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Monday 4 August 2008

Hon. John Brumby MP
Premier
Climate Change Submission
GPO BOX 4912
MELBOURNE 3001

Dear Minister,

RE: VICTORIAN CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT PAPER

Hume City is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Melbourne, situated in the North-Western urban growth area. Our population is large and diverse with over 160,000 residents and a large industrial sector. Hume City covers a large area (507sq/km) with roughly 70% being rural land. Hume City Council is making a concerted effort, through its Sustainability Framework, to incorporate sustainability into core business. By guiding the community through Climate Change along a sustainable path Hume City Council is ensuring its resilience.

Climate Change is very important issue to Council. Council signed up to ICLEI's (International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives) Cities for Climate Protection (CCP) program over ten years ago, and Council remains a leading member of this organisation. Council is also a member of the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA), an alliance committed to greenhouse gas mitigation. NAGA has a strong relationship with State Government, receiving funding for projects and programs on many occasions.

Council commends the State Government for tackling the issue of Climate Change. Climate Change has the potential to affect all facets of our life and ensuring that these impacts are shared in an equitable way is imperative.

Council's submission does not specifically address the questions in the Summit Paper, but notes some issues that Council believes are important to be addressed in the upcoming Green Paper.

Mitigation Vs Adaptation

Hume City Council notes that the Summit Paper addresses both Climate Change mitigation solutions as well as adaptation solutions. Council believes that these issues are both extremely important but that separate policy frameworks should be produced for these two very different problems.

Complementary measures to an Emission Trading Scheme

Council supports the concept of an Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). However Council believes that to have a truly robust mitigation plan, Australia and Victoria must support a wide range of complementary measures. The Victorian Energy Efficiency Target (VEET) is one such measure. It is clear that energy efficiency is a cost effective way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and wholeheartedly supports initiatives to achieve this. However, Council is mindful that many of its residents have relatively low incomes; mechanisms to enable these residents to achieve energy efficiencies will need to be specifically addressed.

The Energy Sector

The Renewable Energy Sector is a critical component of Climate Change policy. Hume City Council is keen to strengthen this sector and State Government support will be crucial. Whilst clean coal technology may play a significant role, the renewable energy sector must be fully supported. Council has strong relations with its industrial sector and is happy to support emerging industries from a carbon constrained world; the renewable energy sector is one such possibility. Hume City Council would also welcome the opportunity to become involved in pilot projects that seek to investigate the large scale installation of photo voltaic cells on commercial and industrial properties for energy production. Council would also like a closer examination of potential energy generation in the green wedge areas, through wind and solar technology, thereby supporting the financial viability of these areas.

Natural and Rural Landscapes

An important part of Climate Change is considering the effect on our natural ecosystems. With over 70% of the municipality covered by rural land, it is important to consider the impacts of Climate Change. Council has made a submission to the Land and Biodiversity at a time of Climate Change Green Paper.

Strategic Planning

Council is concerned that the Summit Paper has provided limited consideration of the potential relationships between future planning and climate change and greenhouse gas production. Melbourne 2030 is a big step towards achieving more sustainable planning. Hume has been fortunate enough to receive considerable funding for the *Broadmeadows Transit City Masterplan* (adopted November 2004) from the State Government; however progress towards the implementation of Melbourne 2030 principles needs to be swifter. A key component of Melbourne 2030's implementation is the provision of public transport. Being an urban fringe municipality, Council strongly supports a much greater investment in public transport infrastructure in the region. The State Government should focus more of its transport infrastructure towards modes that will be equitable to all in the future as Peak Oil potentially worsens and Climate Change takes hold.

Social Equity amongst the Community

The introduction of an ETS will have a large impact on many residents within Hume City. It is imperative that the State Government help smooth this transition to a carbon constrained economy. Facilitating affordable, sustainable housing stock and an efficient public transport system will be crucial. Also the identification of employment opportunities in the new carbon economy will be paramount in identifying how a transition can occur in the Hume economy which has been traditionally based around manufacturing. (28% of the labour force).

Should you wish to discuss this submission, please contact Jason Summers, Manager Sustainable Environment on 9205 2303. Council looks forward to working with the State Government and participating in the development of the Green Paper.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DK', is positioned above the printed name and title.

DAVID KEENAN
DIRECTOR CITY SUSTAINABILITY