

# **Summary report: Greening Southbank Community Participation**

**City of Melbourne**

**Saturday 18 April, 2015**

**Zinc at Fed Square, Melbourne  
9:30 am – 12:30pm**



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# 1. Executive Summary

The City of Melbourne is developing an urban forest precinct plan for Southbank, which will guide tree planting for the precinct for the next ten years. Community input is essential in the development of the plan - shaping the vision statement, planting priorities and future forest character for Southbank. Community involvement included a 3-hour workshop and month-long online engagement on the Participate Melbourne website.

## Workshop

The workshop was held by the City of Melbourne Urban Forest and Ecology Team for local community members to participate in the development of the precinct plan. On 18 April, 2015, approximately 90 community members attended a 3-hour Saturday morning workshop at Zinc at Federation Square, in Melbourne.

Participants were given a presentation on the urban forest and then asked to work together at each table on maps of Southbank to identify locations that were valued for reasons such as culture and heritage, nature and civic values. Later in the session, each table was asked to use those same maps to identify priority locations for tree planting. The mapping information will be used to guide locations for future tree planting.

The second task of the workshop was to create a 'vision statement' that defined each table's desired character for the future urban forest in Southbank. As part of this process each table was provided with a set of photos showing different trees in different landscapes. The groups were asked to select the images that represented their idea of the future urban forest in Southbank. Considering these images, the groups then worked to create a vision statement. Once finished, each table also was given the opportunity to share their vision with the room.

These vision statements will be used to define the overall vision and future urban forest character for the precinct and to guide the selection of an appropriate species palette for Southbank. Some key themes that emerged from this exercise were:

- Creating canopied corridors for pedestrians and wildlife
- Contributions from private landowners and developers to green the private realm
- Amenity both at a street level and looking down from above
- Offsetting the current dominance of built form with green
- Designing for water capture and permeability wherever possible
- Stimulating the senses – texture, colour and fragrance
- Creating human-scale places for people to be, to offset the large-scale development and traffic-oriented public realm

Participants were advised that their work would be used to develop a draft precinct plan that will be made available for public comment prior to being finalised. The draft plan and a summary consultation report will be made available at [participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au).

## **Online Participation**

The community were asked to participate in the Southbank urban forest conversation throughout the month of April. Using the new Participate Melbourne platform, the three activities from the workshop were replicated online.

During the month-long consultation time, 280 people visited the Southbank Urban Forest participation page. 50 people made contributions to the page.

Key themes for online participants were:

- Greening medians
- Offsetting/mitigating the built form
- Green roofs
- Community spaces

## 2. Background

The City of Melbourne is seeking community feedback and input into the development of an urban forest precinct plan for Southbank, which will guide tree planting in the area over the next ten years. As part of the implementation of the Urban Forest Strategy, precinct plans will be developed for each of the City's ten precincts. To date, seven precinct plans have been completed, with Parkville, Southbank and Fishermans Bend to be completed this year. For more information on Melbourne's urban forest and the urban forest workshops, visit [melbourneurbanforestvisual.com.au](http://melbourneurbanforestvisual.com.au).

## 3. Participants

Around 90 participants joined Melbourne City Councillors and staff at the community workshop on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April at Zinc, Federation Square.

Staff included Councillor Arron Wood, Urban Landscapes branch manager Ian Shears, 9 City of Melbourne officers and two researchers from the Australian Research Centre for Urban Ecology (ARCUE).

## 4. Getting Started: Cr Wood

Councillor Wood formally welcomed the participants. The facilitator Yvonne Lynch explained that the objectives of the workshop were to:

- Understand how the community values the urban forest;
- Involve the community in setting priorities for tree planting in Southbank; and
- Develop a vision for the future character of the urban forest in Southbank to guide the planting strategy.

## 5. Presentation: Urban Forest Challenges and Opportunities, Ian Shears, City of Melbourne

This presentation provided an overview of the development of the Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) and an overview of the process that would guide the development of a plan for Southbank.

The process:

- Work with community to develop plans and guide tree planting.
- Protect and develop neighbourhood character.
- Prioritise works and budgets.

Key principles of the of the UFS

- Climate change.
- Population growth.
- Heat island effect.
- Design for health and liveability.
- Create healthier eco systems.
- Become a water sensitive city.
- Position Melbourne as a leader in urban forestry.

- Maintain and enhance Melbourne's cultural identity.

Overview of Strategies and targets (to 2040):

- Increase canopy cover.
- Increase urban forest diversity.
- Improve vegetation health.
- Soil moisture.
- Biodiversity.
- Inform and consult with the community.

To keep the workshop running on time, people who have any questions that were not directly linked to the workshop were advised by the facilitator to write down their queries on a whiteboard. The questions were then collected by the staff.



Figure 1 - Ian Shears presents to the workshop participants

## 6. Participatory Mapping – Places We Value

Participants were asked to introduce themselves to the other people at their table and to identify their favourite landscapes in Southbank. The Participatory Mapping methodology for this exercise was developed by Dr. Dave Kendal from ARCUE. The results are being used to guide the development of the precinct plans, and for Dr. Kendal's research to understand what people think about street trees in urban streetscapes.



Participants were provided with a sheet of stickers and a key that defined what each colour represented. Each colour sticker represented one of the following values:

1. **Civic:** These areas are important because they contribute to the identity of the city, make the city more welcoming or help market the city to national and international visitors.
2. **Natural:** These areas are important because they represent natural places where trees and other plants can grow, where birds, animals or insects could live, or natural processes can occur.
3. **Culture and heritage:** these areas are important because they represent human history and allow me or others to continue and pass down the wisdom and knowledge, traditions, and way of life of ancestors.
4. **Social:** these areas are important because they provide opportunities for meeting or being with other people for social or sporting activities.
5. **Life sustaining:** these areas are important because they help produce, preserve, clean, and renew air, soil and water and they provide shade and protection from wind or rain.

Participants used stickers representing each value to mark locations on a map of the precinct.



Image 1 - Participants place stickers on the Southbank map to show places they value

## 6.1 Valued Places

Participants were asked to place stickers representing one of five values (Civic, Natural, Culture and Heritage, Social, Life Sustaining) on maps of the Southbank precinct. An online version of the map was created on the Participate Melbourne website. Map 1 indicates all the places/streets which were identified by the participants as valued places.

The polygons were created in ArcGIS software by running a kernel density analysis of the sticker points and then converting those to polygons to show outlines of where values were located. For detailed maps on each value, please go to Appendix1.



Map 1 - Places valued by participants



## 6.2 Trees – More Greening Needed

Participants also used star stickers to identify locations that could be improved with greening. Again, this exercise was available for online participants. The locations are shown in Map 3. The areas identified by the community feed into the priority streets for greening in the precinct plan.



Map 2 - Places where more trees are needed

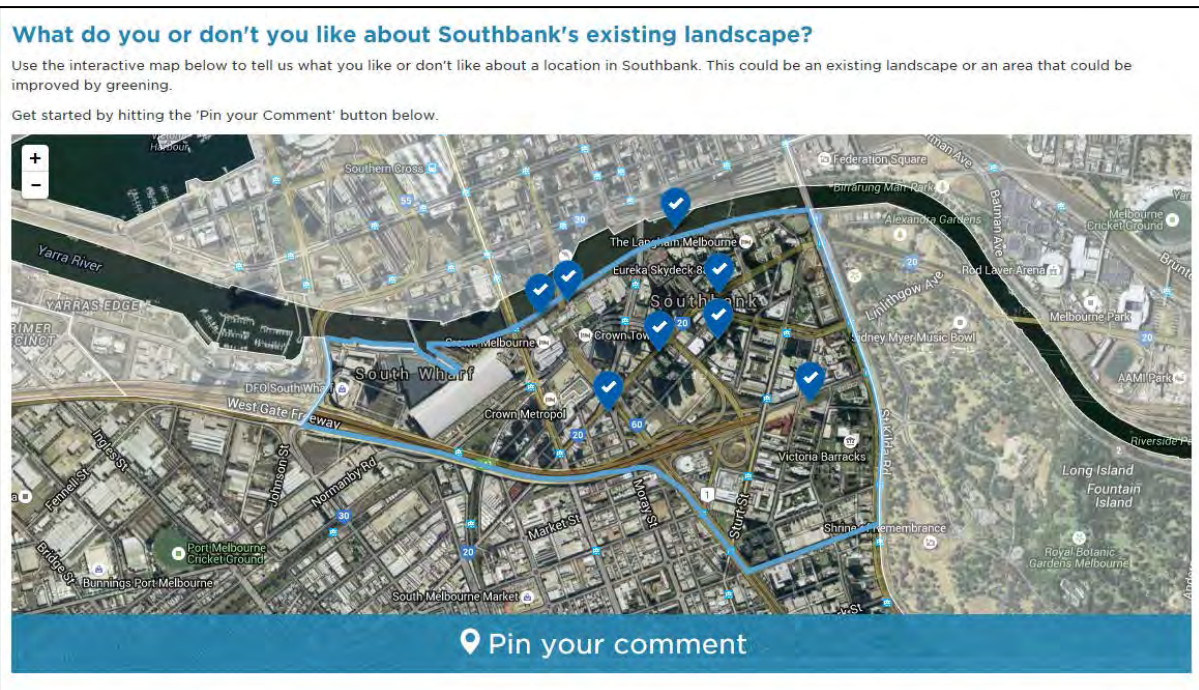


Image 2 - Online participants were able to mark places on the map that they value and that they think could be improved by greening

## 7. Presentation: Neighbourhood Character, Ian Shears, City of Melbourne

Ian Shears provided a second presentation on considerations for neighbourhood character and creating a diverse urban forest for the future.

The main concepts presented were:

A lack of diversity of tree species leaves the urban forest vulnerable to pests and disease.

- The urban forest is dominated by a few species, namely eucalypts, planes, elms and peppercorn trees.
- It is possible to maintain a particular character by using a diversity of species that share similar physical characteristics.

## 8. Designing Southbank's Urban Forest Character

Each table was given a set of the same 30 photos. Participants were asked to divide the photos into three groups based upon the future urban forest character they envisaged for Southbank. Photos were to be grouped into the following:

1. Photos that best represent the future of Southbank
2. Photos that represent the future you don't want;
3. Photos that you are unsure about or cannot agree upon.






Image 3 - Workshop participants decide which photos best represent their idea of the urban forest

The photo survey was also available on the Participate Melbourne website. The results from the workshop and online participation were aggregated to achieve a visual representation of the community's vision for their future urban forest.

**Photo questionnaire**

3 → How much does this photo represent your idea of Southbank's future urban forest?



1 2 3 4 5

Not at all Very much

0 of 28 answered

Image 4 - Online participants could also complete the photo survey

### 8.1 Photos that Best Represent the Future of Southbank



## 9. Vision statement for Southbank

Once each table had agreed upon a set of photos to guide their thinking, participants were invited to write a vision for Southbank's future urban forest. One member of each table read out their table's statement to the room.

These stories will be combined and used by Council to develop a vision statement in the Precinct Plan to guide future tree selection, design and urban forest projects in Southbank. Each vision is listed in the table below.





Image 6 - Participants work together to create their vision statements

## What is your vision for the future urban forest in Southbank?

Tell us your idea

**Username**  
Enter your username

**Email address**  
Enter your email

☒ I would like to stay up to date on this project

[Moderation Policy](#)

You have 140 characters left **Submit**

<p><b>Nance says:</b></p> <p>"Create a roundabout with a dense green centre in the hard grey dirty expanse on Clarendon Street where tram 109 turns left towards the CBD"</p> <p>7 May, 2015</p>	<p><b>naquick says:</b></p> <p>"Plant trees close together to soften the streetscape, in particular the hard, high walls the sit right up against Clarendon street"</p> <p>7 May, 2015</p>	<p><b>Justin45 says:</b></p> <p>"More rooftop gardens, more shady street trees down the medians and in the center of the road. Less concrete."</p> <p>3 May, 2015</p>	<p><b>charlie young says:</b></p> <p>"The roofs of all the buildings provide optimum space for gardens and trees should be planted on every street. Communal gardens/ allotments."</p> <p>1 May, 2015</p>
<p><b>mcne55 says:</b></p> <p>"Anything to do with community activities hall and maintenance for the existing gardens with a park nearby."</p> <p>30 April, 2015</p>	<p><b>Fatemeh says:</b></p> <p>"It needs to have more trees based on multicultural approach in centre of Melbourne as a multicultural city."</p> <p>24 April, 2015</p>	<p><b>sjoh says:</b></p> <p>"Greening across/in front the very bland looking apartments across City Road."</p> <p>21 April, 2015</p>	<p><b>phsok says:</b></p> <p>"If has a playground for children, a play centre for kids, ever road has bike tracks, more restaurants, more green areas with benches"</p> <p>16 April, 2015</p>
<p><b>Sherrill says:</b></p> <p>"Power Street between City Road and Queensbridge need lots of trees in the centre median strip"</p> <p>14 April, 2015</p>	<p><b>Jay says:</b></p> <p>"More greening around the World Trade Centre and in the South Wharf car park and shops. More under planting with grasses in streets."</p> <p>11 April, 2015</p>	<p><b>Marip says:</b></p> <p>"City Rd is a bit sad and grey looking. Also power street near City rd median strip is just sand. I thing green median strips along city road"</p> <p>10 April, 2015</p>	<p><b>Rod says:</b></p> <p>"More planting along Southbank promenade with cyclists banned to create a safe walking area as in the delightful West Vancouver promenade"</p> <p>9 April, 2015</p>

Image 5 - Online participants were able to contribute their own vision statements



Vision statement	Table number	Key words/themes
<p>The future urban forest in Southbank will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- encourage emersion within and from above</li> <li>- add depth to Southbank</li> <li>- add dappled light</li> <li>- contribute to the senses (more than just sight), smell, colour, texture</li> <li>- have irregularity to mitigate the built environment</li> <li>- capitalize on zones – not just linear and include understanding of wilderness</li> <li>- Parasitic – build on existing infrastructure and take over it with green</li> <li>- Have the potential to be moveable</li> </ul>	5	<p>Emersion From above Dappled light Smell Colour Texture Sensory Parasitic Moveable Wilderness Mitigate built form</p>
<p>The future urban forest in Southbank will be ‘opportunistic’, diverse and mulit-faceted – providing a full sensory experience. The forest should enhance livability, identity and a sense of place. There should be shady transport corridors for birds and pedestrians – connected by nature. Light, texture, diversity.</p>	3	<p>Opportunistic Diverse Sensory Enhance liveability Sense of place Pedestrian corridors Texture Light Support wildlife</p>
<p>Southbank’s urban forest will improve liveability and cultural richness, be attractive, diverse and improve microclimates for nature and people to help reduce car and building dominance.</p>	2	<p>Enhance liveability Rich Diverse Mitigate built form Support wildlife</p>
<p>The Southbank urban forest should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- area specific and appropriate</li> <li>- incorporate a precinct-wide strategy for capturing and reusing stormwater</li> <li>- allow for access to sunshine in winter</li> <li>- create small social, family spaces</li> </ul>	4	<p>Stormwater reuse sunshine in winter (deciduous) Places for people</p>
<p>The Southbank urban forest will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a friendly place for wildlife</li> <li>- have deciduous colour for building shaded streets</li> <li>- much bigger than it is now</li> <li>- include more indigenous trees</li> <li>- seamless connection between public and private</li> <li>- improve connectivity with changes to better modes of movement</li> </ul>	6	<p>Support wildlife Deciduous Pedestrian corridors Indigenous Private contribution</p>
<p>Our vision for Southbank has large, uniform, established avenues that provide shade along pathways and roads. We would like the urban forest to mitigate wind, capture storm</p>	7	<p>Stormwater reuse Wind</p>

water from the public and private realm and provide colour and seasonality.		mitigation Public and private realm Colour Seasonality
<p>The future urban forest in Southbank will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a combination of native landscapes in open areas and traditional street trees along major corridors</li> <li>- A great incentive to walk around</li> <li>- Innovative and smart – with the right tree in the right place</li> <li>- Encourage private landowners to contribute more area to green open space</li> </ul>	9	Private contribution Native and exotic Facilitate pedestrian movement and connectivity
<p>Our vision for Southbank's urban forest includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Green dominated landscape</li> <li>- Large canopy, green, flowering deciduous trees</li> <li>- Underplanting is the rule, rather than the exception</li> <li>- Permeable surfaces</li> <li>- Commitments from private sector to increase greening on and around their properties (crown and developers)</li> <li>- Diversity in landscapes to serve various neighbourhoods</li> </ul>	8	Green Canopy Flowering Deciduous Permeable Private contribution underplanting
<p>The future urban forest in Southbank will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connected</li> <li>- Diverse</li> <li>- Integrated</li> </ul> <p>Pleasant green environment for the pedestrians and city-dwellers.</p>	1	Connected Diverse Integrated Green Pedestrian friendly
<b>Online vision statements</b>		
Create a roundabout with a dense green centre in the hard grey dirty expanse on Clarendon Street where tram 109 turns left towards the CBD	Online	Dense Green
Plant trees close together to soften the streetscape, in particular the hard, high walls the sit right up against Clarendon street	Online	Mitigate built form
More rooftop gardens, more shady street trees down the medians and in the centre of the road. Less concrete.		Green roofs Shady streets Less concrete Median strip planting
The roofs of all the buildings provide optimum space for gardens and trees should be planted on every street. Communal gardens/ allotments.		Green roofs Communal gardens
Anything to do with community activities hall and maintenance for the existing gardens with a park nearby.		More parks Community spaces
It needs to have more trees based on multicultural approach in centre of Melbourne as a multicultural city.		Multicultural
Greening across/in front the very bland looking apartments across City Road.		Mitigate built form
If has a playground for children, a play centre for kids, ever road has bike tracks, more restaurants, more green areas		More green Spaces for



## 10. Next steps

Yvonne Lynch, from City of Melbourne outlined the next steps in the development of the precinct plans:

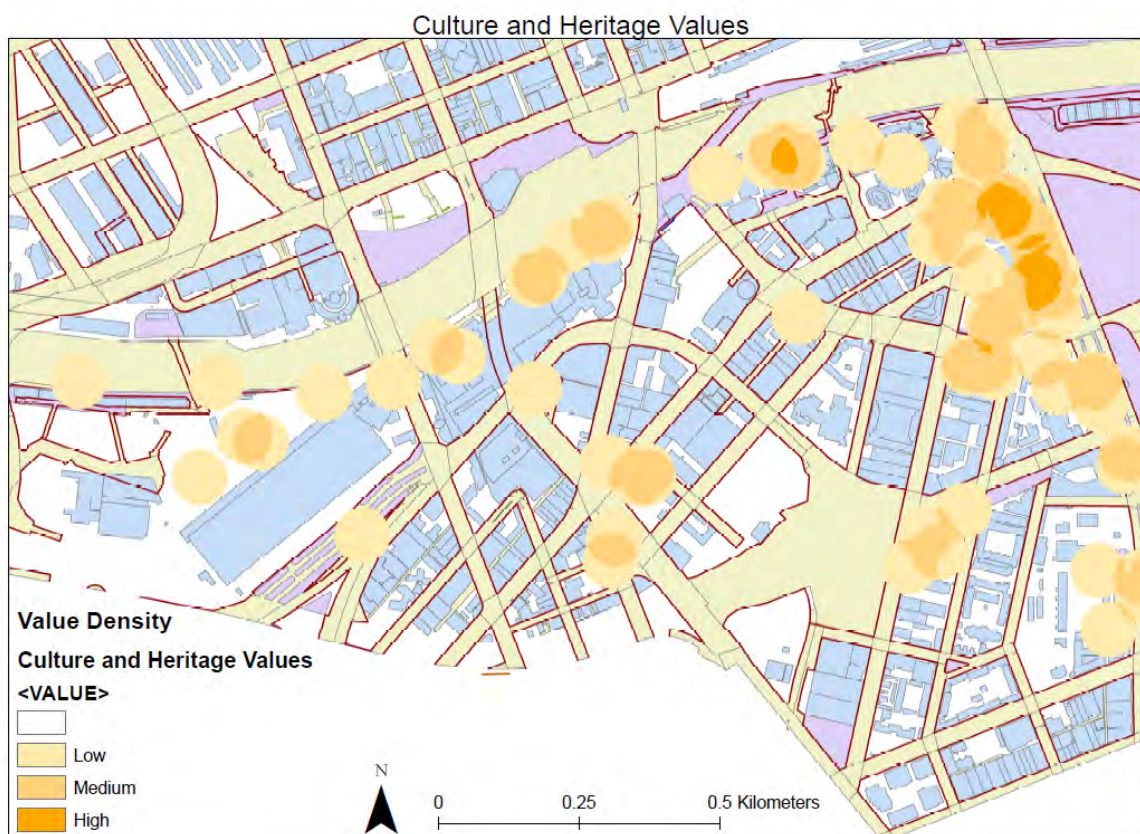
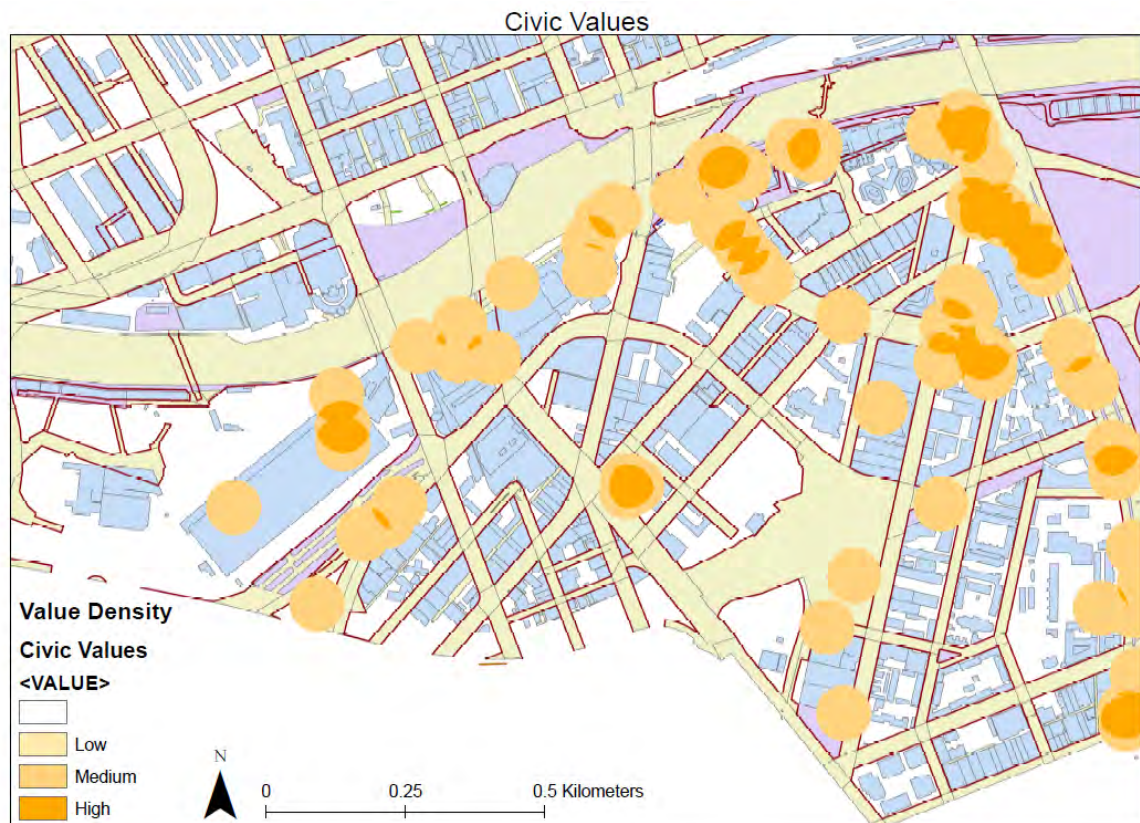
- Information gathered in workshops will be written up in a report
- These findings will be incorporated into a draft precinct plan
- The draft plan would be put out to the community for comment
- A final plan would be presented to Council in 2015.

To continue to participate and comment online visit

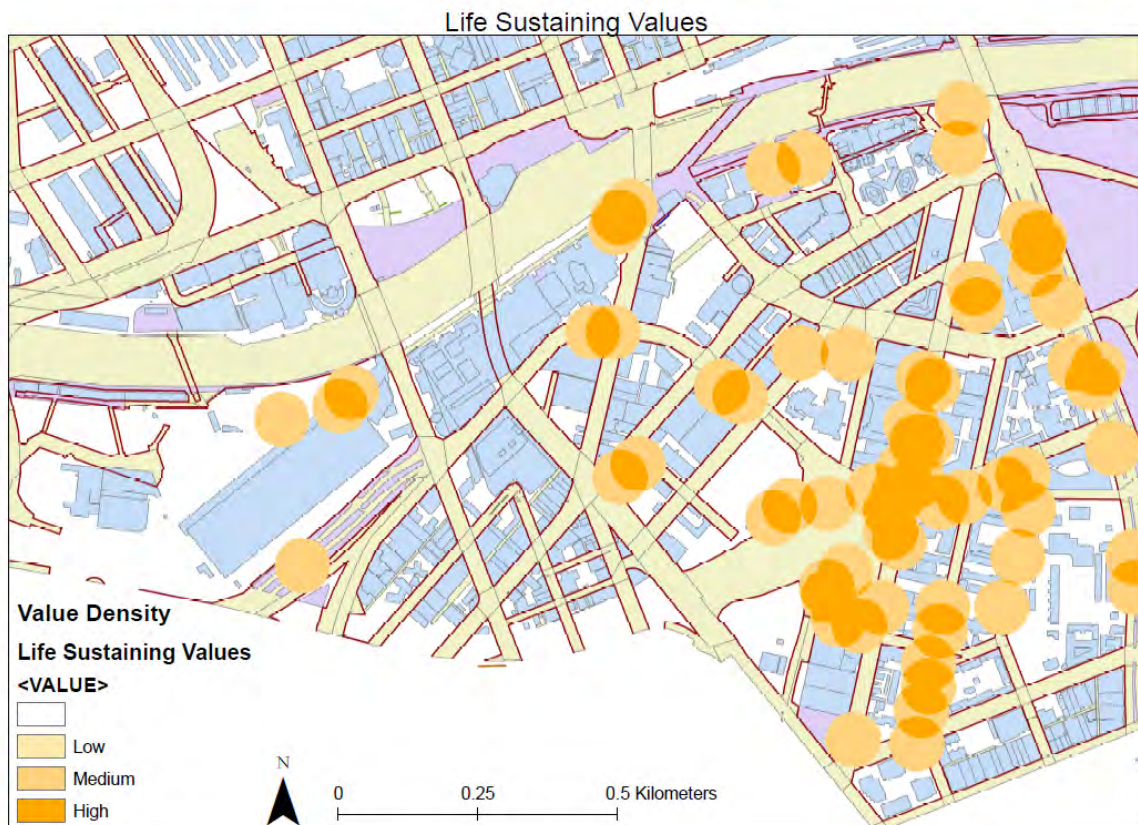
<http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/projects/urban-forest-precinct-plan>

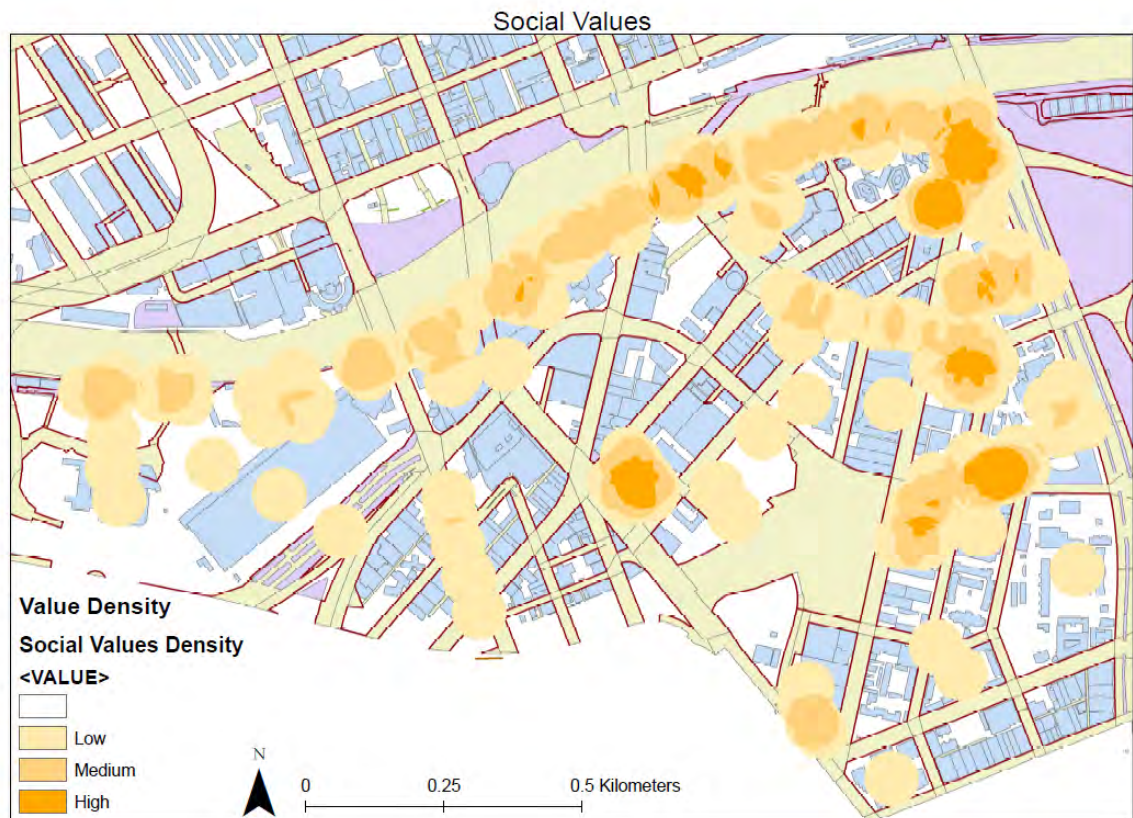


## Appendix 1 – Values mapping outputs













## Southbank Precinct Plan



Places we Value

Southbank Precinct







## Southbank Precinct Plan

● More Trees Needed

□ Southbank Precinct

