Contact details

Economic Development Coordinator
City of Port Phillip
Ph. 9209 6777

Coordinator Economic Development
City of Yarra
Ph. 9205 5555

Team Leader Capital City Business
City of Melbourne
Ph. 9658 9658

Coordinator Economic Development
City of Stonnington
Ph. 8290 1333

‘Making Melbourne more liveable
A Partnership for Regional Economic Prosperity’

An initiative of the Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP)
May 2008
Introduction

The Inner Metropolitan Action Plan (IMAP), adopted in December 2005, responds to the demands of Melbourne 2030, the state government’s blueprint for managing sustainable growth and change across metropolitan Melbourne. The Plan states that the goal of IMAP is “Making Melbourne More Liveable” and includes a strategy to “promote the Inner Melbourne Region as an investment location for knowledge rich business sectors”.

As an action supporting this strategy, this Regional Economic Development Statement positions the Inner Melbourne Region (IMR) for investment and growth in key sectors.

The Economic Strengths of Today

The 19th century planning and layout of the Inner Melbourne Region provided the foundation for today’s high quality living and working environment. The establishment of characteristic retail precincts, public transport infrastructure, connected open space, major sporting facilities, and an industrial precinct supported by a major port has provided the building blocks for the region.

The IMR exhibits a vibrant and diverse economy. As the Victorian state capital and consistently ranked as one of the world’s most liveable cities, the region has considerable competitive strengths across diverse, creative and knowledge based business sectors.

Described as the “metropolitan playground” of Melbourne with many eating and drinking establishments in Chapel Street, Fitzroy Street, Brunswick Street, Bridge Road and Docklands. The region also contains much of Melbourne’s specialised retail and entertainment areas such as Chapel Street, the Melbourne Central Business District, Bridge Road, Brunswick Street and Acland Street.

Retail mix and competitiveness is strong with a unique and diverse range of boutique retail coupled with major department stores and strong marketing campaigns in a highly competitive economy. There are key iconic locations with high usage and density offering a unique cultural, hospitality and event experience to visitors.

Contributing to the region’s attraction as a business destination is:

- access to Australia’s largest container trading port, an international airport and distribution framework;
- the strength of emerging sectors such as higher education, biotechnology and health, creative industries and advanced manufacturing; a skilled and relevant workforce;
- The IMR is a major technology hub for information and communication technologies (ICT).

The region performs a metropolitan and state wide role in terms of sport and recreation with significant facilities such as the Melbourne Cricket Ground Olympic Park, Telstra Dome, Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre. Events such as the Melbourne Formula 1 Grand Prix, Spring Racing Carnival, the Commonwealth Games in 2006 and the Final World Swimming Championships in 2007 are testament to the area’s ability to successfully run major events.

Employment

The professional, scientific and technical services industry employs the highest number of employees within the IMR (77,405 workers). Other major industries include:

- financial and insurance services (56,467)
- health care and social assistance (42,286)
- retail trade (36,407)
- public administration and safety (34,252)
- accommodation and food services (31,011).

It is estimated that there is a net inflow of 289,974 workers, representing approximately 62.2 per cent of the IMR.

The Inner Metropolitan Action Plan (IMAP), adopted in December 2005, responds to the demands of Melbourne 2030, the state government’s blueprint for managing sustainable growth and change across metropolitan Melbourne. The Plan states that the goal of IMAP is “Making Melbourne More Liveable” and includes a strategy to “promote the Inner Melbourne Region as an investment location for knowledge rich business sectors”.

As an action supporting this strategy, this Regional Economic Development Statement positions the Inner Melbourne Region (IMR) for investment and growth in key sectors.
The IMR accommodates some of Melbourne’s most prestigious and internationally well-known educational institutions with a growing demand from abroad. The newly created Office of Knowledge Capital, a collaboration between the City of Melbourne and the eight major universities with campuses in the City, aims to develop and promote the region’s standing as a knowledge centre and global University City. With a key objective to enhance the interaction between business, government and higher education, a greater awareness of capabilities and opportunities for collaboration will position the region internationally and promote overall areas of excellence.

The IMR houses some of Melbourne’s biggest hospitals and health care institutions. These include non-profit research organisations such as Peter MacCallum Cancer Research Centre and a wealth of medical research and institutions such as the Walter & Eliza Hall Institute, the Baker Institute, Howard Florey Institute, Bio21, CSIRO, St Vincent’s Institute and the Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health. There is significant employment generation within these institutions.

IMR is positioned within the state to be recognised as a global leader in health and agricultural biotechnology (valued at $21 billion state-wide) and is home to one of the top ten biotechnology companies in the world by revenue and six life science companies with a market capitalisation greater than $250 million. Victoria’s 2007 Biotechnology Strategic Development Plan aims to generate significant health and environmental outcomes that not only benefit Victorians and Australians, but that also contribute to improving the lives and wellbeing of people around the world. The BioMelbourne Network, the peak industry forum for the leaders of the Victorian biotechnology industry, comprises of 171 members, with 96 located within the IMAP region.

The IMR forms the hub of Victoria’s creative industry sector. Creative industry includes fashion, information technology, computer games/special effects, music and film and TV. The IMR contains much of Melbourne’s fashion industry, the Century City Film Studios and all three commercial TV stations as well as ABC and SBS.

The IMR fulfils a number of important functions for people living, working and visiting the area. An estimated net inflow of 289,974 workers places incredible demand on both community and public transport infrastructure. Robust road networks, bus, train and tram consistency (one ticket access to all services) exist with growing patronage being addressed by network and arterial extensions, more direct flights into Melbourne Airport, and planned East-West infrastructure.

There is a significant tourism economy with over 12 million domestic and international visitations each year. Recognised as the sporting capital of Australia and offering a diversity of product, key bodies such as the Victorian Major Events Company, the Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau, as well as Melbourne Visitor centres, are located around the IMR. Also known as the arts and culture capital of Australia, the region offers a strong cultural diversity of products and iconic arts and cultural centres. The IMR’s strength is its ability to host international and major events and attract external spending (national or international tourists).

Economic drivers and challenges into the future

The IMR is a global business and investment destination. It is Victoria’s primary centre for commerce, professional business and financial services and is one of the most competitive locations in the Asia Pacific region. IMR’s future position as a business destination will be influenced by the relative cost and ease of doing business – factors that will be influenced by IMAP.

Many challenges face the region and will require collaboration and commitment to maintain the region’s current internationally recognised reputation and its drive for future growth and prosperity.
An opportunity to influence

Awareness of existing national, state and local government policy together with the identification of key drivers and challenges provides strategic opportunities for IMAP to influence, drive and position the region for investment and growth. This can be achieved through strong leadership, working collaboratively and promoting the strengths and competitive advantages of the region.

IMAP has the opportunity to influence policy discussion and formulation at state and federal level through planning, economic and social policy platforms particularly in areas of transport infrastructure, housing affordability, business investment within emerging industries, community wellbeing, safety and security.

**Leadership**

- IMAP will **leverage** from the reputation of a leader in state, national and global economies.
- IMAP will **advocate** to ensure the voice of our businesses are heard at all levels of government.
- IMAP will **build** community spirit by facilitating engagement between residents, businesses and visitors.
- IMAP will **educate** the business community to respond to global initiatives such as climate change.
- IMAP will **capitalise** on major projects such as the port redevelopment and associated infrastructure upgrades and the opening of the new Convention Centre in 2008-09.
- IMAP will further position the IMR to deliver **business advantage** through appropriate and affordable accommodation for start-up businesses, nurturing of key emerging sectors, funding assistance and business development support.

**Collaboration**

- IMAP will **collaborate** across the region to deliver a regional perspective and engender a holistic approach to economic development needs, employment prospects & challenges, awareness and support to emerging sectors and subsequent investment requirements to ensure world-class competitiveness, sustainable prosperity & liveability in the region.
- IMAP will **identify** significant attributes and complimentary projects to secure funding, provide greater and more consistent support to the business community and gain economies of scale (eg regional business awards).

**Promotion**

- IMAP will **retain** and **protect** its strong position in the global environment by promoting existing strengths in the areas of knowledge and creative economies particularly in the fields of education, scientific and medical innovation, and technology development and design.
- IMAP will continue to protect the reputation of being Melbourne’s metropolitan playground, our arts and culture, major events and iconic tourist attractions.
- IMAP will protect lifestyle, liveability and **tourism** competitive advantages as a major component of business attraction and development.

Inner Melbourne Region of the Future

IMAP will influence the potential for inner Melbourne to live, work, play and grow:

- **‘Live’** – Actively encourage and promote a healthy, vibrant, attractive and globally competitive city that is recognised for its cultural diversity, liveability, new business development and innovation.
- **‘Work’** – Recognise and support ‘key workers’ and advance opportunities to increase human capital and skills diversity by building on existing relations with the tertiary education sector. Promote innovative and emerging new businesses supporting employment generation and dynamic working environments.
- **‘Play’** – Build on inner Melbourne’s competitive advantages as a cultural precinct by supporting diverse communities of interest through tourism and events promotion and international alliances, whilst protecting its unique heritage and identity.
- **‘Grow’** – Recognise the importance of a knowledge based economy and drive opportunities to stimulate capacity, research and innovation within key local industries in areas of health and leading medical science and biotechnology fields.

This statement will foster growth, leverage existing strengths and competitive advantages and encourage collaboration across the region to plan and implement, influence and drive, promote and position. By working together, IMAP will develop the region as a vibrant, engaging and inclusive learning community, fostering development of core creative skills and directing effort to building the IMR as a global destination that attracts and retains a strong creative workforce.