

City of Melbourne Draft Open Space Strategy

Planning for future growth

Information Leaflet and Feedback Form | November 2011 to February 2012

The City of Melbourne's draft Open Space Strategy is the municipality's first planning guide for publicly owned land. It takes into consideration projected population increases and builds on the city's sustainable living principles.

The purpose of the Open Space Strategy

The Open Space Strategy will provide an overarching framework and strategic direction for our unique and valuable open space network over the next 15 years. The strategy identifies future open space requirements and provides the basis for a fair and equitable open space contributions policy.

What is open space?

For the purposes of this strategy, open space is publicly owned land that is set aside primarily for:

- recreation
- nature conservation
- passive outdoor enjoyment
- public gatherings.

This includes public parks, gardens, reserves, waterways, publicly owned forecourts and squares.

The importance of open space

Melbourne is recognised as the most liveable city in the world. The amount and quality of the city's open space is integral to this liveability. In a recent household survey undertaken as part of the strategy's development, many people indicated that they live in the City of Melbourne because of its open space.

Open space is important for many reasons. Open space:

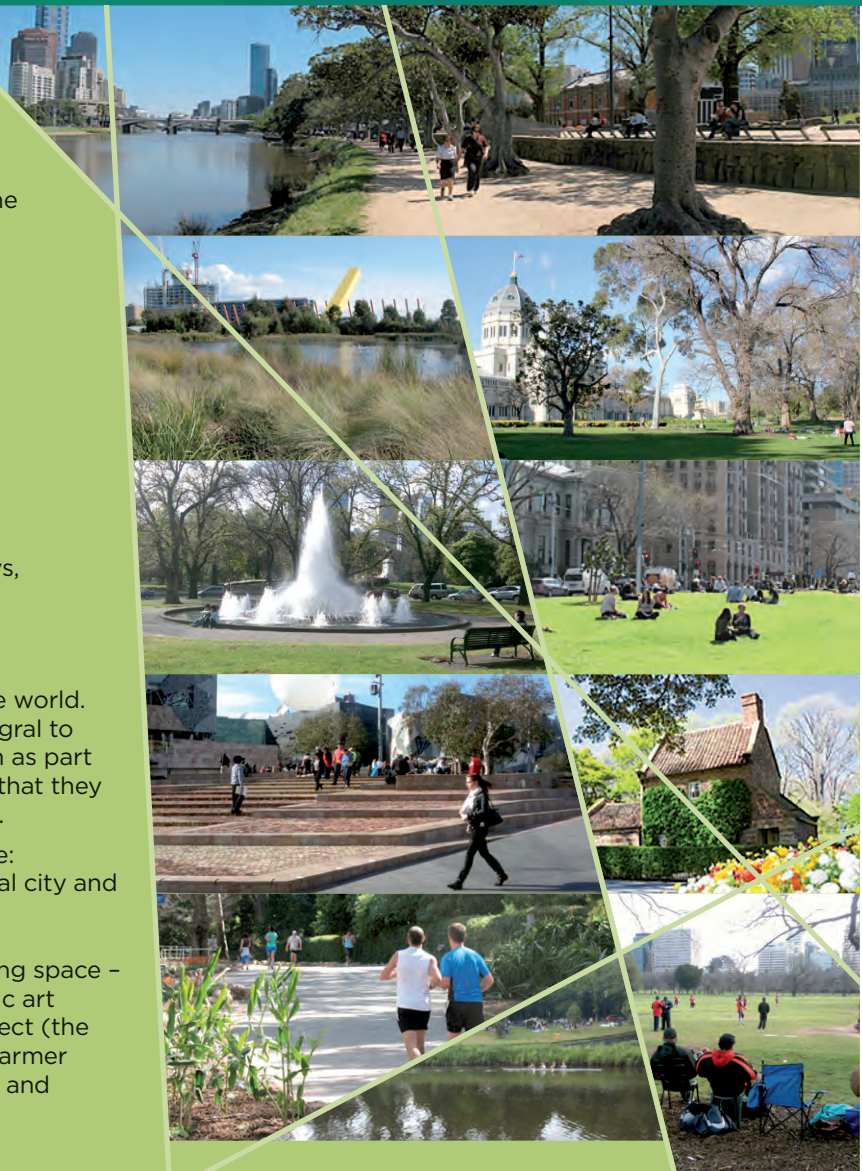
- contributes to the identity and character of the central city and local neighbourhoods
- improves physical and mental health and wellbeing
- allows people to connect by providing public gathering space – including locations for events, performance and public art
- keeps the city cooler by offsetting the urban heat effect (the build up of heat in urban centres, including staying warmer overnight, compared with surrounding outer suburbs and rural areas)
- strengthens biodiversity values
- includes natural features as a contrast to built form
- brings economic benefits and attracts tourism.

How to find out more and comment

- This leaflet provides a summary of the Draft Open Space Strategy. If you are looking for more detail, you can download a copy of the strategy at www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/parks. Hard copies are also available for viewing at the Melbourne Town Hall and at all City of Melbourne libraries and service centres.
- To comment, either complete the feedback form contained with this leaflet and return it via freepost; or download a

feedback form at www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/parks and email it to openspace@melbourne.vic.gov.au

- Attend a community information session in February 2012. Dates and locations will be listed on the City of Melbourne website and advertised in the local media.
- Call the City of Melbourne's Urban Landscapes team on (03) 9658 9658 or email openspace@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Melbourne's existing open space network

The City of Melbourne is located on the traditional land of the Kulin Nation. For the Wurundjeri, Boonerwung, Taungurong, Djajawurrung, and the Wathaurong groups who form the Kulin Nation, Melbourne has always been an important meeting place for events of social, education, sporting and cultural significance.

The major open spaces in Melbourne were set aside at the time of European settlement from 1842 onwards including Royal Park, Princes Park, Flagstaff Gardens, Royal Botanic Gardens, Fitzroy Gardens, Treasury Gardens, Domain Parklands, Fawcner Park and Carlton Gardens. These larger reserves are synonymous with the character of Melbourne as are the more contemporary open spaces including Federation Square, Southbank Promenade and Birrarung Marr. The waterways and harbours including the Yarra River, Maribyrnong River, Victoria Harbour and the Moonee Ponds Creek are regularly used for recreational activities and recognised for their biodiversity and habitat corridor values.

Major festivals and events including major sporting events are held in Melbourne's open space and form part of the image and identity that contributes to the City of Melbourne's reputation as the world's most liveable city.



Existing Open Space Diagram

Summary of the community survey outcomes

In July 2010 more than 1,770 residents completed surveys about Melbourne's open spaces. Feedback received included:

- Open spaces in the City of Melbourne are highly valued by the community including for their diversity, close proximity to homes, character and its contribution to the city's identity.
- The most popular open spaces include the Royal Botanic Gardens, Royal Park, Carlton

Gardens and Fitzroy Gardens.

- Small local parks and urban squares are the most frequently visited on a daily and weekly basis, with the larger reserves and gardens popular for use on a monthly and annual basis.
- Trees are the most valued feature of open space.
- Open space is highly valued as a

place to relax and unwind and be outdoors.

- Walking paths, open grassed areas and seats are the most frequently used facilities.
- Areas such as the central city, North Melbourne and West Melbourne were identified as needing more open space.

What will change?

Forecast population growth

The City of Melbourne is planning for its future growth. By around 2026, the city's residential population could increase by around two thirds and the worker population by about one third. Melbourne's Municipal Strategic Statement outlines the city's future growth plan, with a large proportion expected to occur in designated urban renewal areas. Population growth will lead to the need for more open space in some areas, particularly in the west and south of the municipality.

Overall population change

👤 = 50,000

Residents:

- 2011 (98,162)
- 2026 (164,832)



Workers:

- 2010 (429,392)
- 2022 (563,492)



Open space relative to population density change

■ = 10m²

Open space per resident:

- 2011 (55.4m²) ■■■■■■
- 2026 (33.7m²) ■■■■

Open space per head of population (resident + worker):

- 2011 (10.5m²) ■
- 2026 (7.6m²) ■

What will change? (cont'd)

Climate change is predicted to result in more extreme weather patterns. The urban heat island effect is the build up of urban heat in urban areas as shown in the diagram. During the heat wave in early 2009, urban heat was a serious problem in Melbourne. Urban renewal will drive increased urban densities and the future population will be accommodated in multiple-level buildings with a focus on compact urban form to promote mixed use and walkable neighbourhoods. Provision of open space with natural features through these new neighbourhoods will help offset the build up of urban heat.

The paved and built surfaces absorb heat during the hot summers



The open space provides a cooler space during the hot summers

Overnight the lack of open space traps the stored heat radiating from the built surfaces

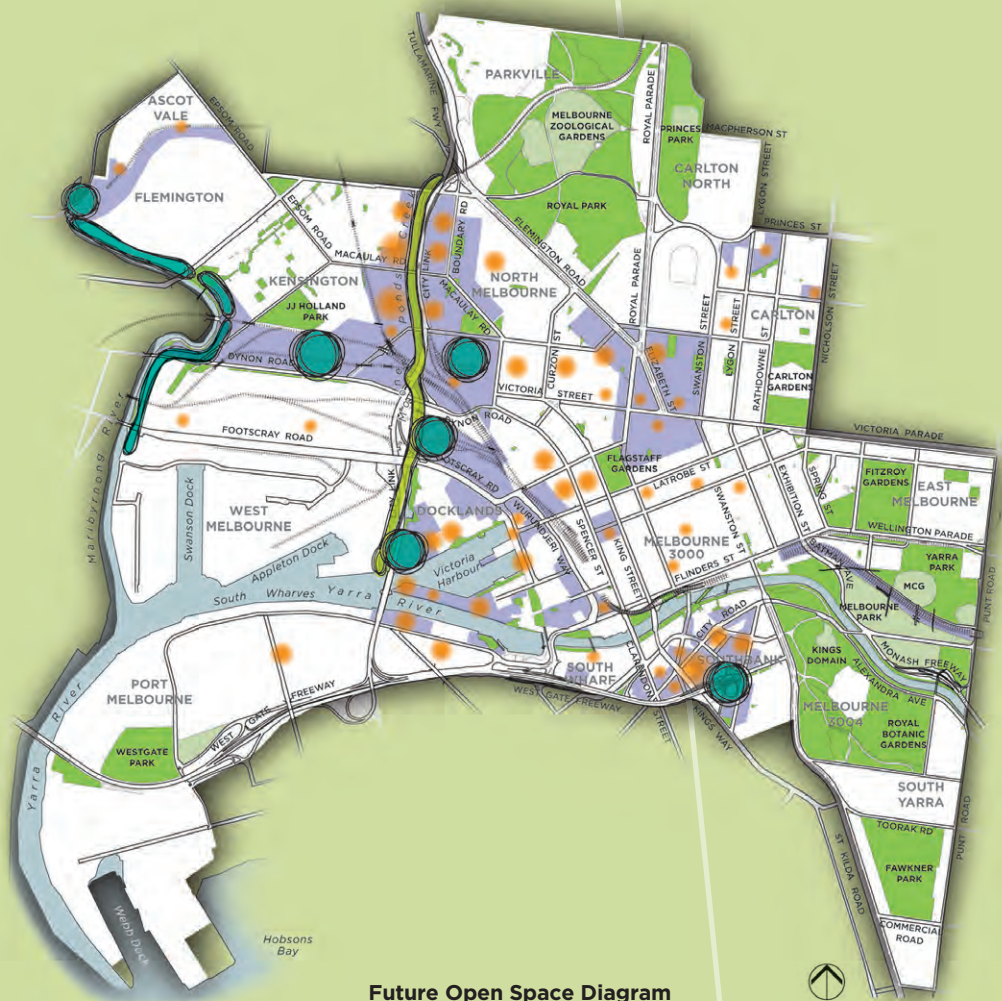


Overnight the open space allows the city to cool with evapotranspiration from the moisture in the trees and natural surfaces

Overall directions

DIAGRAM KEY

- Indicative area in which future Neighbourhood open space is proposed - minimum 1 hectare in size with a 500m walkable catchment
- Indicative area in which future Local open space is proposed - minimum 0.26 to 0.9 hectare in size with a 300m walkable catchment
- Indicative area in which future Small Local open space is proposed - minimum 0.03 to 0.25 hectare in size with a 300m walkable catchment
- Indicative location for proposed Capital City, Regional & Municipal open space
- Improved open space corridor along Moonee Ponds Creek
- Existing open space
- Restricted open space
- Urban Renewal Areas (Source: Draft Municipal Strategic Statement)
- Waterways/Harbour



Future Open Space Diagram

Maintain and expand a quality open space network

Melbourne enjoys a diverse, high quality and highly valued open space network. As the municipality changes and grows the following key actions will be required:

- Add to the open space network to provide a diversity of open space for multiple uses including at the local neighbourhood and the broader municipal level.
- Review the design and function of some existing open spaces to improve the diversity of character and range of facilities, and to mitigate urban heat.

- The City of Melbourne will facilitate partnerships and commitment from key players including the Victorian Government and the development sector industry to deliver additional well located and designed open space, based on future growth projections.
- Implement a fair and equitable open space contribution program based on achieving the *Overall direction* and include a contribution rate in the City of Melbourne Planning Scheme that will apply to new development.



Overall directions (cont'd)

Provide distributed open space within easy walking distance

Open space located within an easy walk (a 10 to 20 minute walk without the need to cross major roads or railways) means that children and people of differing levels of mobility can easily reach and regularly visit open space. To achieve this the following actions are required:

- Add to the open space network to provide open space within an easy walk of the majority of people living and working in the City of Melbourne, as illustrated on the Future Open Space Diagram.
- Ensure an adequate diversity of open space is located within safe and easy distance to meet local community open space needs. This includes different sized areas of open space, areas of quiet and contemplative spaces, gathering/meeting spaces, areas for informal fitness and exercise, and others with club-based sporting facilities.

Improve community health and wellbeing

Well designed and located open space can encourage people outside into open space, contributing to their physical and mental health and wellbeing including:

- Provide open space nearby to encourage people to participate in organised sport.
- Provide a diversity of facilities that encourage informal activities.
- Provide a diversity of facilities that encourage people of all abilities to participate in social and physical activities and events.
- Provide gathering and meeting places for people to socialise in open space.
- In urban neighbourhoods provide some natural features in open space including large canopy trees, garden beds and grassed areas as a break from built form and to provide cooler spaces during summer.

Provide additional Capital City open space in urban renewal areas

This is primarily to recognise and support the City of Melbourne as the most liveable city in the world, with its status as the Capital City of the State of Victoria. To achieve this:

- Provide additional Capital City open space in the western part of the municipality, expanding on the network and quality of open space already established to the east of the central city. This includes open space that has the capability to hold events, festivals and become visitor destinations.
- Locations are indicatively shown on the Future Open Space Diagram.

Provide additional Municipal open space in urban renewal areas

Primarily provided and designed for club-based sporting facilities, these types of open space are currently under-supplied in some urban renewal areas. To address this:

- Provide additional Municipal open space in larger urban renewal areas for community club-based or organised sport and recreation.
- Set aside the larger land areas required for these reserves early in the future planning process for urban renewal areas.
- Locations are indicatively shown on the Future Open Space Diagram.

Mitigate urban heat island effect and improve environmental values

Regularly distributed areas of open space that support large canopy shade trees, garden beds and wetland/water features can have positive effects by cooling the localised area. Actions to achieve this include:

- Distribute open space through urban neighbourhoods with natural features such as large canopy trees and planted surfaces keeping the spaces cooler in the summer.
- Continue to implement sustainable water harvesting and re-use initiatives to improve sustainable water management in open spaces.
- Treat urban runoff where feasible in open space and improve the quality of receiving waters including the waterways, harbours and Port Phillip Bay.
- Improve biodiversity values along waterway corridors, including Maribyrnong River and Moonee Ponds Creek.

