

STRATEGY AND POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE
7 JULY 2008 **POLICY AND PLANNING**

A11 **CITY OF PORT PHILLIP DRAFT
ALCOHOL ACTION PLAN**

LOCATION/ADDRESS: **N/A**

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FILE NO.: **80/03/27**

ATTACHMENTS: **DRAFT COPP ALCOHOL ACTION PLAN**

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Council has initiated and supported many policies and projects designed to reduce alcohol-related harm in our community (e.g., Nightlife Policy 2004, Local Drug Strategy, Liquor Licensee's Accord, Safe Taxi Rank, and Local Laws banning public alcohol consumption). Some of these initiatives and policies need to be consolidated, reviewed and updated in the context of recent State and Federal government policy directions, Liquor Licensing Commission Victoria changes and the changing face of activity and nightlife in our entertainment precincts.
- 1.2. Council is requested to endorse an updated Nightlife Policy 2008 framework and the associated draft City of Port Phillip Alcohol Action Plan, including the community consultation process to consider proposed new actions, and to also note the current strategies that are in place to reduce alcohol related harm in the city's entertainment precincts. The draft Action Plan focuses on the following four objectives:
 - 1.2.1. reducing violence;
 - 1.2.2. reducing negative health impacts;
 - 1.2.3. improving amenity for all;
 - 1.2.4. safeguarding the local economy and the cultural & entertainment life of the city

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 2.1. The City of Port Phillip has one of the heaviest concentrations of licensed venues in Australia and has a long-standing reputation of being one of the country's most exciting nightlife destinations. We now have more than 600 licensed venues – an amount that has tripled since 1994 and more than double the State and Southern Metropolitan Region average. Each month hundreds of thousands of visitors come to Port Phillip for a good night out, although not all leave with that experience. Our community is also subjected

to rising levels of alcohol-related assaults, drink driving offences and alcohol-related hospital admissions that are much higher than the State average and numerous complaints about amenity issues such as excessive noise, vandalism and alcohol-related litter and exposure to spills of human body fluids. More details about the City of Port Phillip's alcohol-related harms can be found in the discussion paper attached as Attachment One.

- 2.2. However, the rise in alcohol-related harms is not unique to the City Of Port Phillip. In May 2008 the Victorian Government released the Victorian Alcohol Action Plan (VAAP) in response to increased community concern about mounting alcohol-related harms, such as violence and hospital admissions. The Plan included initiatives such as:
- 2.2.1. A 12 month freeze on new late night licenses beyond 1am
 - 2.2.2. A three month trial of a 2am lockout from venues in the cities of Port Phillip, Melbourne, Stonnington and Yarra, which commenced 3 June 2008
 - 2.2.3. The development of Victoria Police's "State Licensing Taskforce" & "Safe Streets Taskforce"
 - 2.2.4. Higher licensing fees and tougher new obligations for licensees
 - 2.2.5. Changes to local government planning provisions, which now allow the impact of both existing and proposed licensed venues as valid amenity considerations in planning decisions
- 2.3. The VAAP (a summary is attached as Appendix A to the Attachment) has generally been well received by local governments and many parts of the community, although the Inner South Metropolitan Mayors' Forum (ISMMF) identified a number of gaps in the plan, which include a lack of attention to:
- 2.3.1. Packaged liquor & availability
 - 2.3.2. Venues with extended operating hours that do not have liquor licenses
 - 2.3.3. The impact of licensed restaurants/cafes and footpath trading
 - 2.3.4. Research and data sharing
 - 2.3.5. Enforcement protocols
 - 2.3.6. Integration with existing council services and activities
 - 2.3.7. Integration with existing service providers and activities
 - 2.3.8. The influence on behaviour of built form and streetscapes
 - 2.3.9. Cumulative impact assessment tools
 - 2.3.10. Recognition of the role of available public transport and taxis in disbursing patrons
 - 2.3.11. Volumetric data collection (volume, type and location of alcohol sales)
 - 2.3.12. Prioritization of actions
 - 2.3.13. Impact on Council resources

- 2.4. The City of Port Phillip is part of a multi-LGA working group that has commenced to address these issues.
- 2.5. The City of Port Phillip also regularly participates in the National Local Government's Drug and Alcohol Advisory Committee (NLGDAAC) of which the Mayor, Cr Janet Cribbes is the Deputy Chairperson. CoPP representatives recently contributed to a workshop conducted by the NLGDAAC to develop and advocate for more uniform liquor licensing regulations, land use and planning mechanisms to reduce alcohol-related harm across the nation. A list of recommendations regarding enforcement of licensed venue performance, assessment of community risk of alcohol-related harm and support to run improved planning and enforcement systems will be released later this year.
- 2.6. There are a number of policy initiatives and decisions that Council has already made that address this topic. The principles of Council's Nightlife Policy 2004 provide a sound basis for an updated policy framework. The principles of this policy are proposed to continue to underpin the 2008 City of Port Phillip Nightlife Policy and Alcohol Action Plan and have been slightly amended to reflect progress:
 - 2.6.1. Harm minimisation, collaboration, partnerships and holistic approaches guide our response to improve the management of our entertainment precincts. We will invest heavily in building trusting and supportive relationships between all stakeholders;
 - 2.6.2. Recognize and support the City of Port Phillip Liquor Licensee's accord as a major influence and partner in achieving better outcomes for all;
 - 2.6.3. Best practice standard planning conditions will continue to be developed and promoted to assist owners to take a preventative approach to noise and other issues;
 - 2.6.4. Acknowledge that behavioural change cannot wholly be achieved by legislation and promote the (behavioural responsibilities of patrons in and around licensed venues;
 - 2.6.5. Promote a mix of retail, culture and entertainment late into the night which attracts a diverse range of groups through the adoption of structure plans for each activity area which address the clustering of particular uses such as bars and nightclubs;
 - 2.6.6. Ensure safe urban design and provision of amenities, especially lighting and public toilets;
 - 2.6.7. Promote and support initiatives with the State government such as Safe Taxi ranks and public transport solutions after midnight particularly on weekends and public holidays;
 - 2.6.8. Ensure a coordinated and compassionate response to critical incidents that enables strengthened prevention strategies that are within our realm of influence
 - 2.6.9. Acknowledge the positive contribution that evening and late night uses make to the economic health and cultural vitality of our city. Our policy aims to enhance these positives and minimize any negative impacts on residential amenity.

- 2.7. A list of work that Council has already undertaken to reduce alcohol-related harms has been formed into the Draft Alcohol Action Plan, attached as Attachment Three. It has been grouped into the areas that Council exerts greatest impact: (a) Building, planning & infrastructure; (b) Shared community responsibility for reducing alcohol-related harm; (c) Cleaning and (d) Local Laws. Some of these initiatives and strategies, need to be consolidated, reviewed, and updated to form the final Port Phillip Alcohol Action Plan, in the context of recent State and Federal government policy directions, LLCV changes and the changing face of nightlife in our entertainment precincts. We will consult with the community about potential new strategies and consider the inclusion of new ideas in the final Alcohol Action Plan in light of available research on best practice and resource constraints.

3. RECOMMENDED OPTION

- 3.1. Criterion for recommendation
We recommend that Council endorses the principles of the updated Nightlife Policy 2008 as the guiding framework of the new draft Alcohol Action Plan; approves the community consultation process as seen in Section 5 of this report and receives recommendations on the proposed actions and any further ones that emerge during the review and consultation process in September.
- 3.2. The draft Alcohol Action Plan brings together and articulates Council initiatives within one policy framework and draft action plan. This document is to be further informed and developed by a wide range of community members, research and relevant data.
- 3.3. The draft Port Phillip Alcohol Action Plan is based on a premise of having a robust and collaborative partnership with the community and the Police to best influence positive outcomes.
- 3.4. The Council's Alcohol Action Plan aim is to reduce alcohol related harm and focuses on the following 4 key themes:
- 3.4.1. Reducing violence;
 - 3.4.2. Reducing negative health impacts;
 - 3.4.3. Improving amenity for all; and
 - 3.4.4. Safeguarding the local economy and the cultural & entertainment life of the city
- 3.5. The City of Port Phillip's draft Alcohol Action Plan supports and strengthens the Victorian Alcohol Action Plan directions but is responsive to our local context and operates within the legislative and regulatory framework applicable to Local Government.

4. SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

ECONOMIC VIABILITY

Economic Pillar	<p><i>We expect that activities that reduce the alcohol-related harm that our community is exposed to will see:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>Reduced clean-up costs</i> ◆ <i>The maintenance of strong, financially viable entertainment precincts as the image and perceptions of safety improves.</i>
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ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Environmental Pillar	<p><i>We expect that activities that reduce the alcohol-related harm that our community is exposed to will see:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>Reduced demand on cleaning services as a result of alcohol-related damage and vandalism</i> ◆ <i>Reduced noise pollution</i>
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CULTURAL VITALITY

Cultural Pillar	<p><i>We expect that activities that reduce the alcohol-related harm that our community is exposed to will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>Maintain the vibrancy of the area</i> ◆ <i>Decrease the amenity disruptions to residents and local businesses.</i>
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SOCIAL EQUITY

Social Pillar	<p><i>We expect that activities that reduce the alcohol-related harm that our community is exposed to will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>Reduce the incidence of violence</i> ◆ <i>Improve safety for people in public areas</i> ◆ <i>Improve amenity for residents</i> ◆ <i>Reduce drink driving and residents' risk of being injured or killed in traffic crashes</i>
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4.1. Policy and legislative implications

- 4.1.1. The updated principles of the Nightlife Policy support Council's position on alcohol and entertainment areas and provide a sound framework for the draft 2008 City of Port Phillip Alcohol Action Plan
- 4.1.2. The State Government's 12 month moratorium on new late night licenses in this area and new local government planning provisions that allow the impact of existing and proposed licensed venues as valid amenity considerations in planning decisions, opens an opportunity to review issues of licensed venue density and its impact on amenity. There is an opportunity

to amend the land use planning scheme to assist with the reduction of alcohol related harms, waste clean ups, vandalism and other amenity disruptions at night.

- 4.1.3. There is also an opportunity to use this process to review Council's local laws concerning the public consumption of alcohol.
- 4.1.4. There should be no other significant policy or legislative implications as a result of the adoption and implementation of the CoPP Alcohol Action Plan.

4.2. Risk implications

- 4.2.1. The endorsement of this draft action plan will assist Council to further identify and develop strategies to mitigate risks. A risk management framework will be used to assess proposed actions.

5. PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

5.1. Internal

- 5.1.1. A Councillor Briefing was conducted on June 23, 2008 which indicated that the draft policy framework and proposed new areas for action were consistent with Councillor's understanding of the issues. Other managers and staff from Environment and Renewal, Health & Amenity, City Development, Community Development, Governance & Community Relations and Economic Development have been consulted and have indicated their support for the directions and proposed new areas for action.

5.2. External

- 5.2.1. We propose to conduct consultations with many members of our community over the next three months to gain comment and ideas particularly regarding Local Laws restricting times of alcohol consumption in public spaces and the recording and analysis of Police and Liquor Licensing data. A proposed consultation timetable follows:

Police	Interview	July
Liquor Licensing Victoria (LLV)	Interview	July
Licensed Venue Operators	Accord	August
Other Business Owners, business associations and or landlords	Focus groups or telephone surveys	August
Residents	Street interviews or phone surveys	August
Welfare Agencies	Drugs Roundtable or additional forum & follow up interviews	August
Patrons	Interviews on streets or in venues (if permitted)	August
Public Transport & Taxi Operators	Interview	August

6. IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1. The consultation will commence during July and report to Council in September with recommendations.

7. COMMUNICATION

- 7.1. Council has a policy framework and action plan that works with the community, Police and State and Commonwealth governments to reduce the disruption to residents and to improve safety, while still supporting the identity of the city as a lively music, arts and entertainment hub.
- 7.2. There are two parts to the communication of this action plan. The first part needs to communicate that we are seeking public comment on the current and new proposed actions.
- 7.3. The consultation period will be advertised in the Port Phillip Leader and provide information to ASSIST, at Council and community centres and on the internet.
- 7.4. The second set of messages needs to promote the findings and directions of the action plan, so we can promote the vision and recruit help from across the community. These messages and other messages in the final action plan will be communicated via a variety of channels including a public launch, the intranet and internet, a media release, a Diversity article and information for ASSIST staff.

8. RECOMMENDATION

That the Strategy and Policy Review Committee recommend that Council resolve to:

- 8.1. That the Council resolves to endorse the updated 2008 Nightlife Policy principles, the four objectives of the draft City of Port Phillip Alcohol Action Plan and the current strategies that it contains, as contained in the attachment.
- 8.2. That Council reviews the feedback from our community consultation, the findings from our exploration into new strategies and receives a final Alcohol Action Plan during the September cycle with a process of review and monitoring over the next 12 months.

Draft City of Port Phillip Alcohol Action Plan

Principles

- I. Harm minimisation, collaboration, partnerships and holistic approaches guide our response to improve the management of our entertainment precincts. We will invest heavily in building trusting and supportive relationships between all stakeholders;
- II. Recognize and support the City of Port Phillip Liquor Licensee's accord as a major influence and partner in achieving better outcomes for all;
- III. Best practice standard planning conditions will continue to be developed and promoted to assist owners to take a preventative approach to noise and other issues;
- IV. Acknowledge that behavioural change cannot wholly be achieved by legislation and promote the (behavioural responsibilities of patrons in and around licensed venues;
- V. Promote a mix of retail, culture and entertainment late into the night which attracts a diverse range of groups through the adoption of structure plans for each activity area which address the clustering of particular uses such as bars and nightclubs;
- VI. Ensure safe urban design and provision of amenities, especially lighting and public toilets;
- VII. Promote and support initiatives with the State government such as Safe Taxi ranks and public transport solutions after midnight particularly on weekends and public holidays;
- VIII. Ensure a coordinated and compassionate response to critical incidents that enables strengthened prevention strategies that are within our realm of influence
- IX. Acknowledge the positive contribution that evening and late night uses make to the economic health and cultural vitality of our city. Our policy aims to enhance these positives and minimize any negative impacts on residential amenity.

Objectives

- Reducing violence;
- Reducing negative health impacts;
- Improving amenity for all;
- Safeguarding the local economy and the cultural & entertainment life of the city

Draft City Of Port Phillip Alcohol Action Plan

OBJECTIVES (Some actions address more than one objective)

V = reducing violence

H = reducing negative health impacts

A = improving amenity for all

E = safeguarding the local economy and the cultural & entertainment life of the city

Part 1: Existing Strategies

a) Building, planning & infrastructure			
Objective	Action	Aim	Status
A V	1. <i>Improve the consistency between planning, liquor licensing and kerbside dining controls (City Development)</i>	To simplify requirements on licensees by clarifying controls and achieving more effective action by Council and police.	Ongoing
A V E	2. <i>Trial a Safe Taxi Rank in Fitzroy Street (Economic Development)</i>	To provide a safer, quicker method for patrons to travel home after visiting licensed venues. It also helps clear the streets more quickly of people who may be intoxicated.	Trial to be completed in 2008
A V E H	3. <i>Improvements to public transport (Environment & Renewal)</i>	Advocacy and implementation to improve public transport infrastructure in and around the city, including entertainment precincts.	Ongoing as funding opportunities arise.
H A	4. <i>Lighting of Fitzroy Street precinct (Environment & Renewal)</i>	To improve safety and amenity	Audit completed. Design work to be undertaken 2008/09
A H E	5. <i>Implementation of South Melbourne master plans (Environment & Renewal)</i>	To improve safety, amenity, ambience and economic performance of the precinct.	Implementing through capital and operational programs.
A H E	6. <i>Implementation of master plans for South Melbourne, (Environment & Renewal)</i>	To improve safety, amenity, ambience and economic performance of the precinct.	Implementing through capital and operational programs.

Draft City Of Port Phillip Alcohol Action Plan

a) Building, planning & infrastructure (cont.)			
Objective	Action	Aim	Status
E A	7. <i>Preparation of the St. Kilda Activity Centre Structure Plan (City Development)</i>	To ensure coordinated development in the precinct by providing an integrated framework for assessment of development proposals.	To be completed in 2009
E A	8. <i>Development of Fitzroy Street master plan (Environment & Renewal)</i>	To improve safety, amenity, ambience and economic performance of the precinct.	Draft August 2008. Final document December 2008.

(b) Shared community responsibility for reducing alcohol-related harm			
Objective	Action	Aim	Status
A V E	9. <i>Management of the Liquor Licensees Accord (Community Development)</i>	To encourage the promotion of responsible service of alcohol and the maintenance of high standards of behaviour in and around licensed premises.	Ongoing
A V H	10. <i>Protocols and integration with Victoria Police (Health & Amenity)</i>	To improve responsiveness and resolution of issues by liaising closely with the police to agree responses to issues of concern.	Ongoing
V H	11. <i>Implementation of the Local Drugs Strategy (e.g., community education sessions on alcohol) (Community Development)</i>	Work with the community to address local drug issues. A free session for local parents featuring adolescent psychologist, Dr Michael Carr-Gregg will be held in September.	Ongoing
A V E	12. <i>Development of St Kilda Triangle operating plan (inc. operation of licensed venues) (Environment & Renewal)</i>	The development of best practice management protocols with licensees and other operators located at the St Kilda Triangle site (also includes areas such as security and waste management).	Discussions are continuing
H	13. <i>Drugs Roundtable</i>	Conduct at least 4 meetings each year inviting guest speakers and the community to discuss and respond to local drug and alcohol issues	Ongoing

Draft City Of Port Phillip Alcohol Action Plan

(b) Shared community responsibility for reducing alcohol-related harm (cont.)			
Objective	Action	Aim	Status
AHE	14. <i>National Local Government Drug & Alcohol Advisory Committee (Mayor & Community Development)</i>	Contribute to and learn from a National Committee that works to minimize drug and alcohol-related harms in local government areas across Australia	Ongoing
A V	15. <i>Response and advocacy regarding ICEPT recommendations (including transfer to IMAP as appropriate) (Health & Amenity)</i>	To achieve regional consistency in developing and implementing effective responses to the recommendations of the Inner City Entertainment Precinct Taskforce	Ongoing (note that many recommendations do not sit with local government)

(c) Cleaning			
Objective	Action	Aim	Status
A	16. <i>Street cleaning and refuse collection (Manager, Infrastructure Services)</i>	Clean streets and pavements. Removal of refuse.	Ongoing

(d) Local laws			
Objective	Action	Aim	Status
A H V	17. <i>Implementation of local laws banning street drinking between 11pm and 7am and at other events (e.g., St Kilda Festival) (Health & Amenity)</i>	To reduce alcohol-related offences on the streets.	Ongoing
A H	18. <i>Compliance with local law, planning and health requirements (Health & Amenity)</i>	Inspection and enforcement to support compliance with local laws, health, planning and road safety legislation.	Ongoing

Draft City Of Port Phillip Alcohol Action Plan

Part 2: Potential Strategies

a) Building, planning & infrastructure			
Objective	Action	Aim	Status
A V	19. Review the land use planning scheme for entertainment precincts (City Development)	Develop land use planning guidelines that address the cumulative impact of existing and proposed licensed premises (inc. operating hours and number of patrons) on the amenity of the area.	To commence in 2008
A H	20. <i>Install a new public toilet in Fitzroy St (Environment & Renewal)</i>	To reduce the prevalence of public urination around the Fitzroy St entertainment precinct	Consultation regarding the location is continuing.
A V E	21. <i>Review the Safe Taxi Rank in Fitzroy Street (Economic Development)</i>	Explore opportunities to locate new safe taxi ranks in other areas, such as South Melbourne, if the Fitzroy St trial is successful	To commence in 2009

(b) Shared community responsibility for reducing alcohol-related harm			
Objective	Action	Aim	Status
A V H	22. <i>Protocols and integration with Victoria Police (Health & Amenity)</i>	To review existing protocols with police in light of new Victorian Alcohol Action Plan and potential changes to local laws.	To commence in 2008
H A V	23. <i>Proposed St Kilda Social Inclusion Project (Community Development)</i>	Work to improve life opportunities (e.g., health, employment, skill development) of local homeless people or St Kilda residents living in social housing	Its status will be confirmed in August 2008
A V	24. <i>Evaluate the 'Enjoy Don't Destroy' campaign (Governance & Community Relations)</i>	Evaluation of a campaign that aimed to deliver a consistent message, particularly to the 18-23 demographic, in regard to visitor behaviour	Evaluation to be completed in 2008.

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(c) Cleaning			
Objective	Action	Aim	Status
Cleaning services will continue as normal. No new actions are proposed at this stage in this category.			

(d) Local laws			
Objective	Action	Aim	Status
A H V	25. <i>Review of local laws banning street drinking (Health & Amenity)</i>	To reduce alcohol-related offences on the streets.	Council to consider review of current local law and possible review of hours of operation.

Appendices

- a. Summary of Victorian Alcohol Action Plan Actions**
- b. Background paper**
- c. Local Government Strategies**
- d. Process Map**

a. Summary of Actions

Summary of actions within *Restoring the balance – Victoria's alcohol action plan 2008–2013*

	Initiative	Actions
1) Restoring the balance for families	<p>More support in mainstream health services to help people reduce their drinking early.</p> <p>Providing the best quality care for more serious alcohol use problems.</p>	<p>1.1 Establish an early alcohol intervention program</p> <p>1.2 Produce information for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities</p> <p>1.3 Develop a Koori alcohol plan</p> <p>1.4 Implement the Blueprint for alcohol and other drug treatment services</p> <p>1.5 Respond more effectively to clients with co-occurring mental illness</p> <p>1.6 Extend shared-care models and promote primary care settings</p> <p>1.7 Introduce extended-stay withdrawal programs</p> <p>1.8 Introduce family therapeutic interventions</p> <p>1.9 Develop a community corrections alcohol program</p> <p>1.10 Introduce new legislation to provide for involuntary detention</p>
2) Restoring the balance within our culture	<p>Sustained community awareness to change community attitudes and encourage a safe and sensible approach to alcohol use.</p>	<p>2.1 Develop a community awareness campaign</p> <p>2.2 Support the distribution and uptake of the revised <i>Australian alcohol guidelines for low-risk drinking</i></p> <p>2.3 Introduce more effective alcohol and other drug education in Victorian schools</p> <p>2.4 Support the Good Sports Program</p> <p>2.5 Introduce warnings on alcoholic energy drinks</p>
3) Restoring the balance for our community	<p>Properly enforced controls on the sale and marketing of alcohol.</p> <p>Preventing and reducing the consequences of excessive alcohol use such as alcohol-fuelled violence.</p>	<p>3.1 Enhance enforcement of the <i>Liquor Control Reform Act 1998</i></p> <p>3.2 Review liquor licensing fees</p> <p>3.3 Review obligations of managers and employees of licensed premises</p> <p>3.4 Consider introducing underage operatives</p> <p>3.5 Review compliance with the <i>Voluntary water guidelines</i></p> <p>3.6 Develop an assault reduction strategy</p> <p>3.7 Introduce late-hour entry restrictions</p> <p>3.8 Freeze issuing of late-night liquor licences</p> <p>3.9 Implement new security camera regulations</p> <p>3.10 Review patron numbers in high-risk venues</p> <p>3.11 Amend the <i>Victoria planning provisions</i></p> <p>3.12 Consider a new rehabilitation system for high-risk drink-driving offenders</p> <p>3.13 Extend the zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit for young drivers</p> <p>3.14 Conduct the Safe Streets public safety research and pilot evaluation</p>
4) Restoring the balance in partnership	<p>Working with the Commonwealth and other state and territory governments to address alcohol-related issues on a national level.</p>	<p>4.1 Conduct research into alcohol product packaging and labelling</p> <p>4.2 Reduce young people's exposure to alcohol advertising</p> <p>4.3 Explore actions to address secondary supply</p> <p>4.4 Review the alcohol content in ready-to-drink-products</p> <p>4.5 Support including alcohol in the National Illicit Drug Strategy Drug Diversion Initiative</p> <p>4.6 Enhance alcohol diversion programs for young people</p>

b. Background

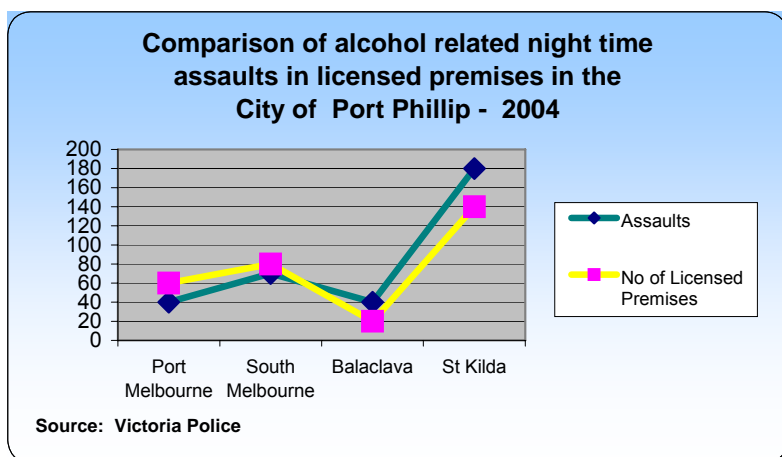
Background Context Paper on Reducing Alcohol-related Problems in the City of Port Phillip

Alcohol-fuelled anti-social behaviour has received lots of public attention across Australia recently. Many high-profile alcohol-related incidents have occurred in the City of Port Phillip, such as the arrest of AFL footballers for assaulting police in Port Melbourne, assaulting hotel patrons in Fitzroy St, urinating in public in St Kilda Road and the death of former Australian cricketer, David Hookes, by a St Kilda hotel security guard in 2004. There are thousands more incidents here each year that don't make the news.

CoPP has one of the heaviest concentrations of licensed venues in Australia and has a long-standing reputation of being one of the country's most exciting nightlife destinations. We now have more than 600 licensed venues – an amount that has tripled since 1994 and more than double the State and Southern Metropolitan Region average. Each month hundreds of thousands of visitors come to Port Phillip for a good night out, although many leave without that experience.

The Major Alcohol-Related Harms:

1) **Assaults** - There is a clear link between assaults and alcohol consumption. State assault figures for 2006/07 rise steadily after 6pm Friday and peak in the early hours of Saturday & Sunday mornings (ie. 12 midnight to 5am). Of the 31,020 assaults across the State, 1,535 occurred in licensed premises, 8,793 in streets, 687 in open space and another 1,700 on public & other transport. Alcohol was also present or strongly suspected in 43% of family violence incidents. Local police have recently reported that over 90% of assaults are alcohol-related and that CoPP's assault rates have increased this year by 9% and are expected to rise even higher. Backpackers appear to be both a significant offender and victim crime group. The figure below shows that our local assault rates have mirrored the density of alcohol outlets in our suburbs with the most profound entertainment precincts.



2. **Drink Driving** - Police have reported that drink driving offences are 5 times higher in the City of Port Phillip (1 in 25 over 0.05) compared to the Victorian average (1 in 125). They target CoPP entertainment precincts rather than major highways.

3. **Hospital Admissions** - Turning Point (2005) figures demonstrated that Port Phillip residents have significantly higher rates of alcohol-related hospital admissions indicating that it is not just visitors who drink at unsafe levels.

4. **Underage Drinking** – There is much evidence that alcohol can adversely affect the health of people under 18 and set up future heavy drinking patterns. The issue of extensive underage drinking in CoPP has not come to our attention, although there is no reason to believe that its prevalence here is any different to other parts of Melbourne, except that the concentration may be smaller as we have a relatively smaller proportion of teenagers compared to other LGAs.

5. **Other** - Various other anti-social incidents are commonly reported during times when local alcohol use is high. These incidents include public urination, vomiting, abusive language, vandalism, excessive noise and amenity disruptions.

What does the research say?

The research on the most effective proven methods of curbing alcohol related harm can be summarised as “What works is not popular and what’s popular doesn’t work”. A presentation from Turning Point at our Drugs Roundtable summarised the research in the table below:

Good results	Mixed results	Poor results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment / intervention for dependent & non-dependent drinkers • Increasing policing and enforcement (feedback / audits / increasing policing) • Increase drink driving counter-measures • Accords & Forums <p>There’s some evidence that lock out policies decrease alcohol related violence (QLD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible service of alcohol programs (RSA) • Increase pricing & taxation • Decrease physical availability (outlet density) and reduce trading hours • Increase minimum purchase age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accords and forums are increasingly popular. There is some evidence of effectiveness when police are involved. Few have been rigorously evaluated • Regulating alcohol promotion • Legislative bans / limitations: some evidence ↓ consumption / harm levels • Self regulation has no impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public education/ counter advertising has limited evidence of less drinking or alcohol related harm • Unlikely that effective campaigns can be developed within realistic budgets • Promoting alcohol free events has no impact on youth alcohol consumption • School based programs do not produce behaviour change

These strategies are limited to strategies that have been empirically tested. Other strategies may work but have not yet been thoroughly evaluated. It is clear that the most effective measures require State and Federal Government support.

c. Local Government Strategies

LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES TO REDUCE ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM

1. Ban on Public Alcohol Consumption

Many LGAs have sought to reduce the volume of intoxicated people in their streets by banning public alcohol consumption. Most do this for all people at all times in heavily populated areas (e.g., Cities of Melbourne, Stonington, Adelaide).

The City of Port Phillip has attempted to introduce a more sophisticated approach by implementing local laws that differentiate among people who drink in public at night on their way to or from licensed venues or during large scale events (e.g. St Kilda Festival, Grand Prix, New Year's Eve) from chronic street drinkers (e.g., homeless or poorer people with alcohol dependencies). Council has attempted to be sensitive to the circumstances of chronic street drinkers, not wanting to victimise or criminalise them for being poor, mentally ill or alcohol dependent.

Chronic street drinkers are generally marginalised people with an alcohol dependence. Some may be brain injured, mentally ill or use alcohol as a way of coping with past traumas or their despair regarding their current or future circumstances. Many drink in public places to relieve boredom or acquire a cheap form of entertainment. They head to where the local action is in places such as Fitzroy St for social contact or to "people watch", in the same way that others come to Fitzroy St to watch them. Others drink on the streets because they are either homeless and have no other options, cannot afford to drink in bars, live in cramped conditions where it would be uncomfortable or too noisy to have more than a couple guests or simply prefer to get outdoors into the fresh air. Street drinking is often the public interface between the tensions that exist between rich and poor in our community. Much of their behaviour is similar to that which you would find in bars, though it is exposed to public scrutiny. However, sometimes street drinkers' behaviour is offensive and abusive and many people perceive groups of street drinkers as intimidating and scary.

Street drinking is most prominent in St Kilda, but also occurs frequently in suburbs such as Balaclava, South Melbourne and Garden City.

The City of Sydney has an interesting model that makes similar distinction. It has banned street drinking in its most popular streets and surrounds, but allows it in other places. This strategy also includes advocacy for the provision of more treatment and alternative activities for chronic street drinkers (e.g., wet houses – places with activities such as pool tables where people can turn up intoxicated, but can't drink on site, so they gradually sober up over time).

Other ICEPT LGAs' Positions on Public Alcohol Consumption

Council	Position
Melbourne	24 hours a day all year in CBD. Discretion outside of the CBD
Stonington	24 hours a day all year throughout the LGA, unless you have a permit
Yarra	Only restrictions in designated areas in designated times (e.g., festival or a formal public gathering)

2. Licensees Accord - The City of Port Phillip's Licensees Accord has been operating since 2002 and has widespread support from Victoria Police, Liquor Licensing Victoria and the majority of our big hotels

and nightclubs. It has provided over 1500 bar staff with free Responsible Serving of Alcohol training, produced reports of local safety indicators; and initiated discussions on methods of making bars safer, including preparing a training package 'Venue Safe' to address antisocial behaviour within venues.

3. Drugs Roundtable & Community Education – The City of Port Phillip's Drugs Roundtable has operated since 1999. It merged with our Local Drug Forum in 2006 and focussed less on illicit drugs and more on alcohol in 2007. It often features guest speakers on specialised topics and includes workers from many of our agencies whose clients struggle with drugs & alcohol (e.g., health & welfare agencies, legal services, police). The Local Drug Strategy has also produced public education on drug and alcohol issues, including a drug and alcohol related trivia night for parents by Dr Michael Carr-Gregg. In 2008, we are preparing a community forum for parents of 12-17 year olds to help them develop strategies to better deal with alcohol-related issues and their children; and another forum to help parents cope with children who have already developed problematic drug and alcohol use. These will be run in conjunction with the Kilbride Centre, Family Drug Helpline & Council's Youth services.

4. Local Laws - Currently the City of Port Phillip has a local law that bans public drinking between 11pm and 7am and at certain events, such as the St Kilda Festival.

5. Building & Planning regulations - State Government recently amended "the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) Clause 52.27 and consequentially all planning schemes. This change means councils can develop local policies to guide planning permits that ensure licensed premises are situated in appropriate locations, and that the amenity impact of the proposed licensed premises is considered made a very important decision about alcohol regulation in the planning system. Throughout Victoria there have been frustrations at councils' inability to control the immense harms in terms of violence, noise and amenity problems in our entertainment precincts and beyond." (Goss from Gross, no 79)

6. Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) - The feasibility of CCTV was recently investigated for Fitzroy St. It was found that the installation and monitoring of CCTV was very expensive (approx. \$40,000 for the cameras and \$40,000 plus electricity per year to monitor each street) and that there was no guarantee that the systems prevented violence or other anti-social behaviours.

7. Other Areas Where Council May Influence Alcohol-related Harms - There are many other areas of council that deal with alcohol-related issues that could be involved in any widespread response to reducing alcohol-related harm. These include areas that deal with young people, sports clubs, cafés & restaurants, Fitzroy St Taskforce, festivals, public transport, and pedestrian safety.

The Next Steps:

Council has developed a draft Alcohol Action Plan to consolidate and update the actions it performs to reduce alcohol-related harm. This will be open to community consultation during July and August and a final Alcohol Action Plan will be available by September, 2008.

d. Process Map

