



14.4 **RECOMMENDATION TO REFORM AND EXPAND THE INNER MELBOURNE ACTION PLAN (IMAP) IMPLEMENTATION**

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: PETER SMITH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

PREPARED BY: JAMES GULLAN, STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS ADVISOR

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the reforms of the existing Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP) Implementation Committee (Committee); and dissolving the Committee and jointly establishing an expanded advocacy group (M9) of nine councils, including the current IMAP councils.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 IMAP comprises the Cities of Maribyrnong, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Yarra and Melbourne and was established in 2005 to deliver the State Government's "Melbourne 2030" planning agenda.
- 2.2 IMAP currently operates as a joint delegated committee under the Local Government Act 2020.
- 2.3 IMAP has been a knowledge sharing forum which has delivered several projects and been a forum for collaboration between member councils since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.4 A review of the effectiveness and impact of IMAP found that there is an opportunity to strengthen the advocacy voice of inner Melbourne city councils through a refreshed and expanded group. These would include Hobsons Bay, Moonee Valley, Moreland and Darebin Councils.
- 2.5 It is proposed that the primary focus of IMAP councils moving forward should be advocacy, with a sharp focus on three to five key strategic issues.
- 2.6 Expanding the group from five to nine inner Melbourne Councils, M9, will enhance the group's effectiveness.
- 2.7 The expanded coalition of councils will be established under a Memorandum of Understanding and would involve the Mayor and CEO from each member council meeting four times per year to set and monitor strategy.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Pursuant to sections 11 and 64 of the Local Government Act 2020, dissolves the Inner Melbourne Action Plan Implementation Committee as a joint committee of Council and revokes the Instrument of Delegation to that committee.
- 3.2 Endorses joining an expanded group of inner-city councils for the purpose of shared advocacy, with a working title of M9.
- 3.3 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with other participating councils to establish the new entity and its operating principles.
- 3.4 Requests further information be provided to Council on proposed advocacy priorities.



- 3.5 Approves the rollover of unexpended IMAP funds to fund the new entity (M9) for the first 12 months and notes that each non-IMAP member of M9 will match the contributions on the basis of 1/9th share of funding.
- 3.6 Notes that membership to the new entity, M9, be reviewed annually as part of the City of Port Phillip Strategic Membership Review.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

Background: IMAP

- 4.1 The IMAP Committee was established in 2005 to deliver the State Government's "Melbourne 2030" planning agenda. IMAP comprises the Cities of Melbourne, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Yarra and Maribyrnong.
- 4.2 IMAP member councils were originally linked under the Local Government Act 1989 by the member establishing identical section 86 special committees. On 1 May 2020, section 86 of the Local Government Act 1989 was repealed abolishing Special Committees. Instead, two or more councils can create a Joint Delegated Committee (section 64, Local Government Act 2020). In 2020, the IMAP member councils established a joint delegated committee pursuant to section 64 of the Local Government Act 2020.
- 4.3 The IMAP 2016-2026 strategy identifies 27 strategies across five goals to help build creativity, liveability, prosperity and sustainability across a range of diverse neighbourhoods experiencing rapid growth. It operates under the brand 'Making Melbourne More Liveable'.
- 4.4 IMAP has been a knowledge sharing forum which has delivered projects such as,
 - Sport and Recreation Facilities Report (released in March 2020): The report is an advocacy tool that identifies recreation facilities and open space requirements across the IMAP region needed to respond to future growth.
 - Inner Melbourne Cycling Network: a business case for State Government to deliver a regional integrated connected and safe (on/off road) cycling network.
 - Wayfinding and Signage Project: to improve and align wayfinding and signage across the inner Melbourne region for visitors and residents
- 4.5 IMAP engaged the Minister for Roads and Road Safety and advocated for a more connected bike network. Shortly after this meeting, Minister Carroll announced \$13m in funding to 100 kilometres of new and improved cycling routes to help relieve congestion and provide an alternative to public transport for those living closer to the CBD. (Safer Cycling and More Routes to Keep Melbourne Moving | Premier of Victoria)
- 4.6 Throughout the COVID pandemic IMAP CEOs have met regularly to coordinate responses and strategies. This includes information sharing on individual Council responses and relief packages, as well as joint advocacy to State governments.

Issue:

- 4.7 Compared to other council peak bodies, IMAP is a relatively small group, focused on coordinating internal projects rather than representing inner Melbourne to external parties.
- 4.8 In 2020, The City of Melbourne commissioned CPR media and communications to review IMAP's remit, operation and delivery. The review found there was a fragmented



agenda focused on micro issues, slow project delivery, and a lack of media and political influence.

- 4.9 While all current IMAP members remain committed to the goals, there is interest from current IMAP members in expanding the group and sharpening its strategic focus to strengthen the value proposition for constituents.
- 4.10 The current proposal is to establish a new group that includes existing IMAP councils and Hobsons Bay, Moonee Valley, Moreland and Darebin Councils. This would better represent the inner city and Greater Melbourne as a coalition of the nine innermost councils unified with a shared vision for Melbourne, which has the potential to be a major influence on State and Commonwealth policy and funding. It would represent 18 per cent of the Victoria population, or almost 1.2 million people.
- 4.11 The working title for the expanded IMAP is M9

M9 Proposal:

- 4.12 Rather than using a joint delegated committee, an expanded coalition of councils (M9) will be established under a more agile Memorandum of Understanding.
- 4.13 The recommended model would involve the Mayor and CEO from each member council meeting four times per year to set and monitor strategy. Member council CEOs would meet monthly to oversee delivery. It is proposed that a smaller Executive Management Group comprising the Mayor and CEO of the lead and deputy lead councils would meet fortnightly, however, this is subject to further discussion in the coming months.
- 4.14 The expanded entity would adopt key aspects of the successful Council of Mayors (South East Queensland) model, including reflecting its focus on advocacy, consistent branding and leadership approach including the capital city Mayor (Lord Mayor of the City of Melbourne) as permanent Chair.

Advocacy Priorities:

- 4.15 There is unanimous agreement that the primary focus of the new M9 councils moving forward should be advocacy, with a sharp focus on three to five key strategic issues. These issues could include affordable housing and homelessness, economic recovery, and job creation subject to engagement with members.
- 4.16 Advocacy efforts would be formalised and include regular engagements with key Ministers such as the Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Local Government.
- 4.17 Investment would be required in a new brand, name and website to appropriately reflect a vibrant inner-city vision and purpose.
- 4.18 Projects underway or proposed in the IMAP 2016-2026 would be reviewed. It is recommended that shared projects are managed through other vehicles, allowing the expanded IMAP to focus on advocacy work.

Funding and Council buy-in:

- 4.19 Subject to agreement from all current IMAP councils unexpended funds already contributed will be rolled over to support the expanded group of councils, M9, with additional contributions coming from new members. Members agree adequate ongoing resourcing is critical to the success of the project. The administration model and resourcing would depend on the final agreed scope and scale of the new M9 model.



- 4.20 Stakeholder consultation was conducted with all existing IMAP member CEO's to inform the analysis and recommendations in this report. Stakeholder consultation has also occurred with the CEO's of Hobsons Bay, Moonee Valley, Moreland and Darebin who have all indicated an interest in joining this new body, subject to the agreement of their own Councils.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 Thirteen telephone interviews involving 20 IMAP stakeholders were conducted in 2020. This included CEOs and Mayors from each member council, the IMAP Executive Officer, and associate government members. The consultation found:

- There is continuing commitment to IMAP from its existing member councils. CEOs and elected officers believe that the relationship provides a unique platform to collectively influence State and Commonwealth government as part of their mandate to best serve their communities.
- IMAP has a reputation for stability and longevity in a time where partnerships often come and go.
- However, there is widespread agreement that the IMAP 'status quo' is not a viable option to secure continuing support from resource constrained councils and time poor leaders. In particular, the fragmented and relatively "micro" focus of the agenda and slow pace of action has limited the effectiveness of IMAP to date. There is currently no clear value proposition for continuing council involvement.
- There was universal agreement that the primary focus of IMAP councils moving forward should be advocacy, with a sharp focus on around three and no more than five key strategic issues that are shared across member councils.
- The opportunity to achieve strength in numbers was agreed – i.e. to expand the group to include councils with similar urban fabric and shared policy challenges (subject to agreement on a set of collaboration principles).
- More effective leadership, greater stability and continuity and adequate resourcing were all identified as key factors to be reconsidered for operational model.

- 5.2 Further consultation has also been undertaken with the CEO's of the other proposed M9 councils.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Inner Melbourne Action Plan Implementation Committee was established as a joint committee of Council under section 11 of the Local Government Act 2020 and delegated powers and functions of Council pursuant to section 64 of that Act.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 The funding by IMAP Councils for the operation of the IMAP is currently suspended.
- 7.2 Existing reserve funds budgeted for membership of IMAP will be transferred to the new entity to fund its operations in the first 12 months, with matching contributions being received from new (non-IMAP) members of M9.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 In developing this proposal, no environmental sustainability issues or opportunities have been identified.



9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 There are no community implications arising from this report.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 This report contributes to Council's strategic objectives contained in the Council Plan 2017-2021, by considering:

- Strategic Direction 6: Our Commitment to you – 6.1 A financially sustainable, high-performing, well-governed organisation that puts the community first.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

11.1.1 Subject to Councils decisions, the next steps are,

- IMAP member Councils to endorse decision to dissolve the Inner Melbourne Action Plan Implementation Committee as a joint committee of Council and revoke the Instrument of Delegation to that committee.
- MOU for new M9 model to be drafted, and endorsed by CEOs of member Councils
- IMAP Reserve funding to be rolled over to M9
- M9 anticipated to commence in late May/early June.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

11.2.1 Subjects to Councils decisions, communications on this change, will be provided via an update in CEO report and on the CoPP website.

11.2.2 Affected Council staff will be notified by email.

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter.

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ATTACHMENTS Nil