



# CIVIC TRUST NEWSLETTER

April 2007

## CIVIC TRUST AGM

1pm, Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2007  
TMK Consulting Engineers  
103-105 Waymouth Street Adelaide

## MURRAY-DARLING BASIN MANAGEMENT

Prior to the Premier's announcement of this strategy on 31<sup>st</sup> January, the Civic Trust published a call for an independent non-political body to manage the basin (The Advertiser, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2007):

*"The first step toward managing the Murray-Darling basin is not difficult to see. Management of the basin is a management issue. Inadequate management in the past has led to a system which is degraded, affecting first the environment and subsequently us.*

*The over-arching need is to analyse and resolve this problem.*

*Politics and the economy are only some of the tools we can use. Farming practices are another. The free market is essential, but has limits, as environmental needs are quite separate from environmental needs.*

*A viable management solution has to be based on science and the ecology of the region. Political pressure and ad hoc ideas such as weirs, which address single issues to the exclusion of others, are almost certain to add to the problem.*

*Even a national political approach, which may be more coordinated than the present states' one, would be subject basically to the same political pressures.*

*Australian has expertise in its primary river system. A management authority utilising this expertise, with appropriate support, must be implemented without delay. The only viable political solution is to legislate an independent non-political body with the practical knowledge and the expertise to manage the basin. Anything less is an unacceptable distraction.*

Darian Hiles

Chairman, The Civic Trust Inc."

## ADELAIDE'S (LACK OF) INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

The council of the Civic Trust is concerned about the lack of adequate planning for infrastructure, services and events in Adelaide. This includes the absence of a transport plan, sudden ad hoc developments such as the tramline extension, announcements of major buildings in the parklands with very poor substantiation and well away from existing sporting venues, an interstate rail terminal in perhaps the most desolate spot in the Adelaide city area, a new interstate bus terminal with no connection with rail, interminable indecision on Victoria Square, the lack of a public meeting place, etc., etc. This lack of planning is self-destructive, as every new idea is seen as out of context and therefore criticised as such.

The council wishes to address the need for planning for infrastructure. Views or interest in participation by members are most welcome. See the back page for contact details.

## VICTORIA PARK GRANDSTAND

The following submission was made to DTEI:

*"The Civic Trust was created to provide independent evaluations of modern developments, of which the proposed permanent Supercar Race infrastructure in Victoria Park is a classic example. Last year the Trust gave a brickbat to the current temporary race infrastructure on the grounds that it was detrimental to the Park for 5 months of the year. Clearly a permanent facility is an even larger problem.*

*Adelaide was created as a city surrounded by an urban park. This park is the most spectacular aspect of the plan of Adelaide and has been maintained intact for 170 years, resulting in a unique identity that is considered potentially of world heritage significance.*

*A large permanent facility is obviously not sympathetic to an urban park, particularly when the aim is to construct multi-storey buildings and extensive hard surfaces in its largest open space for one of the most polluting activities of modern times and a major contributor to greenhouse gases.*

*This would be not only detrimental to the Park Lands but would also send a very poor signal about South Australia's environmental priorities and integrity*

*If we wish to have motor racing, then let's find a solution in an appropriate area and not degrade a vastly more significant asset in the process"*

In addition a letter was sent to the Advertiser with a drawing of the grandstand superimposed to scale on the image published recently of the Chinese project in Chongqing where the home owner was holding out against the excavations of the developers. The grandstand was considerably bigger than the Chongqing excavation:

*"The current temporary grandstands used in Victoria Park appear to have been quite adequate.*

*However a permanent replacement would certainly be attractive to the commercial participants, particularly if it is funded over 80% by taxpayers and ratepayers and subsidised by community land to the value of hundreds of millions of dollars.*

*The consultation process has been effectively bulldozed and the proposal is for Victoria Park to follow. To give an indication of the result, this composite picture is an approximate indication of the size of the "shorter" building of 200 metres proposed by the Adelaide City Council in comparison with the Chinese project in Chongqing reported in The Advertiser 4/4/07 p46."*



## CIVIC REVIEW CEREMONY: OCTOBER 2006

Hosted by the Hon Jack Snelling, Speaker







# HUMAN WELLBEING

Following the public project in 2005/06, the following paper has been submitted to the State Strategic Planning Group and discussions are proceeding on its possible use in the State Strategic Plan...

**WELLBEING** is both internal and external.

Internal factors may be direct (e.g. basic physical and mental health) and indirect (our personal success in creating happiness, self-esteem, satisfaction, etc).

External factors of our living environment are also direct (social, urban and environmental) and indirect (our success in relating) – to the food we eat, the air we breathe and the community we live in.

These factors of internal & external, and direct & indirect, may be considered as four basic pillars of human wellbeing:

**Health** (basic physical & mental health) and **Spirit** (happiness, self-esteem and aesthetic & spiritual satisfaction) as the internal factors and

**Environment** (interactions with the natural & urban environment) and **Society** (social security and a sense of belonging) as the external ones.

Measures within each area and methods of support will vary widely. For example internal issues such as physical health and happiness would normally be determined by the individual but if there are congenital, educational or other unavoidable external influences then external issues need to be considered.

Similarly the natural environment and social security are usually external factors but they can also be directly affected by the individual and in return then have a direct impact on one's personal health and spirit.

## MEASURING AND PROVIDING SUPPORT

Most measures today are related to economic issues but it is clear that when considering these areas we need to go beyond simple economics. For example:

### 1 HEALTH: Physical & Mental Health

Initial *measures* of health may be by individuals, who may then approach the medical profession if necessary. Thus the medical industry has significant data related to the health of the population.

Statistics, surveys of the population, research and community attitudes provide additional measures and may have unexpected outcomes, such as obesity identified as a health issue through a wide range of observations and general discussion.

*Support* for improving health ranges from individuals to the medical profession, sport & recreation activities, the media, general education, personal finances, etc.

### 2 SPIRIT: Happiness, self-esteem and aesthetic & spiritual satisfaction

Recognised and objective *measures* have not been developed for these areas. Usually individuals

themselves are the best indicators of success, so a survey type of approach appears to be the most reliable.

However the *support* of these qualities involves the community, the government, the environment and the workplace.

### 3 ENVIRONMENT: Interactions with the natural & urban environment

*Measures* of the qualities of these environments and their effect on people may be through official statistics and also reports by government, NGOs and research organisations.

But the *support* of the natural and urban environments varies dramatically, as one is based on ecosystems and the other on direct human control.

### 4 SOCIETY: Social security, sense of belonging, etc.

The social network underlying human wellbeing is very complex and varies between different cultures. Social security *measures* are well developed in many western societies and include statistics, the economy, work and community opportunities, personal finances, ownership, etc., while the sense of belonging is more developed in community interest groups and religious and many non-western cultures.

Thus the *support* for social wellbeing is often qualitative and more amenable to discussion than measurement. Institutions such as services, law & order and town planning form part of the base for such support, and some measures are available.

## SUMMARY

(1) We have no universal measures of human wellbeing, and in particular the economy measures only the subset related to monetary transactions.

(2) Each of the four basic areas identified above is needed in its own right. Thus it is not desirable for, say, physical health to be above an accepted level but happiness to be below. In other words, we cannot take point scores, add them up and be satisfied if the total is above a certain figure, as in fact the totals in *each* of the widely varying measurement systems *all* need to be above a generally agreed level.

## RECOMMENDATION

A structured set of working parties be established through a collaborative venture between the Civic Trust and the SA Strategic Plan Initiative to identify in more detail the elements of human wellbeing and to recommend processes for monitoring and supporting them.

The results be adopted as a unique South Australian Wellbeing Index and as a key driver of the South Australian Strategic Plan.