Institute for Sport, Exercise and Active Living
Victoria University, Footscray Park
19 August 2011

Australian Government
Department of Infrastructure and Transport

RE: Creating Places for People

To whom it may concern;

As an academic with a passion for planning and designing healthy and vibrant neighbourhoods, I would like to commend the Major Cities Unit for its collaborator development of an Australian Urban Design Protocol. I also appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft framework.

Jan Gehl, a prominent observer of public space, suggests that "living cities, ones in which people can interact with one another, are always stimulating because they are rich in experiences, in contrast to lifeless cities, which can scarcely avoid being poor in experiences and thus dull, no matter how many colours and variations of shape in buildings are introduced." The Design Principles for People as outlined in the Protocol adhere to Gehl's suggestion and promote the nuances of spaces that people perceive to create pleasant and visually appealing experiences.

I would, however, like to comment on the four design principles as delineated on pages 8 and 12. I agree with the principles of comfortable and safe. However, I would like to suggest that for pedestrian-scale principle, instead of

"*creates places that are enjoyable and easy to walk and cycle around*" to be replaced with
"*prioritises human-powered mobility* (as reflected on page 12) *for all ages*".

I believe it is important to highlight the ease and accessibility of places for all walks of life. Moreover, I believe the "enjoyment" aspect should be reflected in the "vibrant" principle and a statement should be included about encouraging joy and wonder on page 12. There are suggested references below to support this claim. Lastly, for consistency, it would be good if the goals on page 10 include the final design principles for people (e.g. comfortable, vibrant, safe, pedestrian scale).

Thank you for considering this comment. If you need further clarification of this comment, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Vivian Romero

Suggested References

Gehl, J. (1987). Life between buildings: using public space. New York: Van Nostrand
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Kerr, I. & Tranter, P. (1997). A wish called wander: Reclaiming automobility from the motor
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        Architectural Press.

O'Brien, C. (2005). *Planning for sustainable happiness: Harmonizing our internal and
        external landscapes*. Paper presented at the Rethinking Development: 2nd International
        Conference on Gross National Happiness, Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

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        *Children, Youth and Environments* 20 (2): 46-66. Retrieved [19 August 2011] from
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