

## PREPARE FOR MORE TIME IN THE CAR, NEW REPORT FINDS

**Tuesday, 22 February 2010:** By 2041, Australia's cities will experience significant increases in traffic congestion, people will spend more time travelling and cars will generate more greenhouse gas emissions, a new study has found.

*Cities for the future: Baseline report and key issues*, commissioned by the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC), has been released today at Green Cities 2010 in Melbourne.

The report points to a bleak future where transport-related greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) increase by almost 50 per cent and travel times increase by quarter.

"Under a business as usual approach, our urban centres will become more transport intensive and less transport efficient. Congestion will worsen, travel times become longer and transport-related GHG increase," says ASBEC President, Tom Roper.

"The report is a clarion call to our federal, state and local governments that swift, decisive action is required to deliver better transport systems in Australia's cities," Mr Roper says.

According to Romilly Madew, Chief Executive of the Green Building Council Australia and task group chair, the analysis "clearly shows that, without action to change the way people live, work and play in our cities, our transport challenges will only get worse."

*Cities for the future* is the first part of a four stage project which aims to explore and measure the links between greenhouse gas emissions from urban transport and land use within our cities.

"This report has found that the shape of our cities and the distribution of land uses can influence transport and therefore emissions. However, in raising sustainability and reducing emissions, we are likely to realise other tangible benefits, such as healthier communities, more accessible services, appropriate responses to demographic change, and more efficient use of land and infrastructure," Ms Madew explains.

The study examined two cities, Greater Melbourne and South East Queensland, with key findings including:

- **Urban centres will become more transport intensive and less transport efficient:** The total amount of passenger travel and time spent travelling in cities is forecast to grow more than proportionally to population and employment.
- **Transport is forecast to be slower:** Average trip speed (kilometres per hour) is projected to decrease in both regions studied in the report by around 10 to 13 per cent by 2041.
- **Transport outcomes are likely to deteriorate:** people in both cities are projected to spend more time travelling per day and to travel longer distances. People in South East Queensland and Greater Melbourne will see their travel time increase by approximately 26 and 23 per cent, respectively, by 2041.

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- **Transport GHG emissions are projected to rise in the studied urban centres:** Emissions in South East Queensland are projected to have the largest increase, rising by 75 per cent between 2006 and 2041.
- **Land transport GHG emissions from within urban Australia are projected to rise substantially under the baseline scenario:** Without additional policy interventions these emissions are projected to rise from an estimated 41 megatonnes per annum in 2006 to 60 megatonnes in 2041 – an increase of 46 per cent.
- **The need for mobility and its costs will increase:** Overall, the analysis shows that the need for mobility and its costs in terms of time and harmful impacts upon the environment will increase. These adverse changes are expected to outpace the growth in underlying population and represent a challenge for future transport networks.

Stage two of ASBEC's study will bring together key experts and stakeholders in Australia to discuss the initial findings and develop alternative frameworks for land use, transport, environmental outcomes and community planning.

"From this, we will determine which alternative scenarios provide the best outcomes for Australia's cities and the people who live in them," Ms Madew explains.

"The challenge is to recast our vision for Australia's cities and deliver sustainable, liveable places that service a diverse and growing population," says Tom Roper.

"While the model is still being debated, the principles of the sustainable city of the future are clear: well planned, built and operated places that are sensitive to their environment, meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, and contribute to a high quality of life."

### **About ASBEC**

The Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC) is the peak body of key organisations committed to a sustainable built environment in Australia. ASBEC members are industry and professional associations, non-government organisations and government observers who are involved in the planning, design, delivery and operation of our built environment, and are concerned with the sector's social and environmental impacts.

ASBEC's Cities for the Future task group comprises representatives from the Green Building Council Australia, Australian Institute of Architects, Australian Conservation Foundation, Property Council of Australia, the Planning Institute of Australia and the Association of Consulting Engineers Australia. *Cities for the future: Baseline report and key issues* was funded by task group members, the Built Environment Industry Innovation Council (co-funded by the Australian Government Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research), the ACT Planning and Land Authority and the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

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