

**Northern Melbourne Area  
Consultative Committee**

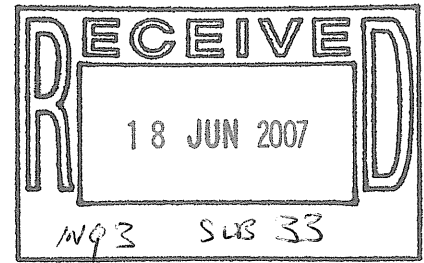
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June 18, 2007

Sean Coley  
Executive Officer  
Outer Suburban Interface Services Development Committee  
Level 3, 157 Spring Street  
MELBOURNE 3000



Dear Sean,

The Northern Melbourne Area Consultative Committee (NACC) welcomes this opportunity to make a presentation to your Committee.

### **NACC Role**

The NACC works in partnership with community, business and all levels of government to support and contribute to regional development across the semi-rural Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Hume, Nillumbik and Whittlesea and the metropolitan LGAs of Banyule, Darebin, Moreland and Yarra, in northern Melbourne.

The NACC's core responsibilities are:

- to be a key facilitator of change and development in the region
- to be the link between government, business and the community
- to facilitate whole of government responses to opportunities in the community.

The NACC will facilitate the growth of a sustainable regional economy with a focus on social, economic and environmental issues.

This will be achieved by:

- facilitating a shared vision for the region
- engaging and developing partnerships with key stakeholders and government in the region
- stimulating and coordinating regional initiatives and interventions
- monitoring effectiveness of initiatives and interventions
- initiating selected regional projects.

A holistic strategy that is informed by a wide body of research, including published reports, will be implemented. The NACC will continue to conduct research that will further develop understanding of the region's key issues.



This project is supported by funding under  
*Regional Partnerships*, an Australian Government  
initiative in regional Australia



## NACC Structure

The NACC Committee of Management is a community based incorporated association and its constitution outlines its responsibilities in delivering services on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTARS).

The Committee comprises representatives from business, industry, government, and education and training providers. Its membership includes cross-representation with other strategic regional organisations to achieve maximum input and consultation. The Committee meets six times a year.

The organisational structure of the NACC has been developed in response to the need for effective decision-making and the facilitation of regional partnerships. The main features of the organisational structure include:

- substantial cross-membership of the major regional organisations
- project management teams comprising key stakeholders aligned with the major objectives of the NACC.

## NACC Priorities

- maximise regional growth, leading to positive economic and social/community outcomes
- improve the skills capacity of the region, in particular by attracting and retaining global knowledge workers
- grow business capacity in line with benchmarks highlighted in NACC research
- improve economic and social outcomes for disadvantaged groups, including Indigenous people
- increase regional employment that provides the required outcomes (hours and income) to resource a family
- improve transport infrastructure to and around employment areas
- support sustainable development across the urban, semi-rural and rural environments in the region
- initiate and manage research that continues to build a detailed understanding of economic, social and environmental factors impacting on the region
- facilitate timely information flows between industry, community and governments.

## SWOT Analysis of Northern Region

### Strengths

- ◆ Strong manufacturing sector
- ◆ Creativity/diversity of residents
- ◆ high skilled residents
- ◆ Tertiary education – established universities (2) and TAFEs (2)
- ◆ Application of 21<sup>st</sup> C skills
- ◆ good north/south transport infrastructure
- ◆ availability of land in outer region
- ◆ Melbourne Airport and access to ports

### Weaknesses

- ◆ lack of business & personal services
- ◆ leakage of retail dollars
- ◆ high exposure to low skilled and clerical workers
- ◆ low levels of global knowledge workers
- ◆ structural unemployment
- ◆ low level of gov't admin & education sector employment
- ◆ poor east/west transport infrastructure

## Opportunities

- ◆ growth of exports
- ◆ growth of advanced manufacturing inc bio-technology
- ◆ growth in retail capacity
- ◆ business services and personal service provision
- ◆ increasing residential capacity in line with Melbourne 2030
- ◆ capacity for partnerships between industry and tertiary education sector
- ◆ growth in service enhanced manufacturing

## Threats

- ◆ lack of support for manufacturing at C'wealth and State level
- ◆ decreasing capacity to deliver high tech products
- ◆ low income residents at risk to economic stress
- ◆ rezoning of industrial land to residential in Darebin, Moreland & Banyule
- ◆ growth of imports from Asia esp in labour intensive low margin products
- ◆ business attracted to other regions of growth
- ◆ lack of growth in power jobs
- ◆ historical lack of investment in manufacturing facilities

## Northern Region Economic Major Development Needs

1. **Transport Linkages:** The rapid population growth that will continue to be generated over the next decade in Hume and Whittlesea will need to be serviced by timely and relevant road and public transport infrastructure. The need is already obvious and it is critical that this infrastructure is delivered proactively rather than reactively.

It is also important that east/west transport linkages in the northern region are improved particularly to improve access to employment centres currently inaccessible by public transport.

2. **Industrial Land Use:** Significant population growth in the outer north will require increased levels of local employment opportunities. Industry growth in these areas will benefit greatly by the State Government being responsive to local council requests for flexibility in the allocation and innovative usage of available industrial land.
3. **Manufacturing Sector:** The northern Melbourne region is fortunate to have a large manufacturing sector that employs 16.5% of residents and 21% of all full-time workers in the region. The value of output in manufacturing in the north represents 25.5% of all manufacturing in Melbourne, 19.5% of manufacturing in Victoria and 7.8% of Australia's manufacturing output.  
It is critical that Government supports the sustainability and growth of the manufacturing sector particularly in relation to the uptake of global opportunities available in advanced manufacturing.  
Our experience shows that many small to medium manufacturing businesses require assistance to compete globally particularly in areas such as effective business management and business growth.
4. **Office and Commercial Accommodation:** The NACC and NORTH Link/NIETL are jointly working on a strategy to address the shortage of office/commercial accommodation across the northern region. Government support is required to support the contribution from a wide range of partners committed to overcoming this barrier to economic development.
5. **Skill Shortages and Skills Development:** A regional strategy is required to address inadequacies in the current system that have created a situation whereby the region suffers from high youth unemployment yet at the same time employers are unable to find suitable young people who are aware and interested in the skilled pathways available.

It is also important that education and training resources in the outer northern region keep pace with population growth to ensure that a highly skilled workforce is developed that can undertake skilled occupations in knowledge based local industries.

6. **State Funding to Leverage Commonwealth Funding for Regional Initiatives:**  
The NACC is able to access Commonwealth funding through the Commonwealth Government's Regional Partnerships Program to contribute to regional initiatives that are designed to address inhibitors to regional development. This funding requires matching funding from other partners such as the State Government.  
The ability to access State funding to complement Commonwealth funding would enable the development and implementation of a number of valuable projects in the outer suburban areas of the region.
7. **Research Support:** The NACC has been involved in initiating key research reports for the region to enable strategic analysis and understanding of the region's key issues. These reports have included the "Northern Regional Profile" and in collaboration with NORTH Link/NIETL "Growing Melbourne's North ; developing an integrated economy".  
There is a strong need to regularly update this socio-economic data to identify and respond to the trends that are occurring across the region and particularly in the outer suburban municipalities.
8. **Business Incubators:** The NACC and NORTHLink have been directly involved in the development and establishment of two highly successful mixed use business incubators based at Alphington and Brunswick. Incubators can be a very effective method of providing support and guidance to start-up businesses and minimising significantly business failure rates. The establishment of a new business incubator in the outer north would provide significant benefits to local start-up businesses and provide increased employment growth.

I look forward to discussing the above issues with the Committee on Monday June, 18 at 2.30pm.

Yours sincerely,

  
Tony Coppola  
Executive Officer