourne, forgive me; it is a demonstration of how I took some of those ideas and implemented them in East Darling Harbour which is the bottom edge of that image over there, which shows you landscape flowing over buildings.



East Darling Harbour Competition, Sydney  
Karakiewicz Kvan 2005

And these were six storey buildings which where the nature of a park allowed people to walk up the sides of buildings and across the tops. On steeper walls you could do [...] and wall climbing. There are different attitudes that we can conceive of but what we must be able to do is to think the unthinkable and that's the challenge tonight I think, is to push ourselves that far. It's not that we must act on what we think because that will stop you thinking about the unthinkable; what you have to do is to think about the unthinkable and then evaluate the results and decide whether those have any potential to be thought through further.

So don't hesitate in your explorations, don't constrain yourself by being safe; what we want to do is to avoid the biggest mistake, which is to refuse to think about what might be and to hold ourselves where we are today. Thank you.

[applause]

Peter Mares

Thank you very much Tom. Our second speaker is—and I won't steel your watch—our second speaker is Carolyn Parker who is Managing Director of the privately owned Kador Group, which owns properties in the commercial, retail and industrial sectors across eastern Australia. And in this position Carolyn has gradually reshaped the company's portfolio focussing more on larger investment opportunities and opportunities to value add through refurbishment and as you can imagine, environmental awareness and sustainability then arises crucial issues in that process. So Carolyn is going to talk to us about the move to sustainable building and the future for property developers. Carolyn Parker.

**PANELLIST PRESENTATION – Speaker 2: Carolyn Parker, Managing Director  
Kador Group**

Carolyn Parker

Thank you very much. I'm delighted to be able to be here. I must emphasise that my company, we're not developers, we're investors but of course as part of the work we do we do deal with developers all the time. So what I'm sort of going to try and talk to you tonight is some of the challenges that face big business, the capital D, developers. I'm also not qualified to talk about high-rise residential development either but listening to my colleagues on the Property Council, Victorian Division, I know that the biggest challenge that faces them is affordability and I'm not even going to try and get into that one because better brains than mine have struggled with that.

There's no point in pretending that there aren't challenges to be faced by and I suppose because of property developers but really I think that challenges are just opportunities with a different name. Melbourne's future must be wrapped around the concept of an environmentally sustainable city but I think one of the biggest challenges that we face is to convince developers and others in the industry that sustainability is here to stay and that it's not just scare mongering. Because remember the Y2K bug, the year 2000 bug? We were all absolutely made to believe that the world was just about going to come to an end unless we threw squillions of dollars at everything then so the industry was pretty jaundiced about that so don't, you know, not everybody is these days as yet convinced about climate change.

And the developers and the leasing agents and the tenant reps are judged on their financial performance so they don't want to be caught up in something else that's just going to be another, what they perhaps see as another needless expense. They're a pretty sceptical bunch and they need to have it demonstrated that the move to a sustainable built environment is not only necessary for the future of Melbourne and the future of Australia and the future of the planet but it's commercially feasible. Unfortunately unless and until they can see a commercial reward for their effort it just won't happen.

So I think the challenge for the future is to convert the sceptics; the opportunity that arises from that is for the city to work in partnership with the property industry towards a sustainable and commercially viable built environment. And I have to say that based on my experience in other capital cities I think that Melbourne City Council is miles and miles ahead in terms of educating the city stakeholders about green issues; the Council have shown tremendous leadership. There's still a long way to go to get everyone thinking along the same lines and perhaps it involves some carrot and perhaps it involves some [stick] but you didn't hear that from me.

Making Melbourne's future based around sustainability will by implication create better buildings and that's another opportunity; it means better architecture, better energy efficiency, better water management, better waste management, better health and safety. And that will flow onto the attraction of new businesses with more of the best and

the brightest workers wanting to actually work in Melbourne. And it'll reinforce the old adage—I think it used to be one of the city slogan's—about Melbourne being a better place in which to do business.

Also don't forget that Melbourne needs ongoing development every bit as much as the developers need Melbourne. Don't overlook the fact that the development industry has got other choices outside the CBD and outside Melbourne and I personally believe that the city needs the constant renewal of the built environment to remain viable and visible. It also needs the rates and taxes that the commercial industry brings in too.

I think it would be foolish in the extreme to think that Melbourne's future can be supported solely by an increasing emphasis on city residents and a consequent discouragement of commercial development. And certainly Melbourne in the future must embrace and encourage its travelling workforce, the people who commute from elsewhere each day. These workers provide the retail support and the cultural support and the diversity for the city. Melbourne needs to leverage off these daily commuting workers, Melbourne needs to encourage their employers to set up business in the city.

To encourage ongoing commercial growth, traffic and transport congestion is one area that must, it must be resolved. I think the MCC is showing great initiatives with these ideas of the bicycle pods that I heard about the other day and that's potentially a win/win for everybody; the developers won't have to lose expensive net lettable area out of their buildings to put in bike parks. But they can do their bit by putting in shower and changer and locker facilities to encourage the workers to use them. Vehicle traffic will be reduced and the health benefits for the treadly riders will be greatly enhanced. But public transport is still a basket case and the city must push the State Government for a complete overhaul.

And I think the city also has to accept that motor vehicles are a necessary part of life, particularly while there's no viable alternative with public transport. We've obviously got to work to reduce the cars in the city but we're kidding ourselves if we think we can have a viable city without cars at all. I may not be very popular for that view but I'm not afraid to say it because it needs to be said. Imposing a congestion levy is one thing but not actually working to find a solution to the congestion is another thing altogether. We shouldn't just continue to treat motorists as the enemy; we can't blame motorists for traffic congestion, particularly when there's no viable public transport alternative for some commuters, myself included. Non-sequenced traffic lights throughout the city, no easy east-west linkage, virtual gridlock until 7:30 on many, many evenings. This can't continue if Melbourne is to have a future and it's also appallingly bad for the environment to, cars sitting there and not being able to move anywhere.

Okay, so that's the view of a developer in a nutshell, I think it comes down to sustainable buildings, traffic management and communication and partnership between government at all levels and industry. Thank you.

[applause]

Peter Mares

Thank you Carolyn and thank you to both our first two speakers for sticking to their time limits, I haven't had to push them off the stage. Elizabeth Proust is a company director, she's on the board of Perpetual and she's held numerous other positions at the very highest levels of Australian business and government, including serving as Secretary of the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet and CEO of the Melbourne City Council. Elizabeth Proust is Chairman of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and her topic for tonight is *What development means for social capital*. Please welcome Elizabeth Proust.

**PANELLIST PRESENTATION – Speaker 3: Elizabeth Proust, Company Director and Board member Perpetual**

Elizabeth Proust

Thank you Peter, good evening ladies and gentlemen. My perspective tonight is I suspect like many of you as a worker, a shopper, somebody who goes regularly to the Arts Centre, to the MCG and many other areas of Melbourne, but that informed by the five years I spent, as Peter has mentioned, as CEO of the City of Melbourne in the early 1990s. And because I want to say some critical things I want to firstly acknowledge the very significant changes that have occurred in the last 10/15 years in the city.

Some of you are too young to remember but when I took the job in 1990 friends thought it was the worst judgement call that I'd made. It was a fairly depressed time in the city and I'd go interstate, mostly to Sydney, and the jokes included *what's the capital of Victoria*, to which the answer was *about a dollar*. And people would offer food parcels to take home. Now it wasn't obviously that drastic but that was the psyche and about a month after I took the job, Melbourne lost the 1996 Olympic bid and not coming second, coming fourth in that which was a further downer to the city's fortunes.

But as often is the case out of that adversity came a range of opportunities. And I think that many of the great cooperative and collaborative efforts that were triggered by the events of 1990 and the general demise in the city included initiatives such as the Committee for Melbourne, which exists today and which still works with the city, with the University of Melbourne and with many others, businesses included, to work on major projects for the city. So I think that those sorts of efforts, and there's many others, have been an enormous and ongoing success in turning around the fortunes of the city.

And I suspect if somebody had left Melbourne in 1990 and come back in 2007 they would struggle, both with the physical and obvious changes but also with the changes in the psyche of the city. And both Tom and Carolyn have touched on some of those areas but that includes the very large increase in people living in the city, it includes the lanes and alleyway revival in the city, the area around the arts complex and of course, as I've mentioned, the sporting precinct and all that's happened in that part of Melbourne fairly

unrivalled almost anywhere in the world.

I think though that if you look at social capital—and let me quickly give you a definition that I like which is the attitude, spirit and willingness of people to engage in collective civic activities—if you look at that and if you just concentrate for the moment on the heart of the city—and I want to say something about the wider city at the end—I think that there are some areas for concern, and here I'm not just talking about King Street. I work in the rarefied atmosphere of 101 Collins Street and within a block of that area—and here I'm mostly talking night-time but not entirely—I've seen assaults, I've seen drug dealing and I've seen obvious public drunkenness. That's occurred recently around the Arts Centre as well and I think all of that adds up to a feeling of people feeling less safe in the city and less inclined, particularly for night-time activities, to come into the city. So—and that's not something that the Council can solve by itself, it's obviously a multifaceted problem but I think there are some areas about the development of the city that we as a community need to be concerned about.

The issue of the wider city that I want to focus on which is probably not going to be widely endorsed, it may well be controversial, I was involved in the council reforms of the early 1990s which saw Victorian councils reduced from about 210 to 70-something. My view at the time was that that was a great step forward in taking council boundaries from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to about the 1930s and I think we are shackled with too many councils in Melbourne, 30-something I think the number is. I think that Brisbane has a very significant advantage by having one council that covers the whole of the City of Brisbane.

I don't expect the City of Melbourne to endorse what I've just said but I think some of the issues that are being touched on, including planning for infrastructure, and in particular for public transport, I think that we need some boldness by government to look at issues about further council amalgamations so that we have the possibility of one body being able to take on some of the key issues in the same way that Brisbane does. So as I said, I don't expect it to be generally endorsed but I think that what we're looking at is a strategy for Melbourne and when I say Melbourne I don't just mean the fairly narrow boundaries of the City of Melbourne, I think of the whole of the city and I think that that needs some bold steps and I'd like to put that forward as one of them. Thank you.

[applause]

Peter Mares

Thank you Elizabeth and thank you for raising the Brisbane example, I think it's a fascinating one and one that I had hoped would be raised as part of these discussions. Brisbane is, for those of you who don't know, Brisbane, and as Elizabeth outlined, has one city council covering the whole metropolitan area and so the contest for the mayorship, the mayor, the position of lord mayor in Brisbane are very, very intense as you can imagine.

Our final speaker tonight is Professor Rob Moodie. Now Rob has been brought onto the panel at short notice which is why we've put him last so he's had time to digest what everyone else has said and prepare himself. Rob is an internationally renowned public

health expert. He's now Chair of Global Health at the Nossal Institute for Global Health at the University of Melbourne, it's a position he took up earlier this year and before that of course Rob was the CEO of VicHealth. He's served on many international and national and state committees including the Premier's Drug Prevention Council, the International Union of Health Promotion and Education and he advised Bill and Melinda Gates and their foundation in its HIV work in India. And surprise, surprise, Rob is going to talk to us about health, about how we can plan health into the future of Melbourne. Rob Moodie.

**PANELLIST PRESENTATION – Speaker 4: Professor Rob Moodie, Chair of Global Health, Nossal Institute of Global Health, The University of Melbourne**

Rob Moodie

Thank you very much Peter. And first of all I'd like to say I really like paying my rates, I think councils do a really good job. I don't have to pay rates at Melbourne but I pay them further out but I think that local councils and the fact that contributions are being made to them is a really good thing to do. The second thing I want to say is I fundamentally believe you can design good health into the local environment, good health into our environment or you can, as we've seen, you can design ill health into the environment. So we have, from a health point of view we have some really positive things that we can talk about.

I'd just like to talk a little bit about what I see as a healthy city. I think a healthy city is connected, active, economically viable, sustainable, safe, attractive, fun, it manages conflict and problems well, it's optimally regulated and it acknowledges and balances risk. So I just want to pick out those things one by one or sort of one by one—I said them so quickly so you wouldn't quite catch on. It's connected and by that—it's welcoming. It has porous boundaries with the cities around it and I actually think I agree with Elizabeth that it should not only have porous boundaries with some of the cities around it, it should actually envelope them.

It is emotionally connected and encourages people to actually connect up with each other; it doesn't have gated sections. How it deals with everybody, it's egalitarian in that sense and that it allows, I think, a great diversity of activity and types of people in it and manages that well.

It's active and it's active physically, socially and culturally. And just take the sort of physical point of view, then it's from a public transport or from a transport point of view, it encourages a whole array of forms of transport. So it is 'walkable', it is 'cyclable', it is 'busable', 'tramable' and 'trainable' but it's not only 'carable'. And Carolyn was talking about motorists getting a bad wrap, well the problem is that, motorists, we only thought of motorists until about five years ago; we haven't really considered alternative forms of transport, it's only, it's just sort of come on our agenda over the last few years. So we

suffer those problems now of having such a, in a sense, concentrated form of transport which is fundamentally around the car and we haven't invested, as she said, nearly enough in public transport let alone in other forms of transport.

It's socially active and it's culturally active and in that sense it does everything to encourage people to actually relate to each other. And councils sometimes have a wonderful capacity to stop that. I think that's changing in many of the councils in and around Melbourne; they're trying to do as much as they can to actually get people to relate to each other both by offering various forms of activities but actually by encouraging local residents, local owners, traders to actually interact with each other in respectful and fun ways.

It has to be economically viable and I agree with Carolyn in terms of the way that you need a balance between commerce, residents and visitors. It has to be safe. Safety actually determines activity and it determines connection. On the other hand, connection and activity determine safety. In other words, the used area is much safer than, in a sense, the non-used area. If we don't do this then you will have heard of 'obesogenic' environments where in a sense people are so inactive that it helps us put on weight. Well it also, I think we can unfortunately create depressogenic environments where people don't have an opportunity to connect up with each other. If they don't have the opportunity to, in a sense, create relationships both in their vertical operating, whether that's work or whatever, as well as their sort of lateral environment then they stay isolated and they don't, and their mental health is not optimal. I think as Tom pointed out we need a—and I love Tom's ideas about climbing over a building, I think,, those sorts of ideas are wonderful.

It manages conflict and problems well and it's optimally regulated. We're seeing now the point of very poor regulation of licensed premises, both in numbers and in the way that they're actually not regulated very well and in fact, the people that actually run them don't actually look after what's going on inside them, let alone what's going on outside them and that is creating unsafe spaces.

And lastly, it acknowledges and balances risk. We were just talking before about the fact that you can't find stairs in many buildings anymore. Why? Because the stairs on the outside are there for security and you don't go into, you don't use them because you might actually not be able to get out of it. And the need to design back into our buildings provides opportunities for activity, whether that's from floor to floor or just for the first few floors. But that's the—another case is the wonderful pedestrian strategy we've had in our State for the last 10 or 15 years and if you want to know what the real aim of the pedestrian strategy in Victoria is, it's to have no pedestrians because that's the safest thing you can do. Well this is when you've got sort of risk on one side being sort of swung out and we're creating a whole lot of risks on the other hand. So this notion of balancing risk, we will never be without risk; the question is how do we optimally balance those?

And lastly I think a healthy city is where people are as interested how they live outside in the open air with other people as much as they're interested in how they work and live inside. Thanks very much.

[applause]

## **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Peter Mares

I'm just going to briefly summarise what we heard from each of our speakers before I invite you to put your questions and comments. First of all Tom began by asking us to think the unthinkable and he suggested to us that that unthinkable might lie somewhere in the space between our high-rises on the one hand and our quarter acre blocks on the other hand, something perhaps, a range of housing that might be under 10 storeys. And I suspect that there are also environmental issues to be conceived of here in terms of making buildings ultimately sustainable and planning for the best possible use of solar and water and so on. I'd be interested—Tom may want to pick up on that further but I've heard that argument put before, that this is the ideal size and also in terms of streetscape and outside spaces and so on.

Carolyn put the developers' view, not necessarily her view but a view of developers, and she made the point that we have to get developers onboard to make clear that sustainability is for the long-term, it's not a Y2K thing, it is something that we are going to have to plan in and build as part of our future. And she says we also need to realise that Melbourne needs developers as much as developers need Melbourne; they do have other options. And developers are a part of the constant process of renewal and change, which often brings some of the wonderful things we've seen in the city, the opening of Southbank I guess would be an example with the river finally becoming part of the city and Federation Square, which has been embraced and so on.

And she made the point which has been made I must say at every forum so far about the huge problem of transport, whether it's from the perspective of peak oil that is the looming likelihood of us not having the cheap oil we've had and how that's going to leave people stranded in the suburbs, or whether it's from the point of being stuck in congestion. And when I'm a bike rider and when I get tooted at and sworn at by car drivers I yell back at them although they can't hear me through their wound up windows, imagine if I was also in a car how much more space would I take up on the road as they squeeze me into the gutter? And so there, she's right, I think absolutely right, these are things that will come together; we can't get rid of cars, we're not going to get rid of cars but there can be a better mix than the one we've got now.

Elizabeth spoke about social capital and she pointed to some of the, I suppose, some warning signs about problems of alcohol-fuelled violence and so on. And we know about King Street but as she mentioned, it's not the only point. And she also raised the very controversial suggestion that Melbourne should have one council rather than lots of different, so the City of Melbourne should be the whole metropolitan area.

And Rob gave us a list of what makes a healthy city: it's connected, it's active, it's economic viable, it's safe, it manages conflict and it manages and balances risk. So, and I want your questions now.

Female 1 Um, look characteristically of people at a forum like this I want to make a comment, not ask a question. It was a thought that occurred to me when Carolyn was speaking but it's something I really want to say because I'm just a little bit sick of hearing this, can we please stop hinging every attention about environmental sustainability on climate change because if it wasn't, if climate change wasn't happening we would still be acting in environmentally unsustainable ways and have been doing so for a very long time. So, to say that people are sceptical of that theory and therefore, let's not pin everything on having to change the way we do things is, well I'm just slightly horrified by it.

Peter Mares Yeah, good point. Yep, okay. So I'll take that as a comment, before I get a response we'll take the other question here and then go for it.

[Stephen Ingrassia] [Stephen Ingrassia] from Going Solar. I work in the sustainable cities section and transport section with my business. Two points: one is that I think we've got a real problem in this State [until] our governments and our political leaders continually sending the wrong messages. And for example, just recently in Queensland the State Government reduced sales; they've reduced stamp duty on hybrid vehicles and increased it on larger vehicles. In Victoria, the Victorian Parliament did exactly the opposite, reduced it on V8s and larger vehicles and left it the same for smaller vehicles. The other point I want to make, and really picking up on what Carolyn was saying is that you're sort of suggesting that developers should be allowed to develop as long as they've got a financial advantage and also that somehow that it's fine for us to keep driving our cars until somebody else fixes it up. Surely what we need to do is have the developers contributing to that: the history of good development of cities around the world has been that developers have put the money into the public transport. A very good example is in Portland, Oregon in the United States where the developers recognise that they, there was a financial advantage for them by putting a transit system in.

Peter Mares Okay. Who wants to respond? Well Carolyn for a start.

Carolyn Parker I'll take that one if you like. I was actually suggesting quite the opposite from what you've said. Developers can't be allowed to just to continue develop willy-nilly and I'll use an example of we had a, one of Australia's leading developers in our office just recently putting a building that they were planning to do within the city of Melbourne to us as a, to be the end investor and our question to them was *what Green Star rating are you getting into this building?* And the answer was *absolutely none, we've had a meeting at board level about this whole issue and we don't see that there's any money in it for us so we're not going to do it—if you want any ESD initiatives in this building then you will have to pay for them.* Now it was a building that we really wanted that would suit our portfolio really well but we've walked away from it because if we can't get these guys to understand that they have got to do it then they're just not the sort of people that we want

to deal with.

The other side of it is that there are a lot of, in some respects now there's a lot of planning implications for people doing buildings and we're now under, particularly under sort of Green Star too you've also got to provide bike parks and shower facilities and amenities. The number of carparks that are allowed for a lot of new buildings has been reduced. So I think on the residential side of things further out of Melbourne too, as I say I'm not a residential developer but I think these developers are asked to make major contributions to the government as a sort of infrastructure charge. Well I don't know about you, I know there's been a lot of new residential developments gone on but I don't actually, I'm not actually aware that there's been a lot of new railways built. So I think this is where this sort of scepticism and jaundiced view comes in that people are being asked to contribute but they're not actually seeing their money going anywhere. So that's I guess where I'm coming from, to say that they are sceptical about it.

Peter Mares Other members of the panel want to comment? Yeah, Tom?

Tom Kvan The question is actually slightly larger than that in that there's an interesting dimension if we consider infrastructure in cities, the way that cities operate is in a large part dictated by their infrastructure: the transportation system, the sewer system, the water system. We tend to consider those after the fact; we build something and then we try and make—we service it later. I think one of the challenges we have is to re-conceive the city as a network of infrastructures and then think of how that city might, if we design the infrastructures correctly, create an environment we wish to live in. So if we could try and, for example, design an effective transport system and then say what does that mean to our city? How do we start changing the centres of development or the way in which we build in the city?

Peter Mares Well at the environmental forum a couple of weeks ago there was, one of the speakers was from Perth and he made the point that Melbourne could well be the last city in the world to extend its rail network. He said Brisbane's extending theirs, Adelaide's extending theirs, Perth has built two new rail lines and as those rail lines develop, what do you know, property prices go up around those centres and they become desirable places, people set up businesses, they build housing and so on and so forth. So I think that illustrates the point you're making. Do we have further questions?

Female 2 My question is directed mainly to Elizabeth Proust. In my view Melbourne's greatest quality is its democracy and its democratic processes and the way it involves people in the life of the city. I think that's what social capital actually means. It seems to me that most of the democratic processes that happen in this city happen in local government where people are able to participate in a daily basis in things that matter to their lives. I'm concerned that we build a city that promotes those democratic processes rather than defeats them and so I want to know how you can reconcile taking away a local government democracy in the name of building a future for Melbourne?

- Elizabeth Proust ... democratic in Brisbane than it is in Melbourne and I don't agree with that. I know there were concerns about the manner in which the council amalgamations were done in the 90s and I would acknowledge that but I think that you can have a democracy of a size such as Melbourne or Brisbane in which people can participate. And I don't think—and if you look at the boundaries we had up to 1992 and '93 they were actually, at least in central Melbourne, they were measured by the distance a man and a cart and dray and horse could go in a day, that was Fitzroy, Collingwood, Richmond, etcetera. We're a long way from that and I think that you can devise democratic means and still have a much bigger metropolitan area that includes people in it and has ward councillors and the like and is still representative of the people.
- Peter Mares Anyone else want to comment on this issue because it is a controversial one—and Rob you've already nailed your colours to the mast before ...
- Carolyn Parker I would like to just make one comment too that one of the hardest things dealing in greater Melbourne and greater anywhere is the complexity of planning—well planning regulations just vary so much from council to council that it's very difficult to know what's acceptable in one is not acceptable in another. And I think [...] would be from a planning perspective to have one larger area where you know what you're dealing with and it's going to make life easier for everybody. There are also the issue with a number of the councils here and in other States where they're all sort of trying to come up with their own energy ratings and their own water ratings and their own sort of management tools and it's all sort of counterproductive and just a waste of a lot of time and effort when there could be just a uniform set of rules and everybody knows what they're dealing with. So I think there's a lot to be said for it.
- Peter Mares Rob, you wanted to ...
- Rob Moodie Yeah, I think the optimal arrangement we should have is have larger local government, obviously we need a federal government but I'd do away with state governments. In fact this might be a really good way of managing this by having more , local governments of size where you get some economies but we simply don't need three tiers of government in Australia.
- Peter Mares Okay, next question here.
- Female 3 Just with the local government, the only thing with doing away with that is you actually do lose the human element of that because people, you know, meals on wheels are delivered and people do do it just word of mouth, and sometimes that's a lot quicker for people who aren't very literate to write things down. Word of mouth is actually a very valuable tool. And just the other thing was a lot of it seems to be, is about money. We have to work to earn money to pay bills and to pay rent and things like that. And I just think that work in itself, a lot of it is just rubbish, you know, we're producing computer games, I could go on and on, advertising,—there's hundreds of things that are just totally useless and we're doing them and we have to because we have to earn money. And so getting a railway network to come into the city to be able to do that is not going to solve

that problem, that is the problem.

Peter Mares      Okay, well a deeper philosophical issue there I think about the nature of our economy and certainly my nearly nine year old son is going to disagree with you about computer games. But, um, Rob?

Rob Moodie      Well I just want to come back to your point about, which is essential in this discussion, about the size of local government is the fact that we need local neighbourhoods, we need streets, we will always need that quite small unit of activity and engagement. And that's why I think we have to try and develop more; that isn't necessarily contradicted by having larger local governments, I think it just, we have to get smarter at supporting local connection, local activity. And Port Phillip have had a really good approach to street life projects where they're really encouraging local activity in local streets so people can connect up to each other. We should be encouraging office parties, in other words [...] how you can actually devise different ways where people get to know each other. If you do that enough the more people are connected in the long run we know the better their mental health.

Tom Kvan        In our workplace it's the smokers who get to know each another because they all have to go outside and smoke together.

Rob Moodie      That's balancing risks.

Tom Kvan        That's balancing risk indeed. Interesting, you mentioned the City of Port Phillip which is where I live, and one of the things about that sense of neighbourhood is where people walk there is a much greater sense of neighbourhood: they run into each other, they bump into each other and you see the same faces in the street, the people who walk their dogs.

Rob Moodie      Yeah. And just the issue of what huge shopping malls have done, now they've taken away many of our—fortunately a lot of the strip shopping is coming back into our neighbourhood but if you don't have a shop down the end of the street or where you can walk to it, then that means probably that you've got to get in a car and drive. So you don't get to know your neighbours and you're not nearly as active. So, there's ways about designing and sometimes, you know, commercial design and economies of scale go counter to that sort of connectivity. So there are real balances that we have to try and work out.

Peter Mares      And we have another question here.

Male 1            I'd like to get Elizabeth's comments about the following observation: I'm one of the 6,000 and growing residents of Southbank, a relatively new development in Melbourne. It's my opinion or my observation that the City Council really doesn't have any power; the power seems to reside in the State Government and if the minister of development or the minister of local government makes a decision then the City Council is just a pawn. So how do we solve the problem of a state government overriding all this beautiful planning by a city council?

- Elizabeth Proust Well your observation is reality; local government is a creature of state government and the, I think the only way to do that—and politicians rarely give up power—the only way to do that is as Rob just said, is to look at a system where you have much larger regional, say, councils and a federal government. Is that likely in our lifetime? I wouldn't think so but the position you paint is the true one. That if there's a conflict between the state government and local government then the state government will win.
- Peter Mares Okay, another question here.
- Male 2 I'm desperately trying to summarise a thought here. I work for an architectural firm. One of my jobs is to build business cases for development projects and so I was interested in this panel's comments about business cases and do we need a much better business case? Are we building a better business case? And I'm trying to think of an example. I was interested in Carolyn's comments about a board considering Green Star and saying *well there's no money in it*—so they're obviously unable to articulate the business case in any real way. We've been hearing about tripe bottom line accounting for 10 years, at least 10 years, but we're not hearing about quadruple bottom line accounting including governance. So does the panel have any thoughts about a better business case, in other words if you design a residential area—and I know you're not in residential development—that forces people to drive, that's incurring a health cost so the Department of Health has to [...] that up and if they'd been able to put that money forward there might have been a different business case. I hope I'm making some sense but, are we getting closer to actually valuing the social capital that Elizabeth talked about, the social capital and the environmental capital and not just the economic capital that we're more familiar with?
- Peter Mares Okay.
- Carolyn Parker I'll have a go, and to say bearing in mind that my company is privately owned so we're not an institution. You're quite right in what you say but the big institutions have got to, they're answerable to their shareholders; their shareholders are all of us because they've got our superannuation money and we want the biggest and best return on our superannuation that we can get and if we don't like the return then we move our money. So it's,—you've got to have a degree of sympathy in some respects for these people because that's what they've got to do and they have to make money no matter what their own personal feelings are. I think a lot of the larger institutions now are talking sort of triple bottom line, at least talking about it. My experience is though that there's still a lot of talk out there from people who talk the talk about agreeing, for example, but when it actually comes to putting their money where their mouth is there's not necessarily a lot goes on. That probably is a matter of putting a better business case. It's a matter of proving that these things do stack up and they can be commercial because whether we like it or not, it is a commercial environment that we live in and we've just got to be able to prove that, whether you do it by telling people that their future proofing their buildings and if they don't incorporate some of these initiatives that there'll be a, instead of a

premium for sustainability there'll be a discount for non-sustainable buildings. So at some point those messages will start to get through.

Peter Mares Tom?

Tom Moodie We can also think of the context in which we create business cases. I'll take the example of how we consider land at the moment: we zone cities so that an area is residential or another one's industrial, another one's commercial. That causes us to construct business cases in a particular way; we have to optimise that particular location for that particular use. If instead we conceived of cities as being volumes within which society wants to get the best return, not just economic return but as Rob was talking about, the best health return and the best social returns and cultural returns, our business cases would look very different. It's not just a matter of whether we triple or quadruple bottom line, it's the context in which we measure the business case the legislative framework that we have to work within.

Elizabeth Proust And I think—I sit on a number of boards and as Carolyn has said, the shareholder return is the key focus as it must be but increasingly boards are looking at community reaction to what's proposed, they're looking at environmental issues and they're looking at a whole range of risk issues as well. So I think we might be edging towards better business cases.

Peter Mares Rob?

Rob Moodie Yeah it's coming back almost to the point about how do we make money. We need to make money but the question is can we make money in a sustainable or that's—we sustainably make money, we healthily make money, we're responsible socially. You can wait until the market sort of balances out and market forces change. It's the same for health; we make a lot of money not very healthily. And you can just look at shareholder return—I don't know how many people here invest in tobacco companies, I'll see you outside if you do, but you know, they've frankly gone off the list of most people's—you know, arms manufacturers—and eventually, hopefully community attitudes will start to drive some of these changes. The other point about, and this is where there is a role for government, is about regulation, otherwise that's the only way of changing the market. And until you—and you can use regulation sensibly although you'll get huge backlashes obviously from companies because it may erode their profits but it has to play out in a democracy. At the moment I think we're, if you look at the issue of obesity, obesity is a commercial success in Australia, utterly a commercial success, and until we start to regulate that market we won't change it because our other changes will be far too slow. So it's a really good issue and I haven't got the answers.

Peter Mares I think there is probably also a role for public sector bodies to have a demonstration effect and I'll come back to Council House 2, it cost I think Melbourne City Council an extra \$11 million to build all the features, green features into that building and I thought the payoff would be in terms of things like water and electricity saved and so on. In fact they expect it to be in productivity gains because they've created such a healthy

environment: no air conditioning, less flu, hours saved. Now that's all going to be measured and it will be interesting to see if in fact the payoff is there. The gentleman here.

Male 3 The panel's already touched on a number of points I wanted to raise but one was about grandfathering existing unsustainable developments. I'm thinking particularly of somewhere like Chadstone, the sort of grandmother of shopping malls in Melbourne, and you have \$1 billion in development there, it's increasing by a third and yet it's sort of against a number of the things that we've been talking about for the last five weeks. How do the panel see you might be able to stop those things being grandfathered because already \$1 billion have been invested in that, the incentive is there to maintain that and sort of slow the move towards a more sustainable development and maintain that process as it's happening now at Chadstone, it's increasing by a third at the moment. And the other thing is that local governments are also increasingly putting their facilities in these large shopping centres because that's where people are going. How do the panel see we might be able to try and peel the local government away from investing in what's currently unsustainable, and process it or move it towards a more sustainable path for these sort of very large and powerful bodies that are in private shopping malls?

Carolyn Parker Oh people power I think, people who—it's all of us who use Chadstone and all of the other shopping centres. So if we have the ability to vote with our feet and I can't see any other answer to that one and I'm not sure, I'm not sure—I'll hand over to others about it in terms of the local government area—but I think it is people power, if enough people have enough will, then they will change.

Peter Mares Tom?

Tom Kvan I think what you're talking about is an economic model of shopping and commerce which was prevalent in the 60s and 70s and therefore the momentum of that caused a large number of these shopping centres to be built. That economic model of commerce is changing, it's being revised. Tesco in England, which is the biggest commercial entity in the food industry in England, has recently identified a niche in the United States and they're investing something like a billion dollars or a billion pounds to develop shops throughout the south-west of the United States which are small, very small. The distribution network was the key to that and what they did was redesign their distribution truck so it has three zones: it has a refrigerated zone, a fresh food zone and a—whatever you call the other material.

Rob Moodie Dry goods.

Tom Kvan Dry goods, that's it. And so segregating those, because previously the economic model required there to be three trucks and that therefore required mega shops because you had to take a whole truckload at one time. The distribution network was changed. Once that came about in their minds they could then service small stores which are bigger than 7 ELevens, in other words more choice, are fresh food based because they're frequently served and not freezer based or obesity inducing foods. And therefore by creating a new

economic model they can service that and they've created a new opportunity and I think what we need to do is investigate these distribution networks and infrastructures again.

Peter Mares Down in the, yeah just in front of you there. I think there was an article in The Age just recently that pointed out the return of the fruit and veggie shop and how people are returning to fruit and veggie shops over supermarkets so I think there are interesting things happening. Yes please?

[Art Truter] My name is [Art Truter] and I'm a resident of the greater Melbourne. I want to thank you for the opportunity and also it's great to have this panel tonight because we've got the healthy, the wealthy, the wise and then someone who asks us to think the unthinkable. And I think that's the sort of thinking we need, is that cross-thinking. I want to start with the fact that cities are built on wealth, and a perfect example of that is our own city, Melbourne. It's how that focus of wealth goes to desired outcomes and in the 1880s when marvellous Melbourne was built and all the trams and all our infrastructure was put in, great civic buildings and everything, Melbourne had one of the highest standards of living in the world. That's why I want to talk about the other capital, the social capital. We have at the moment—a watershed I believe—we have the assemblage of a huge amount of what I would call social capital in the fact that the superannuation, um, billions of dollars are really social capital because it's our money, it's all the public's, the citizen's money. So I want to ask the panel of how they see we might use this wealth, this social capital to create a sustainable and another marvellous Melbourne.

Peter Mares Rob?

Rob Moodie Well, first of all you create a Melbourne future fund and that is actually about investment that is going into the public transport, into private investment and the thing that Tom just talked about is really smart. It's making money in a really healthy and sustainable way and I think the other capital that we need is creative capital. And if we want to be a really viable city we have to be a smarter city.

Peter Mares Does somebody else want to buy into ...?

Elizabeth Proust I agree with Rob, I think the caveat would be that—it would have to be creative and it would have to be smart but I think Carolyn said earlier, that's all about money and are we prepared, if there were lower returns to be made from that, from say the alternative of having it in the share market, are we prepared to trade lower returns on our pensions in the future for that investment? And that's a specific, an explicit discussion that people should have and people should sign up to.

Peter Mares And there are some interesting discussions around the area of affordable housing in this regard whereby you might have a government providing a guaranteed return on affordable housing to get that super money in there. So the government then doesn't have to come up with all that capital to build affordable housing, it just has to meet the margin between building affordable housing and building luxury condos that are going to make more money. And so there are some, as Rob said, imaginative ways to do things.

- Rob Moodie Sort of like war bonds but for good things.
- Peter Mares Yeah, war bonds for good things. Okay, the gentleman here and then up the back there.
- Male 4 We've talked about rail in Melbourne, for me the greatest disappointment has been the Spencer, or the Southern Cross railway station which has won architectural awards but really it was built around a clothing store. The government I think was too [mean] to look at the opportunities because although today's discussion is Melbourne, we've got out there Ballarat and Geelong and Bendigo and many other places and for the property developer and for the urban designer and architect in particular, what's the chances? It's much easier to take the hour on a train to Geelong or wherever than it is to drive out from Lilydale North or something surely?
- Carolyn Parker I'm sorry, what was—I didn't quite get the sentence ...
- Male 4 Is there a good profit to be made for the property developer by developing in the Geelong area or out in the country or is the real profit to be made in the city, in Melbourne?
- Carolyn Parker Oh no I think developers, that's what I said before, developers have got a choice; development is very mobile, development can be anywhere that there is a workforce that is available or can be made available.
- Rob Moodie Now I suspect the faster trains to Geelong are going to have an influence on development and [...]—people I know who live on the surf coast find it quicker to come to Melbourne now than they used to so I suspect you'll see those sorts of impacts.
- Male 5 There was a comment made at the beginning about tax yet we've got a federal government that's implemented tax cuts over the past few years which I guess is about encouraging individual consumption and choice. How does the panel feel about using tax, individual tax, to fund public infrastructure such as transport, health and education for example?
- Elizabeth Proust Is the question about the trade offs?
- Peter Mares No I think the question is that we've had a political cycle that had been built around offering us ever greater tax cuts and are we going too far in that direction, if I can sort of embellish your question a bit.
- Tom Kvan When you look at some of the models for example in Europe where the government uses the tax take to fund public infrastructure or to provide a catalyst for the investment in public infrastructure [...] outcome.
- Peter Mares So should we in fact be looking to increase the tax take in order to invest in all these things we need?
- Elizabeth Proust My personal view is the level of income tax is already too high even though it has come down. I think that we pay for the inefficiencies of the three levels of government and within that, even if we need to—and I'm sure we will—retain the three levels of government, I think there are still very significant savings that can be made within those three levels of government to fund what we have. So my argument would be I wouldn't

see the need to increase personal taxation or company taxation but I'd certainly see a need for greater efficiencies within government to fund what I think are higher priorities. I think there's still a lot of waste.

Peter Mares

Rob?

Rob Moodie

I'm a real, I really like paying taxes, I think it's a contribution. I'm stunned to always see this seen as a sort of rather like the [share of Nottingham's tie] that he comes around and pinches it off you every year. Fundamentally I pay tax for something that I want, for a place I want to live in and I want to pay it for public transport. I'm pleased if I get more money in my bank, that I actually, half of it goes back into the public system. Obviously we see the world in a different way but I think yes. And you see countries that do the best and if you want to look, every year you want to look at the human development index, you want to look at how kids are best looked after. And you look at the Scandinavian countries, you look at northern Europe, don't look to the US. Why? Because they actually invest in a community and they use government to do that. And I agree with Elizabeth, there's lots of inefficiencies and we could do better with that but if we really want to look at how communities grow and how countries grow then I'd look to northern Europe.

Elizabeth Proust

Can I just add one more thing to that please?

Peter Mares

Oh sorry, yep.

Elizabeth Proust

By default in many respects I think we are paying for a lot of these infrastructure works anyway because most governments, most levels of government these days are using these PPP, the public private partnership, model for major infrastructure projects and that is where a private enterprise builds a road or a bridge or a whatever and then they operate it. Then at some point down the track, usually 30 years, it's transferred back to the government. But in the meantime of course who's paying to use that infrastructure but us so it may not be funded out of our taxes but we're paying for it anyway.

Geoff Leech

Geoff Leech here, I'm a local resident and a resident of the City of Melbourne and a CBD worker. The City of Melbourne has had one of the highest population growth rates in Victoria and I think Australia for the last 5 or 10 years largely due to the Docklands and Southbank where towers are going in. Some would say that Southbank's overbuilt and the Docklands is half done. When those areas are built out there's a—I want to draw back to a question that's in the description of tonight's forum and relate it back to the towers and the increase in population—there's a question here in the description that says *should many more people be living in the [services which are in a city]?* Once the Docklands are done, and Southbank is done some would say, how many more people do you think the inner city should have?

Peter Mares

Okay, how many more people should the inner city have living in the city? Tom?

Tom Kvan

I'll take that on. I'm also a resident of the inner city, in the grid of the city, and I am very astonished at how few people live in such a wonderful environment. It's an astonishingly

rich and rewarding place to be and very comfortable and easy. A city like that, of that size, could take several hundred thousands of people without any noticeable increase in the volume that the city occupies. We could make a number of changes which would build upon the quality of the lanes and the quality of the green city; Melbourne is a remarkably green city and we can enhance that. So I think we could easily triple or quadruple the population and in fact end up with a better city, not a worse one.

Peter Mares Okay, everyone's nodding, everyone agrees.

Rob Moodie Go Tom.

Peter Mares Okay we've got time for one final question and you've got your hand up so you get to ask it.

Male 6 I'd just like to explore a little bit more the Dean's or the first speaker's comments about Melbourne being a bipolar city, which I also feel there's a very strong split in Melbourne geographically and culturally, I think, between the suburbs and inner city and in the suburbs. One being sort of quite intense interactive cosmopolitan and diverse, the other being more I think sort of inward looking, family orientated, green and so on. And I think my question is do we see that as a problem? I don't think it necessarily is but any thoughts on that?

Peter Mares Okay Melbourne's polarisation into the quarter acre block and the CBD, is it actually a problem? Tom?

Tom Kvan I wasn't painting it purely as a problem; I was painting that to illustrate the gap between. I think there are a range of opportunities and choices which are not explored in those two positions which could offer families as well as elderly population, young singles, productive engagements, commercial activities, offer all of those different populations another way of engaging in a city. What I observe here is simply there isn't the choice and I think if we explore that choice we might come up with a kind of city which would be even better than that which we have today.

Peter Mares Rob?

Rob Moodie And I think that will require a cultural shift. We sort of have the quarter acre block or the major apartment blocks and Tom is right, we haven't yet really developed enough in the middle to get a run-on. And that might take 5 or 10 years to get that sort of level of run-on to say yes, it's fine living in this sort of an environment.

Peter Mares Any final comments from Carolyn or Elizabeth?

Carolyn Parker No I agree with what Tom says completely.

Elizabeth Proust I was, I flew in from Sydney from a meeting this afternoon and, across the north, and when Tom was talking I was struck by the fact that what you see when you come that way is a concentration of high-rise towers and everything else is almost the quarter acre block with only a few exceptions. I don't—I think it's an opportunity, I don't think it's a problem. I think though that there are still a very large number of people for whom the

city is, if not a no-go zone, a place that they never come to and I think there's still not enough interaction between the life of the central city and its nearby surrounds. And this is partly a transport issue but not only a transport issue and those who live especially in the outer suburbs, there's not enough interaction between the two.

Peter Mares

Okay I'm now going to ask Geoff Lawler, who's Director of Sustainability and Regulatory Services at the City of Melbourne to say a few words because this is the fifth and final of this series of forums and Geoff's going to say a few words about the forums and about the process from here.

### **NEXT STEPS – Geoff Lawler, Director of Sustainability and Regulatory Services, City of Melbourne**

Geoff Lawler

Thank you Peter. This is the end of the beginning or the beginning of the next stage of this process. I'd like to on behalf of the University of Melbourne and the City of Melbourne to thank Peter our facilitator tonight, our speakers: Carolyn, Tom, Elizabeth and Rob—all people I admire greatly, I might add. And all of you for being a part of this. May I also acknowledge Councillor David Wilson who has been with us tonight and he was at an earlier forum. This first series of five was intended to get people thinking about the future of Melbourne, examining the values that we as a community who make up Melbourne think are important, so that that will inform the next stage when we think more specifically about the things that ought to be done to move Melbourne forward into the next decade and beyond.

And it's been rather interesting, I think, this discussion around values, and there's been some unexpected dialogue. And the first one was about cultural identity and perhaps that one wasn't so unexpected but the things that came forward were multiculturalism, arts, sport, and especially creativity and fostering youth and creativity within our city. But then it started to get a little perverse I think. The second forum was about prosperity but what was talked about was environment; environment being, prosperity being worth more than money but being about a broader sense of wealth. The next one was about environmental shocks but the discussion, as well as dealing with what you might expect, also talked about business opportunity. The third one about social inclusion talked about buildings. And tonight where the title was building we talked about governance.

Now I only make that point to illustrate that cities are complex and it's, what we're hoping to do through Future Melbourne is to enable the complexities of views about the future to come forward. It's an absolutely fabulous partnership for us to be with the University of Melbourne and with the other partners. This is a first, this is a first for the City of Melbourne in doing it this way. It's also a first in using electronic media more than we've done in the past so I do draw your attention again to the website that will be a place where you can continue to dialogue with this process, continue to dialogue with each

other. There's a part of that website called *e-Village* which enables interaction. Stay involved.

I think one of the great attributes of Melbourne is that Melburnians love it to bits. This is a great love affair I think that Melburnians have with their city, with Melbourne, and I just think that's a wonderful thing, it's something that has been worked at, it's something that we want you to be part of. And with all love affairs it has its tense moments, it has its ups and downs, it has its fragility but it has great moments of creativity and that's what we want you to do; for the next six months there'll be a series of other events, perhaps sticking more to the list of things that you can see on the screen there, getting more specific. There are some of those coming up very shortly and they'll all be publicised through the website. On the 21<sup>st</sup> of August there'll be another public forum about globalism, where does Melbourne sit in a wider global environment? Throughout August and September there'll be movies on the big screen at Federation Square—there's a piece of paper circulating around so I hope you've picked that up—called *My Grandma owned a car*. I know, Carolyn excuse me, we're suggesting that perhaps in the future we might be looking back and saying *what were those funny things that we drove around in*, but we're going to try and find some interesting ways to get engaged.

On behalf of the Council, on behalf of the University, thank you very much for being part of this, stay involved and stay in love. Thank you.

Peter Mares

Thank you Geoff, and just a quick reminder about the website, if you didn't get to make your comment or ask your question here then do it via the website, via the forms and yes, finally if you sign up to the website you'll get an email telling you about when future events are coming up. So thank you very much for coming.