

Central City Urban Forest



Consultation Outcomes 2013

Background

The City of Melbourne has been collaborating with the community to develop an urban forest precinct plan to guide greening in the Central City for the next decade. Feedback to date has come from:

1. Community workshop at the Multicultural Hub, May 4
2. Online conversation at melbourneurbanforest.com
3. Online conversation at melbourneurbanforest.crowdmap.com

The workshop included 70 adults and 3 children from the community. The online consultation website received 4,371 separate visits over the consultation period.

What We Were Told: Community Workshop, 4 May

Important Landscapes

- Princes Bridge
- City Baths
- Carlton Hotel rooftop
- Melbourne Town Hall
- William Street (between Bourke Street and Collins Street)
- Collins Street (between Swanston Street and Spring Street)
- Highlander Lane
- Exhibition Street (between Bourke Street and Collins Street)
- Fitzroy Gardens
- Carlton Gardens South
- Parliament Reserve
- Small park on Howard Street
- Church garden on Bourke Street
- St Michaels garden
- State Library of Victoria (frontage) – warm, sunny, grass, trees
- Flagstaff Gardens – trees, open space , grass, sunshine
- ANZ Plaza
- City Square – a communal space; plane trees
- Southbank Promenade
- Vertical garden off Little Lonsdale Street
- Along the Yarra River at Birrarung Marr and Flinders Street Station
- Queen Victoria Village
- Patch gardens (NY style) often connected to historic monuments (e.g. St Michaels and Russel and Collins streets)
- Pop-up patches at Birrarung Marr – children/family access, growing gardens
- Canopy of plane trees on Queen Street (between Lonsdale Street and Little Collins Street)
- Plane trees in Bourke Street

- Elm trees on Collins Street
- Alexandra Gardens – trees, open space, sunshine
- Swanston Street trees
- Tree at Kino Cinema on Collins Street
- Lemon scented gums at Federation Square
- Treasury Gardens – fig trees, gum tree
- Botanic Gardens oak trees
- Gum tree at Federation Square on Princess Wharf

Hopes for the Workshop and Precinct Plans

- More trees, but a safe environment.
- No plane trees.
- Build on small spaces e.g. rooftops gardens, pop-up gardens; laneway gardens.
- Small gardens on lots of spaces.
- Tree species and possums.
- Elizabeth Street - creek
- Colour in our cities.
- Green wall gardens.
- Make hidden spaces more inviting.
- Keep oaks and elms.
- Native plants to provide habitat.
- Make it easier for governments to build rooftop gardens.
- Council to recognise every citizen as a custodian of the land.
- Bush corridors.
- Reuse wood that is cut down.
- Concern over loss of trees in private space.
- Concern about water sources.
- Aggressive renewal of avenues.
- Form guardianships to take care of areas.
- Contrasting, large and diverse species.
- Concern over sustainability of current forest.
- Temporary green spaces.
- Make more of public gardens for community gardens.
- Southern Cross Station - more green.
- A yearly report on the status of the forest (e.g. reporting on how many trees planted).
- Use walls of high rise car parks and make them green.
- Planning permits take into consideration Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) as a priority.
- Rail yards adjacent to Federation Square.
- Spencer Street - improve.
- Queen Victoria Market car park.

Locations for More Greening

Participants in table groups were invited to mark on a large map the areas they regarded as a priority for introducing trees, edible elements, improving soil, priority areas for birds and other green elements. Feedback indicated that the entire City should be considered for new opportunities and a complete list of the locations submitted is provided in Appendix 1.

Each table was given a set of the same thirty three. The photos acted as prompts to convey ideas of a desired future. Each table was asked to divide the photos into three groups based upon the urban forest character they envisaged the Central City. Photos were to be grouped into the following:

- The photos that were generally agreed to best represent the future Central City were:



Urban Greenery

canopy diversity avenue green colour freeways

understorey planting seasonal shade canopy diversity avenue green colour freeways

diversity of species interest together autumnal flowers style of planting street seasonal age wires whimsy median good mix of species ambient street level diversity smaller trees that feed the birds combination of landscapes seasonal colour size native parkland uniformity shape green graceful and soft beauty

fruit trees dappled sunlight small trunks autumn colours architectural walking space tree placement small scale pop up gardens strength WSUD uniform age wires whimsy median good mix of species ambient street level diversity smaller trees that feed the birds combination of landscapes seasonal colour size native parkland uniformity shape green graceful and soft beauty

good for hanging Christmas lights continuous sunlight different LOVE it different paths for people and cars good street design branch height maintain character boulevard playground dense umbrella open high branches uniformity and variety strips beautiful groundcover to slow down honour not as monoculture

traffic slows down traditional elm avenue wild scrubby look space for people bird attracting trees complimentary red and green good for streets like Drummond Street where no trams and electricity Mobile but peaceful food to encourage birds delicate iconic somewhere edible structure blossoms tunnel

pedestrian / traffic traditional Melbourne recreation separation large trees

coverage jacarandas along freeways exotic value charming American scene traffic island greenery community garden laneways

lofty

The photos that were generally agreed (by 5 out of 6 tables) to represent an unwanted future:



Using the photos they had selected, each group was asked to draft a character statement and the results were as follows:

1. The Character we want for Central Melbourne is:
 - a. Beautiful
 - b. Honourable
 - c. Safe
 - d. Native
 - e. Separation
 - f. Valuable
 - g. Different
 - h. Robust
 - i. Reliable
 - j. Healthy
 - k. Don't allow the past to disable the future
2. The character we want for Central Melbourne is:
 - a. Wow
 - b. Lofty and uniform shape
 - c. With diverse trees
 - d. Street level diversity - colour, shape
 - e. Graceful and soft
 - f. Ambience and green
 - g. Variety, delicate
 - h. Colour and flowers - blossoms
 - i. Autumn colours for seasonal texture
 - j. Traffic island greenery
 - k. Mobile (street) but peaceful
 - l. Good match of diversity
 - m. Elegance
 - n. Healthy, robust
 - o. Future oriented, longevity
3. The character we want for Central Melbourne is:
 - a. inviting spaces for people (cool summer/warm winter)
 - b. for a variety of uses

- c. with colour, diversity, lushness, abundance, beauty
 - d. the character of forest like a cathedral of vegetative whimsy
 - e. traffic slows down
4. The character we want for Central Melbourne is:
- a. big canopy
 - b. some areas evergreen (wide road), some areas deciduous
 - c. variety of trees - different for promenade, laneways, small parks
 - d. water efficiency
 - e. romantic spaces under trees
 - f. movie-like trees, mysterious trees
 - g. community tree - celebrate birthdays. Plaque - donation (individual and corporations)
 - h. New building must plant 50 trees - doesn't have to be in front of it
 - i. Planter boxes under trees - give another layer of greens
5. The character we want for Central Melbourne is:
- a. Good combination of different landscapes
 - b. Habitat for humans - playful
 - c. Seasonal colour
 - d. Continuous green corridor
 - e. Provide a sense of place - "identity", Iconic" tree
6. The character we want for Central Melbourne is:
- a. Fitting trees and plantings to the available space
 - b. Giving:
 - c. Variety
 - d. Colour
 - e. Diversity of species
 - f. Shade
 - g. Native habitat
 - h. Low maintenance
 - i. Understorey where possible
 - j. Pedestrian friendly
 - k. More open space to be created
7. The character we want for Central Melbourne is:
- a. Traditional - elms
 - b. Colourful
 - c. Variety - exotic and native
 - d. Avenues
 - e. With
 - f. Structured
 - g. Parkland suited for community gardens/playgrounds
 - h. Laneways

8. Selection criteria:

- a. Variety of trees
- b. Centre planning
- c. Plantings at ground level other than grass - proper understorey
- d. Seasonal variety e.g. spring, autumn and deciduous
- e. Green
- f. Shady
- g. Colourful
- h. Integrated
- i. Sustainable buildings
- j. Deciduous
- k. Diverse plantings (source and scale)
- l. Under-planting
- m. Edible

What We Were Told: Online Conversation

The online conversation is continuing at melbourneurbanforest.com. Comments to date support:

- Increasing permeability
- Implementing incentives to encourage awning removals and use of long-term vacant land
- Greening tram tracks
- Increasing tree species diversity
- Understory planting
- More greening
- Low allergy species
- Edible trees
- Providing trees and other plantings to support native animals and birds
- Plant trees in Kingsway, Victoria Market carpark, Enterprise Park, Power Street, City Road, along the river adjacent to Flinders Street Station

Summary of Key Messages from Central City Consultation

The central city is full of opportunities for greening to create safe and inviting habitats for people. City spaces need to be multi-purpose, and tree planting or greening should be fit for purpose and creative. Achieving the vision for Melbourne's future urban forest is a shared responsibility and needs to be a collaborative effort between government, residents, developers, businesses and the community at large.

Desired future states defined by the community:

- Beautiful, safe, healthy, valuable, ambient, soft, elegant, whimsical, playful
- Diverse, different, colourful, seasonal, green - native, evergreen, deciduous
- Healthy, robust, long-lived, low maintenance
- Pedestrian amenity, inviting, multi-purpose
- Forest-like with greening everywhere

Urban forest benefits highlighted through community consultation:

- Shade
- Biodiversity
- Water capture and storage
- Food production
- Aesthetic beauty
- Opportunities for play and playfulness
- Pedestrian protection and traffic calming

Area Proposed for New Greening	Explanatory notes
Degraves Street	Replace umbrellas and heaters with trees
	Replacement of plane trees with some other trees (preferably indigenous). OHS issues/health
	Concern that climbing gardens will assist a fugitive/criminal (public safety concern)
	Use of planter boxes in high rises – Like Switzerland
	Have businesses “sponsor” a green area with their board as an advert
	Issues regarding maintenance of rooftop, vertical gardens etc.
	Soil quality – arsenic, lead and hydrocarbons. Where do you get clean soil?
Opposite Southern Cross Station	Make a garden out of bomb site.
Area bordered by Lonsdale Street, William Street Street, Collins Street and Spencer Street	Barren – Add green and colour
On edges of Flagstaff Gardens - Latrobe Street and William Street	Add plantings on edge
Little Bourke Street	Consider making some small streets pedestrian only so can put trees and green in the road.
Railway Place	Has high foot traffic and no trees for shelter. Noise barrier, aesthetics.
Swanston Street	Add colour. Add colour – like Town Hall
Victoria Street	Add plants
Wesley Church site - Lonsdale Street	Make public garden. Turn car park into green park/garden.
Area between Russell Street, Bourke Street and Little Collins Street	More Roof Gardens
150 Collins Street	Greening plans
Lane off Mackenzie Street	Trees were removed for development Requirements for developers: In the planning scheme must be compulsory to provide and maintain green spaces. E.g. developers not allowed to remove established trees
Carlton Gardens	No heavy structures for events
Balconies	Help citizens green balconies
Lanes bordered by Latrobe Street, Swanston Street, A'Beckett Street and Elizabeth Street	Need some greening
Building on corner of Flinders and Spring Street	Courtyard trees are all dying since govt depts. Took over the building.
Banana Alley	Greening the underpass
Extension of Bourke Street at intersection of Wurrundjeri Way and Harbour Esplanade	Pop-up gardens All need planters
Community gardens	Buildings in charge of rooftop gardens
Carlton Gardens	Fruit trees
More WSUD along footpaths	
St Francis Catholic Church	Make a park in car park

Area Proposed for New Greening	Explanatory notes
Pop-up gardens	Community based - If intersection too hot could use raised scaffold across a laneway to put garden for heat reduction on upper platform. Incentives for businesses to have pop up gardens outside shops/buildings under construction
Use fruit trees in various precincts	Beauty, amenity, fruit, deciduous, educational. E.g. Spanish towns
Parking areas on streets	Put stone paving with grass/vegetation. E.g. Gisborne Street
Parliament House	Grass, vegetation
Ensure all planning decisions are underpinned by environmental priorities.	
Identify every space and green it.	E.g. beside the MCG next to the railway line Approach private landowners to improve/create greening.
Queen Victoria Market car park	Put underground or a roof garden
Elizabeth Street	Bring back the creek
Vertical gardens throughout Central Melbourne	
Rooftop gardens throughout Central Melbourne	
West of Spencer Street	What a waste land
Old CUB site	Vertical garden
Errol Street primary school, Howard Street/Victoria Street, St Mary's church	rip up asphalt
City Square	Rainforest? Native fruit and nut trees e.g. plumpine, macadamia, lilly pilly
Plantings over train lines	
Identify empty spaces	Temporary gardens
Yarra River	How will bush corridors link river with parks?
	Cycle paths, but need somewhere to stop and enjoy sense of place
Elizabeth Street	Convert Elizabeth Street into water course with trams along the sides.
	Visitors require green spaces to sit and relax when visiting the city
Chinatown Plaza	Little pockets should be converted to green laneways
Small laneway off A'Beckett Street, near Elizabeth Street	Similar to the Hi Line in NYC. The Hi Line is a beautiful example of a run down space converted to a green urban master piece used by all New Yorkers.
Buildings opposite Southern Cross Station on Spencer Street	These eyesore buildings could be converted.
On all streets	Plants, as many trees as possible to make it a green promenade.
	Around current, new trees – surround them with lovely planter boxes like in Chicago and Vancouver. I've got photos if you want. y.singer@alfredorg.au

Area Proposed for New Greening	Explanatory notes
	On prominent street corners plant trees. No new buildings closer than 6 -2 metres to curb to open the streets.
	Grow more food, fruit trees, nuts, vegetables Experimental garden plots/character planting bees
Yarra River	Trees along the Yarra. Canopy will assist in reducing evaporation, create habitats for birds and other small species
Wurrundjeri Way and Collins Street	Trees here
Latrobe Street	add greenery, vertical garden?
Etihad Stadium	Adopt ideas from overseas cities
Tram stations	Small trees, flower boxes, "greenize" the tram stop, especially where there is only small trees
Facilities for bikes trailers on trams and trains	Vancouver – because has racks on buses This helps cyclists to halve their travel routes Also assigned carriages for bikes at rush hour times. This is so car spaces can be converted into tree plots. More streets can be converted into park and pedestrian spaces.
	Encourage people to adopt "sponsor a tree" to increase personal attachment to green space
Old CUB site	Big trees in centre
Corner of Swanston and Victoria Street	Green wall No Smoking
Alma Place	Planter boxes
Journey from CBD to Docklands is very barren!	
Over Victoria Street	Flowers in centre strip
Places where people working in the city can sit under a tree for lunch/coffee break/time out. On every corner!	
Latrobe Street (between Swanston Street and Elizabeth Street)	Plant trees on Copenhagen-style bike concrete pavement
ANZ plaza	Upgrade – lawn, herb boxes
Elizabeth Street	pedestrianised
Site opposite Southern Cross Station	Bomb site. Temporary pop-up garden
Flagstaff Gardens	More, better benches and BBQ Private property down pipes feed to WSUD of the park
Buildings off Little Bourke Street (near corner of Elizabeth Street)	Rankins Lane garden at end Garden on fire stairs Height of potted plants Public liability issues Type of plants Funds for gardens Rooftops and O/C Rates to allocate gardens Rebates? To encourage rooftop and wall gardens

Area Proposed for New Greening	Explanatory notes
State Library of Victoria	
	<p>Our group didn't know how to actually do it as didn't know Council regulations. We think Council should appoint a person to talk to residents/businesses about how to do greening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects • Rebates
	Vertical coordination across precincts – other municipal governments.
	<p>Small parks as productive space and social space. Small gardens – maintenance; ownership. Public space “regulation” for planting? Physical barriers regarding planting Security issues Watering Maintenance</p>
City Square	More green, less granitic sand.
	<p>Pop-up trees in planter boxes as on Southbank for instant greenery Rate/rebate for roof gardens please! More permeable pavement. Concrete waffles with grass in the spaces for car parks – best of both worlds.</p>
Old CUB site	Interim space
Opposite Spencer Street plaza	Market garden
King Street, Queen Street, Russell Street, Exhibition Street, Spring Street, Flinders Street Station, Bourke Street (between Swanston and Elizabeth), A'Beckett Street, Franklin Street, Queen Victoria Market	Centre planting of big trees with water systems
William Street (between Bourke and Lonsdale), Elizabeth Street (between Collins and Bourke), Collins Street (between Exhibition and Russell)	Make alternate sections streets trams - no traffic – trees and seats etc.
Bourke Street	Replicate Collins Street - different trees
City Square, Southbank and Yarra Promenade	Naturalise porous surface. Naturalise the banks
	Consider open space in roof gardens with public access. If unable to set buildings back to create on open space.
RMIT, Suncorp Centre	More vegetation
Kavanagh Street	Urban forest
Flinders Street Station on Flinders Street	Trees or wall garden
Cardigan Street, Lygon Street, Drummond Street	Add park spaces
Add park space in redevelopments	
Elizabeth Street (between Collins and Flinders)	No trees resizing
Queen Victoria Market car park	<p>Become an example of green car park Other carparks that we would like to see improvements - car park in Flinders Lane (near King Street) and Little Collins Street (near Spring Street)</p>
Spencer Street	Greening Spencer Street because it is an important entry to Melbourne

Area Proposed for New Greening	Explanatory notes
Latrobe Street	More trees
Flinders Street	More trees
King Street	Vandalism is King Street. Trees damaged for over 10 years
Market Street	Space for big trees – less road
Temporary greening of development sites (tub trees)	
Tram stops - trees	
Coordination of greening/ permeation of surfaces with all other infrastructure activities	
Carlton Gardens	Vegetable and community garden
Apartment owners – “green” balconies to create green walls	
Latrobe Street (between Russell and Exhibition), Swanston Street	More trees
Queen Victoria Market, Flagstaff gardens	More seating for people
Elizabeth Street	Trees at tram stops
Flagstaff Gardens	Communal gardens in parks
William Street (between Lonsdale and Franklin)	Walls greened?
Public education re necessity for greening our City	