



**The Hon Kelvin Thomson MP
Federal Member for Wills**

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MEDIA RELEASE

Melbourne's Skyrocketing Population

It is astonishing that the Victorian Government's latest Plan Melbourne now says Melbourne's population will grow from 4.3 million now to 7.7 million by 2051. A draft of this plan only seven months ago forecast a rise from 4.3 million to 6.5 million. That 50 per cent rise would be difficult enough to cope with, but 7.7 million is over 75 per cent. In any event, the fact that the projection has altered so radically is further evidence that estimates of Melbourne's future population are totally unreliable. Indeed Melbourne's population growth in recent years has far outpaced previous Government estimates.

The consequences of a 7.7 million population for Melbourne will be dramatic. Traffic congestion will be horrific. Housing prices will continue to skyrocket, leaving home ownership out of reach for young people. People will not be able to afford anything other than an apartment or a unit, and gardens and backyards will increasingly become a thing of the past. Grey infrastructure (freeways, drainage and sewerage systems etc) will proliferate, at the expense of green infrastructure (public open space and trees and shrubs on private land) and blue infrastructure (creeks, rivers, and beaches). Melbourne will become hotter as climate change is reinforced by the urban heat island effect.

According to Plan Melbourne a 7.7 million population would require over one and a half million more dwellings, of which 960,000 would occur in "established" areas, and 610,000 will occur in "growth" areas. In other words Melbourne will continue to grow both upwards and outwards, continuing its path to becoming an obese, hardened artery parody of its former self. By 2031, in the next 17 years, we will see 470,000 more people in the northern suburbs, 430,000 more in the west, 480,000 more in the south, 200,000 more in the east, and 280,000 more in Central Melbourne. Accomplishing this will inevitably involve trampling over the rights of residents, who

have time and time again indicated that they do not want their neighbourhoods and communities to change in this way.

Victoria First was formed as a non-government organisation last year to campaign against this kind of population growth. We believe that returning Australia's migration levels to those of the 1980s and 1990s will stop this rapid population growth and help us protect and pass on the things about Melbourne that make it a great place to live. Anyone interested in joining Victoria First can contact the Secretary, Julianne Bell, on (M) 0408 022 408.

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