Inquiry on Growing the Suburbs: Infrastructure and Business Development in Outer Suburban Melbourne

About Volunteering Victoria

Volunteering Victoria is the state peak body for volunteering, focussing on advocacy, sector development and promotion of volunteering. Our vision is for Victorian communities connected and involved through volunteering.

About this submission

This brief submission is responding to item (e) of the Terms of Reference for this inquiry: examine the role of small businesses, local councils and community groups (such as Rotary and Lions clubs) in developing local expertise. However, we are happy for the points made in it to also be considered by the Committee in a general sense.

Submission

Volunteering Victoria would like to remind the Committee of the importance of volunteering for the development and maintenance of healthy self-reliant communities. Healthy self-reliant communities would be particularly important to cultivate in a growth area context.

Existing, new and emerging voluntary groups and volunteer programs in outer suburban growth areas would benefit from funded volunteer support infrastructure either at a local Volunteer Resource Centre or a volunteer support function at the local council. Such support infrastructure would provide resources, training and general support to volunteer coordinators and program managers. They would also provide a local contact point able to introduce local community members who want to offer their time and skills as volunteers in their own suburb to suitable local voluntary groups and programs.
The recently released *National Volunteer Strategy*\(^1\) has strengthening volunteer management and training as one of its six focus areas for action. Improving the quality of volunteer management is a key aspect of this action. Local volunteer support infrastructure would be well placed to strengthen volunteer management and training in outer suburban growth suburbs.

Please contact me if you require any clarification regarding the above.

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\(^1\) *National Volunteering Strategy*, Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2011.