

Melbourne 2030: Collaborative Enquiry Report

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Introduction

This report documents the collaborative enquiry undertaken by the Australian Foresight Institute's Advanced Professional Practice course participants into the current strategic position and future directions for the Victorian Government's Melbourne 2030 (M2030) metropolitan planning team. The report summarises the collaborative process, outlines the operating context as presented by the M2030 team, offers an interpretation and reframing of the strategic realities, and concludes with recommendations for creating change within M2030 that will enable it to more comprehensively and effectively achieve its objectives while acting according to its stated principles.

The Collaborative Enquiry Process

The enquiry was conducted over five days during March 2005 and involved three key aspects. First the participants were briefed on the context and current internal realities of M2030 through an interview with the Executive Director and two focus groups with the managers of different aspects of M2030. Second the participants reflected on the information provided and produced an overview of their understanding of M2030's strategic context and position, identifying key strengths, weaknesses, threats and, particularly, opportunities. Third, the participants reported their findings to a selection of M2030s managers including the Executive Director.

While a common situational analysis was presented by the M2030 team members, including the identification of a common range of problems, the collaborative enquiry participants (CEPs) deliberately reframed the information and insights provided in order to generate new understandings to be offered back to the M2030 team. It is important to note that to arrive at new ways of thinking about M2030 the collaborative enquiry, its findings, and thus this report, are not completely grounded within the details of M2030 activities, processes, and organisational structures. For example, the publicly released M2030 plan was not discussed in detail. Instead, the general features were examined and incorporated into the CEPs considerations. To reframe the knowledge provided about M2030, and generate new ideas, the CEPs focused on the use of strategic foresight concepts and methods, systems and complexity thinking, and other integrative, meta-systemic, and higher order approaches. An effort has been made to minimize the evidence of these reframing techniques in order to make the report more accessible and to highlight the essential new concepts and methods that M2030 may wish to investigate using.

Key Findings

The key findings from the collaborative enquiry process can be summarised as a diagnosis, a practice recommendation and a capability development recommendation:

- **Diagnosis – *System Complexity*** – The operating context for M2030 is more complex than the current government institutional setting and practices are competent in accommodating;
- **Practice Recommendation – *Putting Principles into Practice*** – To address this it is recommended that M2030's management ensure that the guiding principles of M2030 are actually applied in the design and conducting of design decision making processes;
- **Capability Recommendation – *A New Strategic Conversation*** – The momentum for achieving the practice recommendation will need to come from within. One possible method for instigating this could be to start a new strategic conversation within M2030 that focuses on addressing the issues it raises.

The crucial distinction for understanding these findings is recognising that the principles for M2030 have been interpreted within, and put into practice by, an institutional setting that sees them as idealistic not realistic. To reframe the principles and put them into practice a new strategic conversation would need to be fostered, and carefully framed, within M2030 that could develop and implement appropriate new institutional structures, processes, and policies that reflect the intent of the principles and their ability to strategically navigate M2030 within its increasingly complex operating environment.

Operating Context

A Contextual History

The interview with the Executive Director and focus groups with M2030's management provided the following information. It has been interpreted within the context of the CEPs process. It does not reflect a comprehensive summary of the information provided.

Past Successes

M2030 commenced approximately five years ago and moved very successfully through a gradual expansion of activities which included significant community, industry, government, and expert engagement. The approach taken was recognised as world leading regarding sustainability decision criteria, and was seen as successful because of mutual learning during the public consultations and important enabling changes in government practices.

Two years ago the M2030 strategic framework, initial implementation policies, and implementation planning processes were finalised and presented to interested parties and the general public. M2030 is seen as a unique whole of government effort that provides a high level strategic coordination framework for many State and local Government activities and also for industry and community organisations.

Present Problems

Over the past two years the implementation and detailed planning activities of M2030 have begun. During this time difficulties have persisted into the present involving Local Government planning coordination, general community acceptance of local impacts, inaccurate and sensationalist media coverage, State Government backing in terms of finance commitment, industry hesitation in some regards, and also derisive expert opinion. The valuable high level coordinating function of M2030 has become its weakness as it has become the target for increasingly irrelevant grievances.

Internal awareness of several key weaknesses of M2030, given its long term focus, is becoming more pronounced. These weaknesses include, for example, the lack of detailed trend analysis on employment futures and potential water usage, a restriction on scenario testing the framework with more rich trend based information, and limited inclusion of broader systemic issues such as peak oil. As a result many new questions about the role, function, priorities and overall direction of M2030 are also being raised – although, informally. One of the common concerns within M2030 is the lack of team member understanding of the full strategic vision for M2030 and the informal strategic conversation which facilitates this practical grasp and a adaptable, strategic engagement with changes in the operating environment.

Potential Opportunities

Looking forward M2030 has three whole-of-activity key strategic events that its management recognises the need to prepare for:

1. During 2005 M2030 has the opportunity to propose an appropriate and strategically beneficial review scoping plan to the State Government;
2. Leading up to the State Government Elections in 2006 M2030 will need to carefully navigate the potential political influences to at best secure advantages for implementation or at worst limit the negative impacts on implementation activities; and,
3. In 2007 the delivery of the M2030 review to the State Government provides an opportunity that could either 'make or break' the momentum of M2030's implementation.

Strategic Questions

Strategic questions are the prompts for strategic conversations. They embody the thinking styles of a management team, provide the direction for their analysis, and generally guide the nature of any outcomes. Understanding the various questions that are being asked, and where they lead, is thus crucial for interpreting the M2030 situation and how the CEPs may provide value through new thinking, new insights, and new questions. There were three sources of strategic questions that informed the CEPs process: the original brief and the M2030 management consultations, both summarised below, and the guiding question for the collaborative enquiry set by the lead consultant in agreement with the Executive Director:

How can we be sure that what we are doing now, and into the future, is strategically relevant and systemically viable?

The Original Brief

The CEPs were initially provided with five key strategic questions. While the CEPs process acknowledged these, it also took a fresh approach at what the strategic questions and directions could be within a reframed systemic view. The following summary language for the brief's strategic questions will be used in this report:

1. Is the M2030 planning framework robust enough to adapt to different trends than it was based on?
2. What are the strategic priorities for implementing the various M2030 directions?
3. How could community values and attitudes change over time and how might this impact M2030's strategic directions and public engagement processes?
4. How can a forward looking strategic conversation be established within M2030?
5. How could the M2030 five year review be strategically scoped?

Client Consultations

The interview with the Executive Director and the management focus groups were also a rich source of strategic questions regarding different aspects of M2030. Some of the questions raised, that are different from the original brief, have been summarised in Table 1 below.

<p>M2030</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is this plan believable? ▪ Is this plan deliverable? ▪ Do we have the right assumptions and objectives? ▪ What in the plan needs to change? What needs to endure? ▪ What are the priorities that need to be done to ensure M2030 is not undermined? ▪ How do we get the local councils to own the problems and solutions that M2030 deals with? ▪ Are there other overseas examples we haven't looked at? ▪ What haven't we done that we need to do? ▪ How does a city work and how should it work? ▪ How can we incorporate more qualitative (social/cultural/aesthetic) information into our planning? ▪ How do we evolve the story of M2030? Barriers/risks? 	<p>Implementation Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What does the Government want from M2030? ▪ Can we convince Government to ensure the evolution of M2030? ▪ What is the 'one power-point slide' that can show the progress and benefits of M2030? ▪ Is Melbourne a better place to be? ▪ Was the whole of government invited, and involved? ▪ Have we reduced the economic footprint? ▪ What trade offs have we made between environment/livability/economic development? ▪ What have the unintended consequences of M2030 been so far? ▪ What information do we have for a review? ▪ How can we get good information for a review? ▪ Have we look at overseas approaches enough?
<p>Public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why don't people get M2030 now? ▪ How can we achieve public ownership of M2030? ▪ Who should be the community champions of M2030? ▪ How do we get the media to cover M2030 accurately? ▪ How can we favorably demonstrate M2030 – now? ▪ How do we refocus the public discourse on the benefits? ▪ Can the regional offices do more to support public acceptance? ▪ How should M2030 achieve the cultural shift it implies? 	<p>Institution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How can we integrate other DSE policy initiatives? ▪ How do we identify what is M2030 and what isn't? ▪ How do we foster ongoing knowledge exchange and a learning culture internally? ▪ Do we have the right people involved? ▪ Are we the in the position to deliver M2030? ▪ Do we have the required institutional arrangements? ▪ How can we get Ministers to back the plans financially and foster local government involvement?

Table 1: Strategic Questions about M2030 from Client Consultations

Strategic Principles

The strategic framework for M2030 sets out principles, directions, and policies. An assumption for this report is that the principles were selected to guide decision making for M2030. As such, they can serve as the logical first port of call when attempting to address the strategic questions facing M2030.

In reviewing the seven M2030 principles they can be seen as two broad types. The first type focuses on *outcomes* and includes the principles of sustainability, innovation, and equity. They are more likely relevant to this kind of question: have the principles been reflected in the benefits for Melbourne of the M2030 approach? The second type focuses on *process* and includes the principles of adaptability, inclusiveness, leadership, and partnership. They are more likely relevant to this kind of question: where the principles evident in the process of M2030's design decision making during development and implementation?

It is the second type – the process principles – that this report will draw on to reframe M2030's operational context, identify core strategic questions, and inform the nature of the answers to them and guide the related recommendations.

Reframing the Operating Context

The CEPs first approached M2030's operating context by developing a variety of whole-of-system maps. These maps were used to generate a common understanding and appraisal of the strategic dynamics of the system and M2030's interactions with it.

The various maps were of different levels of complexity and focused on different aspects of M2030's operating environment. The following figures are example systems maps which have low levels of complexity and address both 'hard' and 'soft' aspects. The difference is that 'hard' refers to structures, institutions, groups and other physically identifiable aspects of the system, whereas 'soft' refers to issues, ideas, and other intangible aspects of the system.

For each of the following systems maps a brief explanation is provided that includes primary insights from the CEPs process that may be of value to any M2030 effort towards developing whole-of-systems views. These maps also inform the strategic action recommendations below.

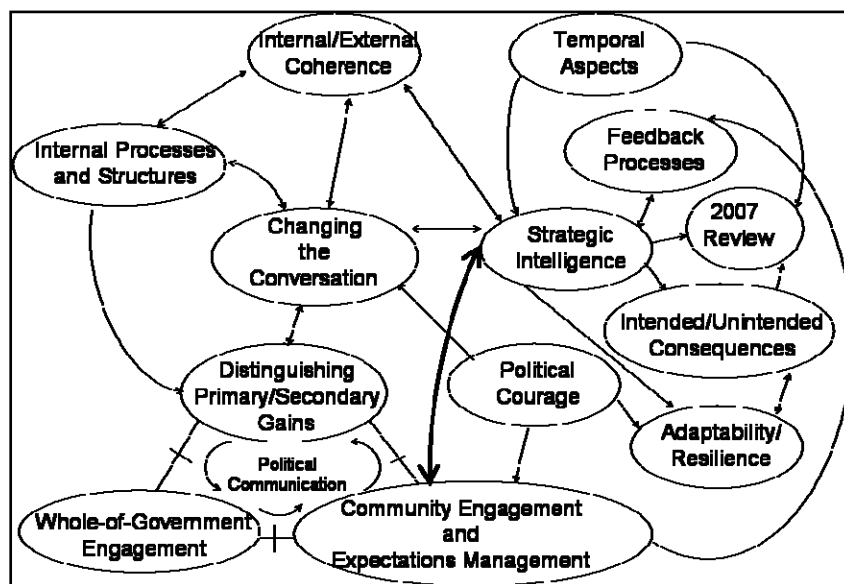


Figure 1: An example soft-systems map of M2030's core systemic challenges

Figure 1 is a soft-systems map that represents the core systemic features identified during the CEPs process. It is a mixture of existing aspects likely familiar to M2030, such as whole-of-government engagement, and new possibilities, such as 'changing the conversation,' and, importantly, how they might relate. The arrows indicate the flow of influence while the crossed lines indicate a current assessment of failure to achieve adequate flows of influence. Other individual reports from CEPs will address this and further systems maps in detail. Its inclusion here serves two main purposes: first, as an example of a soft systems map that M2030 may develop; and, second, it captures the output from the CEP process, which for this report, will focus on the systemic aspects identified within it.

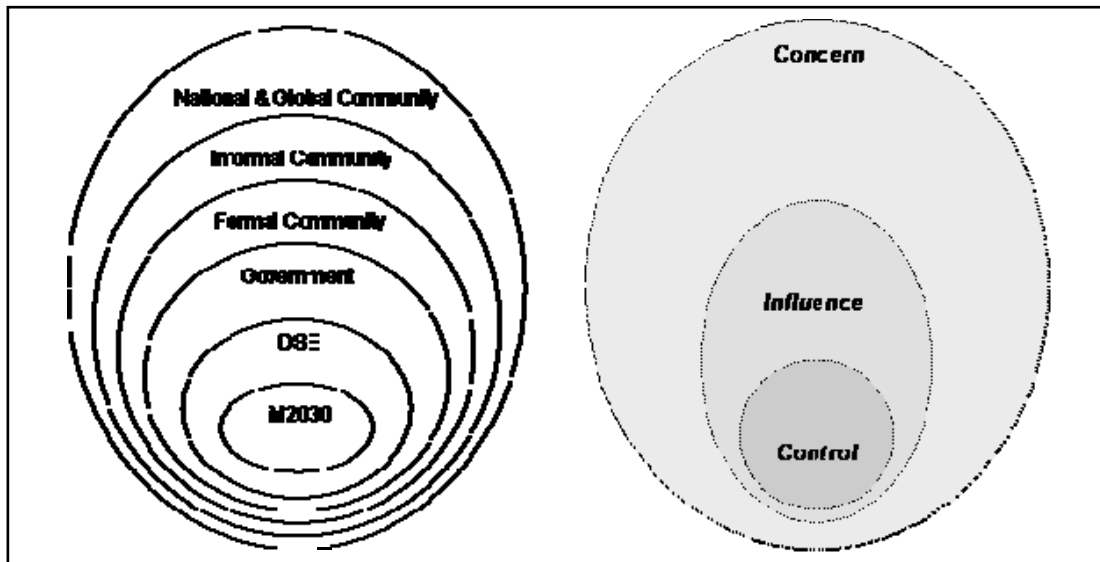


Figure 2: An example hard-systems map of the operating context for M2030 and a soft-systems map of the spheres of stakeholder interactions

The simplified hard-system map on the left in Figure 2 conveys several important aspects of the whole system that will be important for any systems mapping undertaken by M2030:

- M2030 is nested within increasingly larger, more complex and distanced stakeholder domains of institutions and groups; and,
- The structural coherency of each stakeholder domain moving outwards from M2030 becomes more diffuse and difficult to differentiate and thus identify and relate to.

Other hard-system maps generated included the same features as the one in Figure 2, but also added sub-system maps within each stakeholder domain, and identified some of the relationships between the different sub-system groups. They also looked at the changes of the system through time, gauged by the phases of M2030's operations. These more detailed maps have not been included here because they are based on incomplete knowledge of M2030's relationships and thus, as these examples are intended to demonstrate, it would be more valuable for M2030 to generate its own systems maps. This would allow M2030's team members to develop their own personally internalized systems view while also clarifying it with the collective intelligence of the M2030 team. The understanding and ownership of the systems views, and the strategic conversations they require and stimulate, are the central benefits of their generation.

As Figure 1 demonstrates many varied soft-systems maps could be generated to assist in developing and clarifying M2030's view of the whole system. The soft-systems map of the spheres of M2030's interaction with its stakeholder domains presented in Figure 2 addresses what the CEPs considered the core systemic soft issue: understanding different stakeholder relationship potentials.

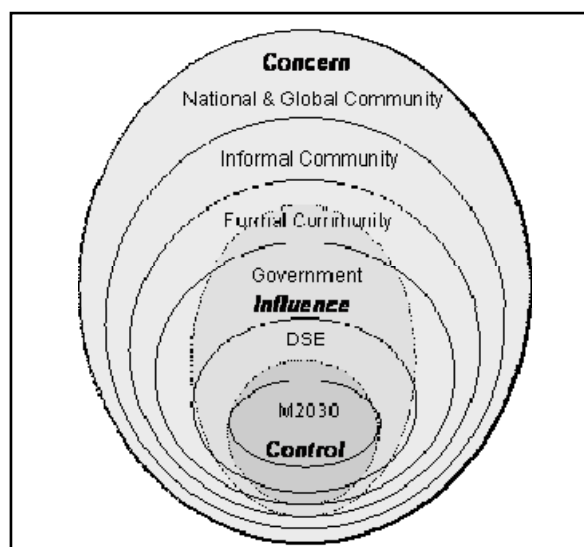


Figure 3: M2030's spheres of interaction with the simplified operating context

The spheres of interaction and stakeholder domains shown together in Figure 3 can serve to highlight the dynamics of the M2030 operating environment. The primary insight this system view raised during the CEP process was that the ability of M2030 to control and influence different stakeholder domains is not consistent: ie M2030 can not control the whole of DSE, only limited aspects, and M2030 can not influence the whole of government, only certain aspects. It may prove prudent for M2030 to identify in detail which stakeholder groups are within which stakeholder domain and which sphere of relationship. This detailed whole-of-system understanding could inform many other M2030 activities, for example defining the nature of strategic intelligence gathering and designing communications strategies.

Reframing the Strategic Questions

The CEPs process involved interpreting the strategic questions presented above and looking for the commonalities, the hidden sub-texts, and the questions that were not asked – but perhaps should be – in light of the reframed whole-of-systems views. The purpose was to enable novel and powerful questions to be asked which can lead the M2030 team in new and potentially beneficial directions. The following four high level strategic questions are a summary of the strategic questions developed by the CEPs, and those received from the M2030 team, and will be used in this report to generate new strategic action options for M2030:

1. How can we communicate M2030 so that those outside of the State Government understand, accept and become positively involved?
2. How can we evaluate M2030 so that it is presented in a way that will navigate the various political realities within the whole of government?
3. How can we be thinking about M2030 so that we can evolve, prioritise, and implement it in a way that ensures beneficial outcomes for Melbourne?
4. How can we change how we do what we do to ensure we can answer the other questions?

Reframing the Strategic Principles

The CEPs process of developing whole-of-system views and identifying the core strategic questions resulted in categorically different interpretations of the M2030s strategic principles. These arose out of a consideration of how they would be translated into practice with the reframed whole-of-system views compared with the perceived current operational reality of M2030. To highlight these differences Table 2 below lists some recommended reframed interpretations of the principles in terms of loosely defined aspects of M2030's approach. Many more, and likely refined, aspects could be identified by an examination along similar lines by the M2030 team.

Strategic Principle	Current Interpretation	To	Reframed Interpretation
Inclusiveness	Review	➔	Monitoring
	Integrated story	➔	Our Stories
	Government project	➔	Melbourne's process
Adaptability	Blueprint	➔	Evolving framework
	Planning	➔	Co-creation
	Urban planning	➔	Social ecosystem maintenance
	Growth	➔	Evolution
Leadership	Management	➔	Strategic stewardship
	Decision making	➔	Option assessment
	Implementation	➔	Coordination
Partnership	Engagement	➔	Dialogue
	Informing	➔	Exchanging
	Experts	➔	Collaborative intelligence/enquiry
	Government responsibility	➔	Community problems and opportunities

Table 2: Example recommended changes to practical reframed interpretations of M2030s strategic principles

Recommendations for Strategic Action

With whole-of-system views, clarified strategic questions, and reinterpreted principles within the context of practice, the CEPs developed numerous approaches to addressing different challenges in the M2030 operating context. A brief summary of these approaches is provided in Tables 3-6 below. Each strategic action is framed in terms of the whole-of-systems views and reframed strategic principles outlined above. Individual reports from CEPs provide further detail on many of these approaches.

The approaches to strategic actions are summarised here in terms of their relationship to key whole-of-system aspects, and two types of recommendations. The first are capability recommendations: strategic actions that could move M2030 towards the type of reinterpretation exemplified by the CEPs. The second are practice recommendations: these are examples of the types of new approaches that M2030 could develop and implement if it followed the capability development recommendations.

These are qualified as ‘examples’ because the M2030 team would likely develop far more sophisticated and appropriate strategic actions than the CEPs. In addition, the process of capability development focused on identifying these types of strategic actions would foster strategic coherency within M2030 itself. To these ends the following recommendations are presented in the order of a capability development recommendation: it appears most practical for the strategic questions to be approached in reverse order (4 to 1) so that M2030’s capabilities develop such that they can more competently address the practice aspects of each question.

Strategic Question	4. How can we change how we do what we do to ensure we can answer the other questions?
System Aspect	Whole of System View
Capability Recommendation	Reframe the internal “systems view” of the operating context through a revitalised internal and informal “strategic conversation.”
Example Practice Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish regular informal meetings – eg weekly for half a day, where the strategic conversation can be actively fostered. These may include general framing from a facilitator – perhaps the Executive Director in consultation with an outside expert on strategic conversations. ▪ Review the physical and cultural boundaries that have hampered the informal strategic conversation and implement changes to allow it to become a cultural norm within M2030. ▪ Include social ecosystem experts (rather than just geographical planners and sustainability experts), PR professionals, DSE management, representatives from all levels of M2030 and possibly outside thought leaders such as strategic foresight consultants.

Table 3: Strategic action recommendations for strategic question 4

Strategic Question	3. How can we be thinking about M2030 so that we can evolve, prioritise, and implement it in a way that ensures beneficial outcomes for Melbourne?
System Aspect	M2030 Functional Role
Capability Recommendation	Clearly redefine the role of M2030 as “Strategic Stewards” within the stakeholder relationship spheres of control, influence, and concern and investigate within the strategic conversation what this would mean and look like in practice.
Example Practice Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generate high level consequence assessments for various actions and inactions associated with M2030 and use these to inform the strategic conversation and dialogues with local and state government representatives and other formal publics such as industry groups; ▪ Involve Local Government planning officers and other government department and agency representatives in the development of implementation guidelines, planning, and prioritisation; and, ▪ Based on reframed whole-of-systems views this may result in priority outcomes such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enforce urban growth boundary and green wedge protection; ▪ Focus on finance for transport and expansion and improvement of enabling services (water, electricity, gas and broadband communications for example); ▪ Encourage – sustainability practices (legislation?) eg TBL and social aspects of high density developments (sound proofing, adequate space, multi-purpose office space etc), innovative recycling services and regulations; and, ▪ Encourage – local councils to support/enforce activity center growth policies – ie not outside of designate areas. ▪ These should act as systemic forces that foster the growth of activity centers while not actively developing them (as they are currently the main sore point for informal publics).

Table 4: Strategic action recommendations for strategic question 3

Strategic Question	2. How can we evaluate M2030 so that it is presented in a way that will navigate the various political realities within the whole of government?
System Aspect	Strategic Intelligence
Capability Recommendation	Use the strategic conversation to identify those interested in conducting a whole of M2030 review of the strategic framework to inform high level “ability criteria” that is in alignment with the new brand. The ability criteria, exemplified below, can be used as the one power point slide assessment of M2030 and, at the same time, is focused on its benefits.
Example Practice Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ M2030’s strategic framework of principles, directions and polices seems to have confused the following aspects of its operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concept/essence; ▪ Process/structure of decision making; ▪ Role/function of M2030 in system; ▪ Implementation design decision criteria; ▪ Design ideas/options; and, ▪ Implementation responsibilities. ▪ At least three key observations can be made about the above separation of the aspects of the strategic framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In order to achieve greater clarity and strategic control/influence for the M2030 as a strategic steward it seems important to separate and clearly define the various aspects; ▪ The different domains of physically measured growth and socially judged ecosystem evolution need to be tactfully defined and carefully integrated, and then addressed by appropriate actors within the system and approached with different decision criteria. It is possible that the current broad TBL approach may not provide sufficient clarity for this; and, ▪ The descending sequence of the strategic framework aspects indicate an ideal development process through time and could guide any process of reviewing them. ▪ Ability criteria – The high level criteria can be integrated to, and even developed through the acquisition of, stratified levels of assessment detail appropriate to a) each sphere of relationship types, b) within the different stakeholder domains, and c) appropriate to the different phases of M2030’s research, design, and implementation process. This may include dialoguing with relevant Government departments and agencies about the assessment criteria they already use for various levels of activities. For an example of what this may look like see Appendix A.

Table 5: Strategic action recommendations for strategic question 2

Strategic Question	1. How can we communicate M2030 so that those outside of the State Government understand, accept and become positively involved?
System Aspect	M2030 Brand & Story
Capability Recommendation	Discover, share and critically review the different ‘stories’ of M2030 internally: those held by staff in M2030, DSE, the cabinet sub-committee etc. Seek to identify agreed commonalities and significant differences contingent within the different perspectives held by people in different positions and understand the causes for these differences.
Example Practice Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Move from one story to “many stories one Melbourne” within a continuous dialogue, and from 2030 to an open ended emphasis on quality of life by removing the fixed date and developing a new title such as “Enabling Melbourne’s Livable Future – a framework for sustainable growth.” ▪ To facilitate the “many stories one Melbourne” employ dedicated in-house public relations professionals and give them guidelines such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dialogue as much as possible – in relevant forms with relevant stakeholder domains; ▪ Always welcome constructive contributions/alternatives – maintaining an ‘open channel’ that accepts responsible suggestions at all times; ▪ Ignore whining, unconstructive criticism when prudent; and ▪ Persuade as much as is necessary – and no more. ▪ It would also be prudent to ensure that the PR professionals engaged are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Given sufficient grounding in the detail of M2030 and its process of development; ▪ Included in any informal strategic conversation; ▪ Given ready access to both the M2030 senior management and technical/practice professionals; and, ▪ Are qualified practitioners of social-psychological models such as Spiral Dynamics (see www.spiraldynamics.org) or integral communications approaches (see www.emergence.net.au). This will enable them to more accurately identify the value systems of each of the key groups of actors in each of the stakeholder domains and accordingly develop messages, and identify delivery avenues, to be most relevant and powerful. Such approaches also allow for high levels of integration between various

	<p>message designs, communication programs, and campaigns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To realise the “many stories one Melbourne” approach it will likely be imperative to focus on framing the new communication efforts with the goal of achieving “problem ownership” amongst the various stakeholder domains. This could be done via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Informal publics – open channel – guidelines that present the summary problems and required style of submissions so that they will be responded to. These can be high level and un-detailed responses, the essential point is that the ‘door is open for reasonable contributions’ and that the information is provided for at least cursory review by appropriate M2030 members and can thus be fed into the strategic conversation as appropriate; ▪ Informal publics – geographical communities – maintain and broaden the community consultations involved with implementation design activities and focus on ‘problem and opportunity ownership’ that explicitly includes a whole of Melbourne focus and what “we” should do rather than Government; ▪ Informal publics – nation/international experts – engage outside experts to review and appraise the strategic directions of M2030, and/or conduct high level comparative studies about other city planning activities to both inform M2030’s strategic navigation and for use with stakeholder groups that respond well to such information types such as the media and other government departments and agencies; ▪ Formal publics – the organised community, industry and media groups that can be engaged in education styled seminars where the focus is on identifying why they should a) own the problems and opportunities that M2030 deals with and b) how they will engage the broader communities they have access to in order to pass on this problem/opportunity recognition and foster community ownership; and, ▪ Formal publics – Local Government – set the agenda for a dialogue and facilitate workshops with individual Local Government planning offices and other relevant actors (such as CEOs) to generate the understanding of and ownership for, the whole of Melbourne problems and opportunities approach and garner input on their current efforts, new suggestions, and how they might become more coordinated with M2030. Repeat this process in a summary format with a Local Government planning forum where the commonalities and differences between their different understandings and planned courses of action can be dialogued with peers.
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Table 6: Strategic action recommendations for strategic question 1

Concluding Remarks

The above reframing of M2030’s strategic position, context, and direction guiding questions has been informed by the core diagnosis and recommendations presented in the introduction:

- **Diagnosis – *System Complexity*** – The operating context for M2030 is more complex than the current government institutional setting and practices are competent in accommodating;
- **Practice Recommendation – *Putting Principles into Practice*** – To address this it is recommended that M2030’s management ensure that the guiding principles of M2030 are actually applied in the design and conducting of design decision making processes;
- **Capability Recommendation – *A New Strategic Conversation*** – The momentum for achieving the practice recommendation will need to come from within. One possible method for instigating this could be to start a new strategic conversation within M2030 that focuses on addressing the issues it raises.

If the strategic conversation is restarted within M2030 and focused on the other strategic questions currently arising then M2030 will be able to bring its whole resources into play and likely generate greater strategic clarity, momentum, and coherency in the process.

Appendix A

Enabling Melbourne's Liveable Future – Decision Making “Ability” Criteria

The following ability criteria are intended as examples only. They could be included in simple questions to use as a high level assessment and also guide the development of stratified levels of detail. Stratified levels means, in practice, that the actors that are closer to implementation details flesh out the assessment information in appropriate, and likely already established, ways, in alignment with the high level criteria.

All of the ability criteria can be posed as questions such as does this contribute to Melbourne being sociable? At a high level of assessment this may simply be a yes/no answer with a short description or qualification. For more detailed planning and implementation activities the existing design, project monitoring and assessment criteria based information can be aligned with these dimensions of ability through sub-categories as exemplified in the table below.

The ability criteria approach could also inform the priority focus of strategic directions and identify the dimensions of information that could be collected in a strategic intelligence process and how it could be synthesised. The ability criteria may need to be defined differently for each of the spheres of relationships for M2030 – control, influence, concern – given that the areas of control can be highly detailed, less so for influence and even less so for the sphere of concern.

New M2030 Focus	Existing TBL Approach	Ability Criteria Dimensions	Criteria sub-categories	Criteria Definition Sources
Liveable	Social	Desirable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meaningful ▪ Enjoyable ▪ Identity ▪ Purpose 	Need new sources – largely public survey based
		Securable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal safety ▪ Possessions safety ▪ In both private and public contexts ▪ Health and social services ▪ Privacy – noise and space 	DHS
		Sociable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural diversity ▪ Interactive nature ▪ Inclusive ▪ Social networks and institutions 	?
	Technical	Viable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial ▪ Political Will ▪ Legislative allowance/support ▪ Attracts and services business and tourism 	DSE, policy review, other departments and agencies with relevant information etc
		Feasible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Technically/engineering ▪ Functionally relevant 	a/a
		Adaptable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open to further development ▪ Multipurpose? 	To be incorporated in current building submissions as defined by or assessed by M2030 in conjunction with relevant existing legislation, regulations and policies.
		Useable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open access to disabled ▪ Ease of transport to and from ▪ Timely development and ongoing access 	
	Environmental	Sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmentally sound in construction and long term 	DSE

Table A: Examples for an Ability Criteria approach for M2030 design, assessment and communication

As an example of the application of a similar approach by the author within a Victorian Government and DSE context the following ability criteria were developed and used in the comparative assessment of multiple vehicle “propulsion technology and fuel groupings” within a futures orientated study concerned with policy options.

step Dimension	Capability	Criteria Question	Key Variables	Description of Variable Factors
Technical	Viability	Is production scale possible?	Viability	Technical viability at production scale. This assessment considers issues such as whether or not major technical barriers need to be overcome for particular system components in order for option to be viable at production scale, without considering whether or not the particular option is already supported by manufacturers. For example, hybrid LPG vehicles, while not currently available in the vehicle market, would not require developments beyond currently available technology, whereas hydrogen fuel cell vehicles have significant technical hurdles to overcome at production scale.
			Safety	Safety considerations related to vehicle use and accidents, and fuel storage, transport and refuelling.
			Maintenance	Availability of technical skills, specialised equipment, and parts required for vehicle maintenance, both locally and inter-state; and overall vehicle complexity and reliability. Issues related to interstate refuelling are also addressed here.
Economic	Feasibility	Do benefits outweigh costs?	Infrastructure	Public, fuel supply and automotive industry infrastructure development required to facilitate uptake of the PTFG.
			Retail and operating cost	Retail price and life cycle operating cost for vehicle owners and fuel suppliers.
			Scale	Issues impacting the scale of PTFG uptake, and perception thereof, required to support local manufacture, fuel infrastructure and maintenance suppliers including the potential for imports to meet local demand.
Environmental	Sustainability	Does it reduce net emissions?	GHG Emissions	Well-to-wheel GHG emissions, based on CO ₂ -equivalent mass per transport task unit. Described relative to nearest 'competitor' option (eg hybrid petrol is described relative to conventional petrol, hybrid LPG is described relative to hybrid petrol).
			Air Pollution	Well-to-wheel PM, NO _x , CO and VOCs, based on emissions per transport task unit. Descriptions as for GHG emissions.
			Resource Consumption	Large-scale road transport usage impact on primary energy source for fuel.
Political	Compatibility	Does it fit existing policy?	Security	Capability of fuel to contribute to diversification of primary energy sources; effect of increased fuel-type usage on crude oil reliance; and ability to make use of domestic energy sources.
			Regulations	Consideration of current and anticipated fuel quality standards and vehicle emissions regulations.
			Initiatives	The existing policy measures and initiatives of Governments in support of the uptake of various alternative transport fuels and technologies.
Social	Acceptability	Will the market accept it?	Demand	Anticipated market response to PTFG availability.
			Image	Anticipated market perception of the PTFGs utility in providing product performance and social desirability.
			Function	Availability and ease of use in terms of vehicle refuelling, general operation, and suitability for vehicle type end-use.

Table B: Example application of an 'ability criteria' approach to propulsion technology and fuel groupings (PTFGs)