Submission to the Parliament of Victoria inquiry on Growing the Suburbs: Infrastructure and Business Development in Outer Suburban Melbourne

Please accept my submission to the above inquiry.

I make this short submission to register and hopefully have addressed some of the needs of the community I represent. This is not an exhaustive submission of all needs and issues, but one that reflects some of the salient concerns that are being discussed within the community.

I have chosen not to restate the detailed statistical facts and population profiles that are readily available which I also believe will be provided to you by the City of Whittlesea in their submission.

My submission is instead provided against the backdrop of this vital information as it provides context and greater meaning to the issues, services and infrastructure needs.

The electorate of Mill Park lies within the municipality of Whittlesea. The municipality is the second largest growing LGA in the state and about one third of residents who earn a salary are employed outside the local government area and hence must travel outside its confines for work.

It ranks high on the SEIFA Index of relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage.

Families want the best for their children. They want to give them a safe and secure home and so the availability and affordability of housing is important. They want to know their young children will get a place at a nearby kindergarten and then go on to well-resourced primary and secondary schools with highly skilled teachers and programs to give them the best start in life.

They know that for their children to get a well-paying job, they need to have a secondary school that provides options for further learning – VCAL, VET along with VCE and that these programs are equally valued through funding and support.

Families also hope for their children to get a job that does not take them hours of travelling to reach so they can instead spend more time at home with the family or socialising with friends.

So, having decent jobs located close to where they live is important.

Families also want to know that in times of sickness they can get access to good health care; and emergency care any time of the day or night at a well-equipped public hospital. They also hope not to have to wait months or years for surgery.

For these reasons and more, the following services are required as a minimum:

- A Jobs strategy for our community
• A major injection of funds to open more hospital beds at the Northern Hospital
• A major injection of funds to increase the number of dental treatments provided to those most in need
• The provision of $11 million towards the new Northern Health Academic and Research Precinct to train 600 medical, nursing and allied health professionals
• $48.5 million to introduce the Mernda Busway (via South Morang). This service should be a rapid service between the soon to be opened South Morang rail station and be operational within the next two years
• Increased services on the Epping rail line
• Duplication of Epping Road between Memorial Avenue and Findon Road
• Funding for the installation of traffic lights at the intersection of Dalton and Childs Roads, Lalor.
• Improvements to the intersection of Childs and Plenty Roads, Mill Park
• Upgrade of Plenty Road Mill Park through to Bundoora to ease traffic congestion
• Allocation on essential funds to build and expand kindergartens to accommodate the growing numbers of children
• Reinstatement of funds for coordinators of VCAL in every secondary school that offers the program
• Reinstatement of funding of Reading Recovery tutors, Take a Break funding and literacy and numeracy
• Establishment of an adventure playground at Plenty Gorge Park in South Morang
• Establishment of targets to employ more apprentices

Yours sincerely

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