

14 November 2008

Growth Areas Authority
Level 6, 35 Spring St
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Sir/Madam

Response to the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines

The Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the consultation draft of the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines (the Guidelines).

As the peak independent coordinating body of the social and community services sector, VCOSS raises awareness of the existence, causes and effects of poverty and inequality and advocates for the development of a sustainable, fair and equitable society. As well as promoting the wellbeing of those experiencing disadvantage and contributing to initiatives seeking to create a more just society, VCOSS provides a strong, non-political voice for the community sector.

VCOSS works together with its members on issues such as poverty and inequality and ensures that community resources and services are available and affordable. VCOSS promotes community participation as well as strengthening the value of citizenship in our community.

VCOSS commends the work of the Growth Area Authority in addressing many of the liveability issues confronting new development areas. The Guidelines' objectives and standards reflect many areas of VCOSS advocacy over a number of years in response to poor liveability outcomes for new development areas, poor service and community services planning and lack of rigor in the implementation and enforcement of *Melbourne 2030*.

In particular VCOSS applauds the Guidelines' focus on:

- access to local services and employment;
- timely provision of transport and community infrastructure and services;
- priority for public and active transport;
- adaptability of housing and infrastructure to changing community needs;
- integration of services and facilities;
- planning for sustainability and the future impacts of climate change; and
- a broad concept of housing affordability which includes ongoing costs of living.