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CoRBA - Melbourne Coalition of Residents and Business Associations

Carlton Residents Association Inc.; Docklands Residents Association; EastEnders Inc.; East Melbourne Group Inc.; Hardware Precinct Residents and Tenants Group; Docklands Chamber Commerce; Kensington Association; Melbourne South Yarra Group Inc.; North and West Melbourne Association Inc.; Parkville Association Inc.; Residents 3000 Inc.; Residents Rights; Southbank Residents Association; Collins Street Precinct; Docklands Chamber Commerce; Melbourne Business Council; Residents Rights; Yarra Park Association

April 6, 2011

Lord Mayor and Councillors
Town Hall
City of Melbourne

Dear Lord Mayor and Councillors

Re License renewal for the Melbourne International Flower and Gardens Show(MIFGS).

On behalf of the CRA Carlton Gardens Reference Group and CoRBA-Melbourne, I wish to submit the attached document for your consideration.

We are aware that CoM is challenged in relation to this event because of the threat posed by successive State governments to take control the site and the event. We note that the CoM invests heavily in the event with grants and in-kind subsidies. We also note that Council has an obligation to use its public assets wisely and extract appropriate return for commercial exploitation of public assets.

In preparation for the MIFGS re-licensing negotiations, we wish to present to Council community concerns relating to the financial aspects of this event. After such an extended period (12 years now) certain attitudes towards the event, its value, attractiveness, siting and its funding arrangements have evidently become entrenched. We are concerned that comprehensive information on the economic aspects of the event is not made available to the community. We are also concerned that recent reports (Weekend Australian Financial Review March 25-26 p.26) make it clear that current methodologies in calculating cost-benefit analyses of such events are being widely questioned by academics and economists.

We request that the attached Submission be given due consideration and we also request that we be advised when the re-licensing matter will come before the relative standing committee so that we may apply to speak at that meeting.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Jackie Watts
Convenor CRA Reference Groups
On behalf of The CRA Carlton Garden Reference Group & CoRBA-Melbourne