

THE FUTURES WE IMAGINE



VPELA STATE PLANNING CONFERENCE
27 & 28 AUG 2026 | MANTRA LORNE | WWW.VPELA.ORG.AU



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THE FUTURES WE IMAGINE

The places we inhabit today were once ideas on paper – visions of how cities, towns, infrastructure and landscapes might grow and evolve. Some of those futures became reality. Others did not. As Victoria faces new challenges – housing supply, climate adaptation, regional growth, infrastructure investment and changing community expectations – the role of industry in imagining and shaping the future has never been more important.



DAY 1 THURSDAY 27 August 2026	
8.15 onwards	Registrations / Coffee Cart – <i>Proudly sponsored by Extent Heritage</i>
9.00	Smoking Ceremony (on the lawn) – Eastern Maar Peoples
9.15	Welcome to Country – Plenary – Eastern Maar Peoples
9.30	Welcome & introduction – Anna Borthwick, Partner KPMG and Conference Convenor MC Day 1 – Will Bromhead, CEO Ratio
9.40 – 10.30	<i>How to ensure the streets we build today are helping us to stay healthy as well as being fit for our future needs.</i> Lucy Saunders, Founder of Healthy Streets UK In this session Lucy Saunders will show us how our streets need to be designed to meet our basic health and wellbeing needs at present but also in the future. She created the Healthy Streets Approach, an evidence-based framework for delivering welcoming streets in which all people can choose to travel actively. <i>Proudly sponsored by Eukai</i>
10.30 – 11.00	MORNING TEA – <i>Proudly sponsored by S & K Planning</i>
11.00 – 12.00	<i>From Traffic to Trust: How AI is Redesigning Safer, Smarter Cities</i> Rita Arrigo, AI Strategist AI is reshaping three critical domains at the heart of the built environment: planning, environmental law, and traffic engineering. This keynote explores how AI is moving these disciplines beyond static models, fragmented processes, and retrospective analysis–toward faster scenario exploration, real-time insight, and more adaptive, evidence-based decision-making. The question is no longer whether AI will shape these disciplines – but how professionals across planning, law, and engineering can apply it responsibly, defensibly, and at scale. <i>Proudly sponsored by Hall & Wilcox</i>
12.00 – 1.00	LUNCH – <i>Proudly sponsored by Ratio</i>
1.00 – 2.00	<i>Building a sense of Community in Developing Countries</i> Dean Landy, Partner, ClarkeHopkinsClarke For more than two decades Dean has worked within Australia and internationally, he has been a leading figure in mixed-use and community design, masterplanning new cities and town centres, and urban regeneration. Dean will speak to the importance of an education and his passion for the creation of a sense of community in the places we live and work.
2.00 – 3.00	<i>Imagining and Reimagining: Transforming precincts and the places in between</i> As we grapple with rapid change and how to make space for growing communities, the city of the future is already being built right now. We explore examples of how we’re already reimagining spaces and innovating the design processes that created them – from adaptive reuse to urban residential and beyond. In this session you’ll meet some of the people behind the vanguard of ‘21st century’ planning and design and leave with the power to think differently. Facilitator: Emily Mignot, Communications & Engagement Strategist, Tract Panellists: Angie Darby, Senior Development Manager, Property Plenary Ana Sá, Principal, Global Sector Leader – Residential, Woods Bagot Niall Cunningham, Executive General Manager – Precincts, Development Victoria Theo Della Bosca, Development Director – Built Form, Frasers Property Australia Janis Fischer, Director, Landscape Architect, Tract <i>Proudly sponsored by Urbis</i>
3.00 – 3.30	AFTERNOON TEA
3.30 – 5.00	IN FOCUS SESSIONS
<i>Cultural Immersion Experience (walk off-site) Facilitators: Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation</i> <i>Proudly sponsored by Contour Consultants</i> <i>Building Smarter: Modern Methods of Construction and the Circular Economy Shaping the Future of Development</i> <i>Proudly sponsored by Hansen Partnership</i> <i>We Tried This in Another Country: What Travels, What Fails and What Sticks – learnings from international planning and design experts</i> <i>AI, Modelling, Smart Networks and the next Generation of Transport Engineering</i>	
5.15 – 6.30	Mentoring, Lorne bowling and meet and greet – <i>Proudly sponsored by Alex Iljin</i>
6.30 – 9.30	Dinner at the Lorne Hotel – <i>Proudly sponsored by Traffix Group</i>

DAY 2	FRIDAY 28 August 2026
7.30	Get Active – Optional activities available to delegates – Meet in the foyer at 7.30am Running Cycling – <i>Proudly sponsored by Russell Kennedy</i> Paddling/Surfing/Swimming/Yoga
7.00 – 9.30	BREAKFAST – Located in the restaurant
9.00 onwards	Registration Day Two / Coffee Cart - <i>Proudly sponsored by Biosis</i>
9.45	Welcome & Introduction to Day 2 – MC – Carly Robertson, Victorian Bar
10.00 – 11.00	Getting ready for future justice – what's new at VCAT and the County Court of Victoria Judge Suzanne Kirton, County Court of Victoria and Vice President of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) Deputy President Carol Daicic, Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) Justice institutions around the world are being challenged to deliver more with less – driving innovation in the way disputes are managed and resolved. Courts and tribunals are rethinking traditional processes, embracing technology, and placing greater emphasis on appropriate dispute resolution and early issue identification. Parties and practitioners are increasingly expected to play an active role in the efficient administration of justice. As these disputes grow in scale and complexity, proceedings are becoming more digital, adaptive and user-centered, reshaping the future delivery of justice. This session explores recent innovations and initiatives by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal and the County Court of Victoria and considers what the future may hold.
11.00 – 11.30	MORNING TEA
11.30 – 1.00	IN FOCUS SESSIONS
	Modern Methods of Research – James Aloj, Senior Engineer, onemilegrid – Streets for the People Environmental Tour of Point Grey Redevelopment <i>Proudly sponsored by Fyfe</i> Dr Who? PhD Candidates from the RMIT Centre for Urban Research Where do I even start? Understanding & navigating the ICP system in the context of recent change <i>Proudly sponsored by UPco</i>
1.00 – 2.00	LUNCH – <i>Proudly Sponsored by Best Hooper</i>
2.00 – 3.00	Shaping the Future: Transforming Geelong into a Global Innovation Hub Cameron Hamilton, Director, Hamilton Group Join us for an inspiring session with Cameron Hamilton , the visionary leader of the Hamilton Group, as he as he shares his journey of transforming Geelong into a thriving innovation hub. <i>Proudly sponsored by Harwood Andrews</i>
3.10 – 4.10	Jelena Dokic Former world No. 4 tennis player, Australian broadcaster, tennis analyst and public speaker Jelena Dokic is a powerful symbol of resilience and triumph. Her story is one of unimaginable hardship and extraordinary courage – a reminder that even in the darkest moments, we have the strength to rise.
4.10	Conference Close Anna Borthwick, Partner, KPMG and Conference Convenor
4.30	AFTERNOON TEA
7.00	Pre-dinner drinks
7.30 – midnight	Gala Dinner – Theme: <i>Back to the Future</i> (open to interpretation!) Featuring <i>The Daedels</i> <i>Proudly sponsored by Foley's List</i> Presentation of Paul Jerome Award <i>Proudly sponsored by Contour Consultants</i>

Keynote Speakers



LUCY SAUNDERS
Founder of Healthy Streets UK



RITA ARRIGO
AI Strategist



DEAN LANDY
Partner, ClarkHopkinsClarke



JELENA DOKIC
Former World No. 4 tennis player, Australian broadcaster and tennis analyst



JUDGE SUZANNE KIRTON
County Court of Victoria,
Vice-President, VCAT



CAROL DAICIC
Deputy President, VCAT



CAMERON HAMILTON
Director, Hamilton Group

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