



Moreland City Council

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The Secretary
Environment and Planning References Committee
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Spring Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Sir/Madam

INQUIRY INTO ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Environment and Planning Reference Committee inquiry into environmental design and public health in Victoria.

Council has used the *Environments for Health Framework (Department of Human Services, 2001)* for its approach to public health planning. The current *Moreland Health and Wellbeing Plan 2010 – 14* reflects an integrated planning approach across the social, built, natural and economic environments to influence health and wellbeing outcomes.

Moreland City Council responds to the following Terms of Reference outlined by the Committee, including:

(2) identify and report on those elements of environmental planning and design which provide the most promising opportunities for improving health outcomes in Victoria.

The following is a summary of examples of environmental design aspirations from the *Moreland Health and Wellbeing Plan 2010 – 14* and other best practice examples to improve health and wellbeing outcomes across the four environments for health.

Built environment

- Aim for 20 minute neighbourhoods; where you can walk to essential amenities and services in 20 minutes, including schools, shops, and public transport.
- Active frontages to promote public surveillance between the public and private domains.
- Availability of public lighting for safety to walk, cycle and use public transport at night.
- Provide stairs in close proximity to escalators and lifts.
- Access to public toilets, drinking water and breast feeding facilities.
- Shade shelters to protect against skin cancer and extreme weather conditions.

Language Link

中文	9280 1910	Español	9280 1916
Italiano	9280 1911	Hrvatski	9280 1917
Ελληνικά	9280 1912	हिन्दी	9280 1918
العربية	9280 1913		
Türkçe	9280 1914	All other languages	
Việt Ngữ	9280 1915	9280 1919	

- Development of walking and cycling networks, including paths.
- Availability of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities including leisure centres, swimming pools and sports clubs.
- Ensure 'walk' lights allow time for all to cross.

Natural environment

- Development of community food gardens, including fruit tree planting.
- Open space and playgrounds that cater for all ages.
- Plant trees for shade in protection against skin cancer.
- Protection of open space from building development.
- Prepare for current and future climate changes, including: heatwaves, garden design, energy efficiency and waste, water and carbon management.

Social environment

- Availability of local affordable fresh food community markets to connect neighbourhoods.
- Affordable leisure options and concession rates to participate in physical activity at sports clubs and leisure centres.
- Better public transport options for older people and people with a disability to enable connection to education, employment and social opportunities.
- Local infrastructure that enhances social connections including men's sheds, neighbourhood houses, libraries, playgroup spaces.
- Amenities that encourage informal social connections in public places, including: seating for conversations; chess, backgammon, checkers, ping pong tables; public art; wireless internet; and play equipment for children and adults, such as simple games painted on the ground.
- Encourage children to walk or cycle to school by providing safe routes to schools signage, footsteps painted on footpaths, separated bicycle lanes and bicycle storage at schools.

Economic environment

- Fresh food availability in local shopping strips.
- Increase planning controls over the location of gaming machines.
- Provide local business opportunities for a local resident workforce.
- Encourage businesses to switch to low oil content chips, such as the Choice Chips project in Colac.
- Innovative infrastructure projects to attract tourism and promote health including: labyrinth and sensory gardens, cultural bath houses, piano key or inbuilt bells staircases.

(4) determine opportunities to influence environmental planning and design for health, including consideration of the role of legislation guidelines, and public-private partnerships, and the costs and benefits of various options.

The role of legislation

Where relevant, the Local Government Act, the Health and Wellbeing Act, and the Planning and Environment Act need to refer to each other, to facilitate integrated planning which promotes public health.

Public- private partnerships

The City of Moreland covers 60 square kilometres of Melbourne's inner and mid-northern suburbs. Moreland has one of the highest population densities in Melbourne and is undergoing a sustained period of urban regeneration due to its growing attractiveness as a location as a place to live, work and play. Due to limited open space in some suburbs public – private partnerships could be further developed to provide physical activity, healthy eating and social connection, including:

- Shared grounds, playgrounds, food gardens, and indoor spaces with schools.
- Private developer contributions, including: playground, ball court, outdoor or indoor gym, swimming pool, community fresh food garden, fruit trees, shared shed or workshop, bicycle parking facilities, outdoor eating area and mixed use indoor community space.

Furthermore in relation to 5(c) in the terms of reference, Moreland City Council recommends the Committee consider UNICEF's Child Friendly Cities Framework in addition to the World Health Organisations Healthy Cities initiative.

Moreland City Council commends the State Government in taking the lead to improve health and wellbeing by promoting innovative and improved land use planning and design.

Council wishes to remain informed of the outcomes of this inquiry. For further discussion, please contact Lynn Waters, Community Wellbeing Officer, on (03) 9240 1224 or lwaters@moreland.vic.gov.au

Yours sincerely



Peter Brown
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

29/6 /2011