Planning Institute Australia
Victorian Division

Parliament of Victoria
Inquiry into Environmental Design
and Public Health

Stuart Worn – Executive Officer

Jason Black – National Board Member

Simone Stevenson – Senior Policy Officer

What is the Planning Institute of Australia?

- The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) is the only national body representing planning professionals

- PIA has been serving planning professionals and promoting planning since its establishment in 1951. It was known as Royal Australian Planning Institute (RAPI) until 2002

- PIA supports members working in Australia and overseas

- PIA is a nationally registered company of limited liability

PIA Planning Institute Australia

PIA Membership

- PIA currently represents just under 5,000 members and is growing at a rate of 5% per annum

- Around 50% of PIA members work in strategic, development assessment, or other planning roles within Local Government. The remaining 50% are primarily engaged in private consulting, state government and academia

- PIA Corporate Membership is for individual planners. PIA also has student, graduate, fellow and honorary fellow grades of membership

- Associate Membership is open to individuals with an interest in planning matters

PIA Planning Institute Australia

What does PIA do?

- Encourages & engages in community debate on planning issues

- Promotes the professional interests of members

- Establishes and administers standards of professional competency

- Develops and communicates planning knowledge & research

- Supports professional development, planning education and training

- Provides professional networking opportunities

- Influences planning within the community, government and industry

PIA Planning Institute Australia

Approach to Affecting Change

PIA is a leader in the health and built environment realm

- **Planning and Health: Building Sustainable Links**

- **Partnership with VicHealth**

- **Planning for Health and Wellbeing Project**

- **Putting Health at the Centre of Planning**

- **Selandra Rise**

- **Healthy Spaces and Places**

PIA | Planning Institute Australia

2011 Review of Victoria's Planning System: PIA Members' Survey

- PIA recently surveyed our membership on what they thought were the best and worst parts of Victoria's planning system.

- 106 members responded

Which sector do you work in?

2.1%	Student
5.3%	Academic
4.3%	Private
39.4%	Public
48.9%	Other
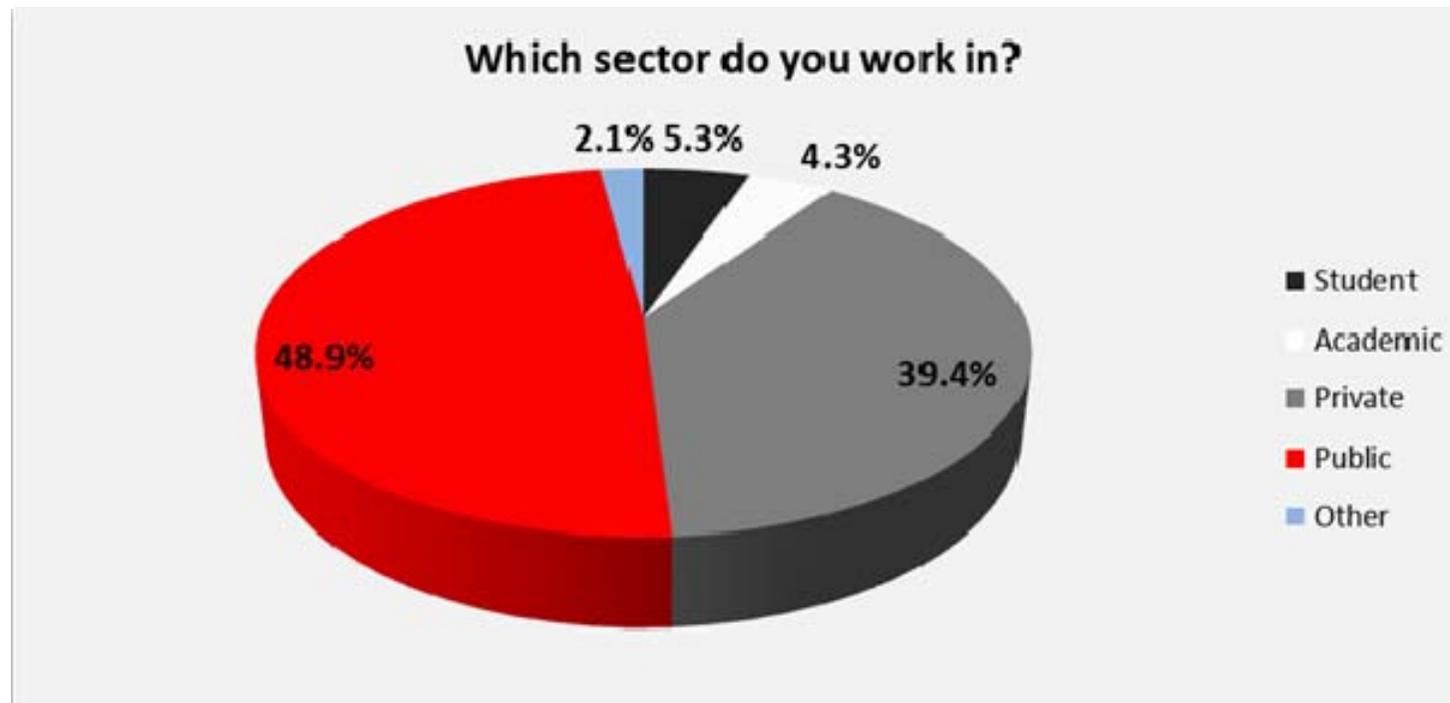
Member's Survey: The Victorian Planning System

Structural problems of the Victorian planning system:

- Lack of integration between planning and other relevant legislation (e.g. Public Health and Wellbeing Act)
- The Planning & Environment Act
- The current system unable to respond quickly to issues as they arise

Policy reform problems of the Victorian planning system:

- Lack of directions and mechanism to address social impacts of planning, including health
- Need for more open spaces (recreation, interaction, food production)

PIA Planning Institute Australia

Member's Survey: The Victorian Planning System

Identified opportunities to improve the Victorian Planning System include:

- Review and improve the clarity of the *Planning and Environment Act (1987)*

- Facilitate increased density, particularly around activity centres

- Prioritisation of sustainable transport methods, including cycling and walking.

Terminology

PIA recommends that the phrases '**environmental design**' and '**environmental planning**' be replaced with the terms '**land-use planning and design**'

TOR 1: Review the evidence of the contribution of the natural and built environments to the promotion of health and wellbeing

An overwhelming body of evidence exists to support the hypothesis that built environments can, and do, directly influence public health and wellbeing.

The focus of PIA's submission are the opportunities to influence health outcomes through the built environment based on this evidence, rather than readdressing the evidence itself.

TOR 2: Identify and report on those elements of environmental planning and design which provide the most promising opportunities for improving health outcomes in Victoria
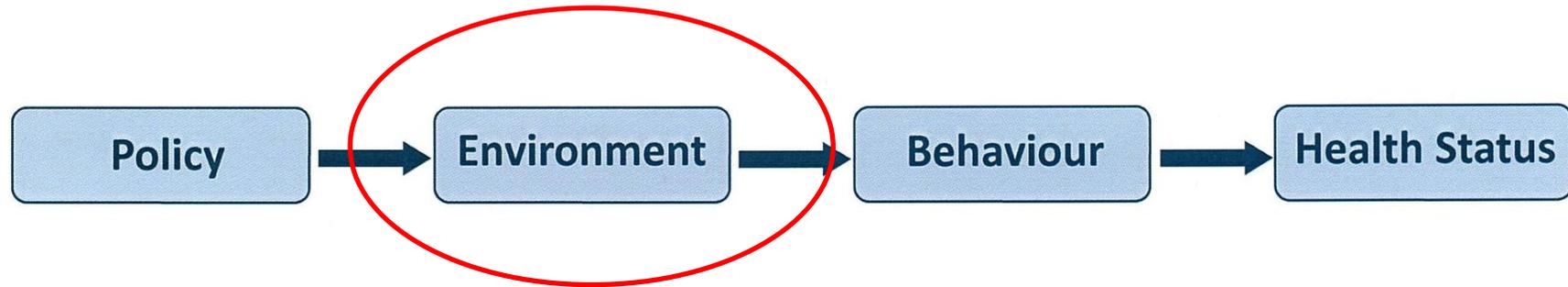

By shaping the 'environment' step of the above process, planning and built environment specialists can exert pressure over the community's behaviour and subsequent health status

TOR 2: Identify and report on those elements of environmental planning and design which provide the most promising opportunities for improving health outcomes in Victoria

Putting Health at the Centre of Planning 6 Key Priority Areas:

•Social Inclusion
•Childhood Health
•Physical Activity
•Safety
•Food
•Mental Health
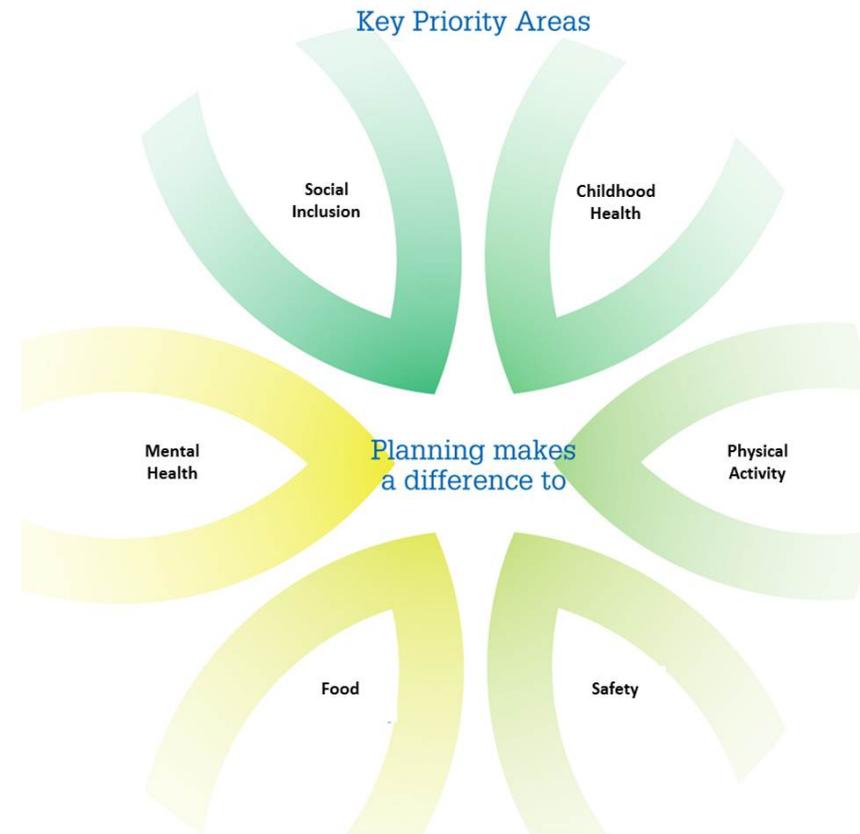
TOR 2: Identify and report on those elements of environmental planning and design which provide the most promising opportunities for improving health outcomes in Victoria

Healthy by Design 10 Design Principles:

- Active transport
- Connectivity
- Environments for all people
- Aesthetics
- Mixed Density
- Mixed land-use
- Parks and open space
- Safety and Surveillance
- Social inclusion
- Supporting infrastructure

TOR 3: Assess the extent to which these factors are currently taken into account in environmental planning and design in both the public and the private sectors, and their effectiveness, with particular reference to new growth areas:

- Key priority areas not embedded in legislation of policy in an effective way.

- Much existing voluntary activity being undertaken - development of resources and toolkits, and public private partnerships to deliver a market based initiative.

- Some existing legislation makes reference to various aspects of health and liveability, e.g. Victorian Precinct Structure Planning (PSP) Guidelines and Clause 56 of the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP), **however health itself is not explicitly defined as a key priority.**

- Selandra Rise - example of a current development which has sought to exceed the minimum requirements of current Government policy.

Selandra Rise

Key Initiatives

1. Timely Delivery of Services

2. Selandra Community Place

3. Affordable & Diverse Housing

4. Community Creation

5. Local Employment

6. Integrated Neighbourhood Activity Centre

PIA Planning Institute Australia

Selandra Rise

- Collaborative Partnership between Industry, Government & the Private Sector

- Project Objectives:
    - Improving housing diversity
    - Promoting local employment
    - Creating a healthy and engaged community

- Independent, longitudinal and comparative evaluation with RMIT University

PIA Planning Institute Australia

TOR 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:

Existing voluntary resources are valuable and effective tools, BUT it is important to note that no statutory measures which **specifically require health outcomes to be a foremost consideration in planning decisions.**

In Victoria, planning decisions are always made based on planning schemes.

Recommendations:

→ Health and wellbeing be included in all local Municipal Strategic Statement 'Visions'
→ Health and wellbeing be included as a specific direction in the State Planning Policy Framework
→ Health and wellbeing be included as an objective in the *Planning and Environment Act (1987)*

TOR 5: Provide recommendations for future planning and investment; and that the committee will consider:

a) The effectiveness of the Environments for Health Municipal Public Health Planning Framework

Recommendations:

→ Environments for Health Framework be reinforced through other relevant local government documents: e.g. Council Plan and MSS.

→ The Framework's division of social, built, natural and economic environments is exercised with caution and recognition that these are integrated issues, not silos.

b) The *State Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, the *Transport Integration Act 2010* and the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

Recommendations:

→Section 12A (4) of the *Planning & Environment Act 1987* be amended to included consistency with the MPHP

→A holistic and independent review of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* is undertaken so that it complements, rather than contradicts, the *Transport Integration Act 2010* and the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.*

TOR 5: Provide recommendations for future planning and investment; and that the committee will consider:

c) **International experience such as the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Healthy Cities initiative:**

World Health Organisation and the Healthy Cities initiative

➔ Learnings from established programs such as the World Health Organisation Healthy Cities Program are included in the Victorian State and Local government's approach to healthy environments. These lessons could accompany learnings from the use by local governments of the Victorian State Government's Environments for Health Framework.

Bogota, Colombia

➔ That the built environment in Victoria take a similar approach to Bogota, Colombia in shifting transport priorities from private motor vehicles to active transportation options such as cycling, walking and running.

Health Impact Assessment

➔ This submission recommends that the *Planning & Environment Act 1987* be amended to define certain types of development as requiring a HIA.

➔ That any HIA tool adopted be simple for planners to incorporate within their existing activities, for example the 'Design for Health' suite.

TOR 5: Provide recommendations for future planning and investment; and that the committee will consider:

d) The consistency of policy approaches across the Victorian Government to promote health through evidence based environmental planning and design measures

→ Links across all policies and acts relating to health and the built environment be strengthened

e) The role of public open space in promoting health

→ That any requirements stipulated around for public space are qualitative, varied and contextual rather than prescriptive

PIA | Planning Institute Australia

Planning is for People

Planning has moved through various Departments over the years:

Department of Sustainability and Environment,

Then…

Department of Infrastructure

Now…

Department of Planning and Community Development

Health is everybody's business.

Questions?

For Further Information

visit our Website: www.planning.org.au

Email: sworn@planning.org.au