

Australian Population Institute Inc.
"A Vision of a Greater Australia"
Populate and Prosper



Australia needs a vibrant, expanding and robust community while restoring a demographically balanced population. We need to be innovative in initiating change in the workplace to maintain and expand our skilled employees. We need to adapt our processes so we can capture and use our resources. We need to take advantage of new technologies. We need to recognize that our population is going to grow. We need to get on with building for the future.

In the 1800's our communities built magnificent grandiose town halls, they were looking with confidence to the future.

In the 1890's our ancestors believed in Australia, they were open to new ideas such as sewage, railways, electricity, communication and how we were governed. In 1890 a group called Australia Unlimited planned for a population of 100 million by 2000.

Today it seems that we are holding onto the present because we are fearful of the future. What happened to the inclusive adventurous spirit that drew up The Plan Of General Development for Melbourne 1929. In 1920 The Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Cr Aikman stated "if we do not take it [planning] in hand we shall be neglecting a duty to ourselves and to prosperity"

In 1929 it stated that there were 2 objectives for the planning of our city

- 1 That of conducting its business in an efficient manner
- 2 Conferring the greatest benefits on the greatest number

At that stage Melbourne was the 6th city in the British Empire in regard to population.

It was a basic plan to guide city progress and it argued strongly *for implementation as deferring works leads to a greater ultimate cost and difficulty in financing**

It was driven by the writings of John Burns, author English Town Planning Act who wrote, "What is our modest object? Comfort in the house; health in the home; dignity in the streets; space in our roads; and a lessening of the noises, the smoke, the smells and the advertisements, the nuisances of a City that is without a plan, because its rulers are governors without ideas, and its citizens without hopeful outlook and imagination. Industry is the condition of a cities being; health, convenience and beauty the conditions of its well being."

The plan was the basis for the implementation of major works across Melbourne right through until the 1970's it guided where people could live, work and play. Railways were built to connect Melbourne and the regional/rural areas so all our people and goods could travel. In the city trams made it possible for the well to do and the labourers to get to the Melbourne Cup, work and the MCG. Government worked with business and public communities to build and grow a robust vibrant and healthy future.

Our baby boomers have been the beneficiaries of that past but what of our future? What kind of Victoria do you and your children want, how do we want it to look and feel?

The Australian Population Institute believes in a country that is economically robust, culturally exciting, secure, socially fair and environmentally better.

To be able to achieve these goals we need the social and capital infrastructure. We have the plans, we have an abundance of plans, what we need is the leadership and the will to implement what is vital for our growth for the next 20- 50 years.

We are going to grow, we have doubled our population from the 1950's to reach our 22 million and people flock to our chaotic, vibrant frustrating cities.

It is how and where we are going to grow that creates tensions and hesitations. The rate of growth can be manipulated as seen by the increase over the last few years. The reality is we do have an ageing population and unless we manage how we grow our children and grandchildren will not be living with the same supports that we enjoy.

We need to rebalance our demographics for the future because for the first time as with other western democracies we have a dangerous blip, we are going to have more aged than babed, resulting in more demand for services and less financial supply. It is not great science we do need to make an adjustment. Society has changed, women are vital to our productive workforce, this has given them financial independence and more conflicting career paths, because of these societal changes our women are not going to have the numerous children needed to replace our existing population and balance out the shift to ageing.

We are a changing society yet a lot of our processes and systems came from the past and it is questionable whether they are adequate for the future.

How should we operate when the majority of our citizens are issues based not politically aligned. They are local and globally attuned; the world will demand fluidity with ideas and money, technology will have changed the world just as the motor car released us from city living above or near our work place. Innovations in industry, electric and nuclear energy will be part of what James Bradfield Moody from the CSIRO calls the 6th wave. It will be a time of contrasts and incredible change.

We need structures to adapt to incorporate the community intelligence. More people are living alone; there is an increase in the number who work from their computer and mobile phone. We are more transient, we have greater competition for our skilled workers from overseas. China is courting our teachers, we are having less children while the countries around us are growing.

Culturally we are one of the most diverse yet inclusive countries in the world. We should be proud of what we have achieved and look with hope and excitement to the future. We are a "can do" nation, innovative and accepting.

It is time we lost our defensive regulated cloak and looked to an Australia that put into place the ways and means by which all our population could live, work and play in expanded diverse communities.

The projection of 35.5 million by 2056 relies on fertility rate of 1.8 and average net overseas migration of 180,000. It may happen, it may not. But it is unlikely to be too far off the mark. We need to address the reality of Melbourne becoming a city of 7 million people with anticipation. In the same period regional Victoria is expected to grow by just 300,000 yet we have beautiful regional cities and towns that offer lifestyles comparable with any where else in the world. Our challenge at present is to start building access and opportunities across Victoria. For this to happen we must celebrate and embrace the number projected for 2056.

What an opportunity for Victoria to show the world, as we have done in the past, how to be tops on the livability table.

We need to rejuvenate the aspirations and operational intensity of our 19th century city planners. We need to build for the future.

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