

SOS Update – 31 July 2014

Election Lead-up

Dear Member,

In the lead-up to the state election, there are several important events coming up addressing issues vital to the democratic planning and liveability of Melbourne.

Accommodating population growth is not specifically part of the SOS mandate but as we're seeing already, overcrowding in Melbourne is becoming noticeable (especially with private & public transport) and we can't keep up with the increasing demand for maintaining and upgrading infrastructure assets and services. Living standards in inner city apartments and outer growth areas and access to services is worsening, VCAT fees have risen astronomically, and the new Plan Melbourne strategy is unashamedly designed to facilitate development, not regulate it.

At the very least, we need a wide public debate on future planning for Victoria that includes the democratic involvement of communities (e.g. Melbourne City Council's new budget process) and consideration of other pressures like the increasing impacts of climate change, rising oil prices, corrupt political donations and other failures of process of the planning regime.

More roads are not the answer to traffic congestion – history shows time and again that new freeways eventually attract more traffic, leading to worse traffic problems, more air pollution and greater dependence on cars.

There is momentum building in our city for real engagement across all levels of the community. Please let your neighbours and friends know too - we all need to maximise attendance to demonstrate that the community is concerned about how planning is still being (mis)managed in Melbourne:

*** The next Victoria First meeting is this Sat. 2 Aug. at 2 pm, at the Frankston Life Saving Club. Featuring Ian Hundley (PTUA) speaking on "*The transport crisis in the Frankston area*"**

*** The first of 3 big public events organised by IMPA (the Inner Melbourne Planning Alliance) on the planning crisis in Melbourne is on Mon. 4 Aug. at 6 – 7.30pm, Deakin Edge – "*City in Crisis: Housing & Public Realm Challenges facing an Expanded Melbourne*" - see attached flyer – no booking required: <http://www.impa.org.au/city-in-crisis>**

With support from Future Melbourne Network, Future Leaders, ArchiTeam Co-Operative Ltd, Fishermans Bend Network and Fed Square.

(Also note the recent Age article on architects concerned about the Govt leaving apartment design standards up to developers:

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/strict-design-standards-needed-now-for-melbourne-highrises-architects-20140727-zxf1n.html>

*** The Great Population Debate between Kelvin Thomson (MP for Wills) & Robert Doyle (Mayor of Melbourne) is on Mon. 13 Oct. at 5.30 – 7pm, Deakin Edge.**

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