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PRESS RELEASE

From Vision to Reality for the Valley

Urban Futures Consulting has been awarded the contract to develop a real time digital model for the Maribyrnong River Valley Project.

As part of the Melbourne 2030 strategy, the Valley Project commits the government to reviewing and strengthening policies and planning controls along the Maribyrnong River. The project brings together State government, the Cities of Melbourne, Maribyrnong, Brimbank, Moonee Valley, Hume, key organisations and the community to shape and plan the river's future.

The Maribyrnong Valley provides both visual relief and variety for Melbourne's west, with opportunities for recreation and tourism as well as protecting significant natural systems. The purpose of the Valley Project is to develop the long term vision for the river valley into Urban Design and Landscape Guidelines to ensure protection of the river valley from inappropriate development, environmental degradation and loss of natural and cultural heritage assets. UFC's expertise in applied use of 3D urban simulation models to achieve better urban design outcomes will be a valuable asset to the process of developing the Guidelines.

UFC has found that the real time models have particular value for testing development proposals within a broad context, particularly where it is difficult to determine precise impacts or opportunities. Director Stephen Axford, who is recognized as one of the State's most influential urban designers in his own right, explained, 'we find that being able to decide where you go in the model and what you want to look at is the most important advance'. Fellow Director Christine Wallis added that, 'the ability to display the models in large format Virtual Reality means they are fantastic collaborative tools, ideally suited to interactive workshops with both professionals and community, and can simplify the writing of Guidelines by using a visual experience to communicate the objectives.'

Urban Futures Consulting is an independent commercial company that has an agreement with RMIT University to develop and market digital visualisation techniques for the urban planning and development industry. They work with Australia's leading team of modelers from the Interactive Information Institute, RMIT who are at the forefront of real time urban simulation techniques. The UFC team brings a unique mix of technological innovation, urban design, landscape, social and cultural planning expertise that is providing new approaches to building better urban environments. The team is ideally suited to the Valley project with their experience in developing practical and cost effective approaches to urban simulation for planning and design.



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