



MEDIA RELEASE

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CBD Planning laws “already working”

Melbourne City Council’s proposal to have amended State legislation controlling outdoor advertising was a waste of ratepayer’s funds as the planning laws were already working.

Helen Willoughby, Chief Executive Officer of the Outdoor Media Association, said a report commissioned by, and presented to Council at Tuesday night’s Planning Committee Meeting produced no evidence that the existing planning laws were failing.

“Their own report showed that since the policy was introduced in 1999 only two applications for large outdoor media sites had been awarded in favour of the applicant when brought before the Victorian Civil and Administrative Appeals Tribunal,” Ms Willoughby said.

“The report also contained images that either were not third party promotional signs, or were approved before the current planning laws were introduced. They bore no relevance to the argument about existing controls.”

Council resolved to seek approval from the Minister for Planning, Mr Justin Madden, to exhibit an amendment to the Planning Act that would restrict large promotional signs to five locations within the CBD.

These locations had not been discussed with industry or property owners and the report to Council had already identified potential problems with the proposed cluster locations.

Ms Willoughby said Councillor Fraser Brindley , a member of the Greens who supported the change, was displaying double standards in seeking to prohibit large signs across the majority of the CBD when his own political party was currently running a national outdoor advertising campaign which included Melbourne.

“Outdoor media operators are part of the mainstream media industry and their activities are restricted to commercial, business and industrial zones,” Ms Willoughby said.



“Not only do they provide for the legitimate marketing activities of Melbourne businesses and many State Government agencies, but they provide millions of dollars of free media space to charities and for promoting community events.

“Council has already spent tens of thousands of dollars on a report that does not support their argument, and now wants to go to the expense of a public exhibition process over a problem that doesn't exist.”

Further information:

Helen Willoughby, CEO

Ph: 02 8356 9000 or Mob: 0439 023 389