

TRANSFORMING SOUTHBANK BOULEVARD

PHASE ONE: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2015



TRANSFORMING SOUTHBANK BOULEVARD AND DODDS STREET

This document has been prepared by The Space Agency for the City of Melbourne.

This document reviews the outcomes and key insights that were gained from a series of community consultations that took place across November and early December 2015.

The Space Agency was proud to support the City of Melbourne in the design and delivery of the Southbank consultations



CITY OF MELBOURNE



THE SPACE AGENCY



CONTENTS

PART A: PROJECT OVERVIEW

Introduction	6
Project Background	7
Proposed New Public Space	10
Key Stakeholders	11
Media Summary	13

PART B: CONSULTATION APPROACH

Methodology	17
Questionnaire	16
Pop-Up Consultations	17
Community Workshops	19
Lobby Activations	21
Street Party	23

PART C: DATA & INSIGHTS

Demographics	26
Insights	29
Community Workshops	43
Key Themes	46

PART D: APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire	51
Appendix B: Workshop Questionnaire	51
Appendix C: Participant Profiles	52



PART A:
PROJECT
OVERVIEW



INTRODUCTION

Aim

The Space Agency (TSA) worked with the City of Melbourne to design and implement a community consultation and engagement project in support of the transformation of Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street.

The project was designed to define a vision for Southbank Boulevard and Dodds St by:

- Project introduction – **the how and why** – including the project’s origins, change in Southbank (demographics and density), and the traffic story,
- **Illustrate the change** (existing versus proposed) and demonstrate the quantum of change in simple terms how big will the new public space be and what will this feel like as a pedestrian and as a vehicle,
- **Encourage and direct people** to provide their comments, feedback in the form of a vision for the space.

Approach

TSA worked with the City of Melbourne to design a multifaceted program of consultation and engagement activities for this project. The project consisted of a number of elements with a questionnaire at its core. These elements were:

- Mail-out to local area residents
- Online information platform (Participate Melbourne)
- Project introduction video on YouTube
- Social media promotions
- Pop-up community consultations
- Community workshops
- Meetings with 45+ stakeholder groups
- Lobby installations
- A large scale pop-up garden party

“A space that encourages people to stop and linger, and creates a sense of community.”

Southbank Resident

CONSULTATION SNAPSHOT

Outcomes

In all, the project attracted **639 questionnaire responses** from a wide range of stakeholders including residents, workers, students and visitors. This translates to **130 hours of community engagement.**

Who Participated in the Consultations:

- 30% Southbank Residents
- 21 % Southbank Workers
- 10 % Local Area Residents
- 9.5 % Southbank and CoM Students
- 27% Visitors to Southbank

31 participants took part in two, **two-hour community workshops** held at the Melbourne Theatre Company Southbank Theatre.

1450 people attended a pop-up garden party that saw part of Southbank Boulevard closed to traffic and transformed into a pop-up park and event space.

Key Themes

Green Space: Respondents envision a public space that is green and open, with trees, grassy areas, and engaging topography

Community: Respondents expressed a desire for the new public space to bring people together and offer a space for the local community to interact.

Diversity: Respondents indicated that they want the space to reflect the diversity of its users through a range of activities and different areas or zones.

Peace and Quiet: Southbank is in need of an escape from noise from busy traffic on its roads. Respondents indicated that this new space should offer a 'sanctuary' within the area.

"A leafy retreat accessible from the busy restaurant strip and arts precinct."

Southbank Resident

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Before settlement, the land surrounding the Yarra River, the Birrarrung, **was a life source for aboriginal people.** This place of mists and shadows was first described by Europeans in 1803 when the NSW Surveyor-General, Charles Grimes named it Freshwater River and said that it was the most eligible place for a settlement that he had ever seen.

Southbank has changed, pre-contact, from the rich flood plain of the Yarra River to an industrial area of South Melbourne, and then in the late 1980's, into the residential, arts and riverside area that it is today – most of Melbourne's premier arts and theatre institutions now co-exist in this suburb. It is **now the most densely populated suburb of greater metropolitan Melbourne** – the only Melbourne suburb to be listed in the top 20 most densely populated areas in Australia.

Several strategic documents have been prepared by both the State Government and City of Melbourne to guide its development. The Southbank Structure Plan (2010) and the City of Melbourne Open Space Strategy (2011) are two primary documents that seek to ensure that Southbank meets the challenges of one of the fastest growing suburbs in the City. The Melbourne Arts Precinct Blueprint is also an important visionary document that encapsulates a much broader cultural vision for the precinct.

These documents identify the **lack of public open space in Southbank as a key concern.** The average recommended provision, per-person, of open space in Melbourne is 22 square metres. In Southbank, there is currently 3 square metres per person. At the same time, the population and density of people in Southbank is increasing rapidly while traffic volumes are decreasing.

The need for public open space is further amplified when analysed against the fact that **92% of Southbank residents live in high-rise apartments and that**

“An environment that connects the residents back to their surrounds.”

Southbank Resident

visitors to Southbank can **increase the total population of Southbank to over 100,000.**

A primary means by which the Structure Plan and the Open Space Strategy recommend delivering new public open space is to use Southbank Boulevard – an arterial road that no longer carries the volume of traffic for which it was designed. Southbank Boulevard was closed as a through road to the CBD, via the Queens Bridge in 1996, when the Crown Casino and car park were constructed. As a result of the closure, **traffic volumes fell from some 40,000 vehicles a day to 13,000 vehicles a day** in 2015.

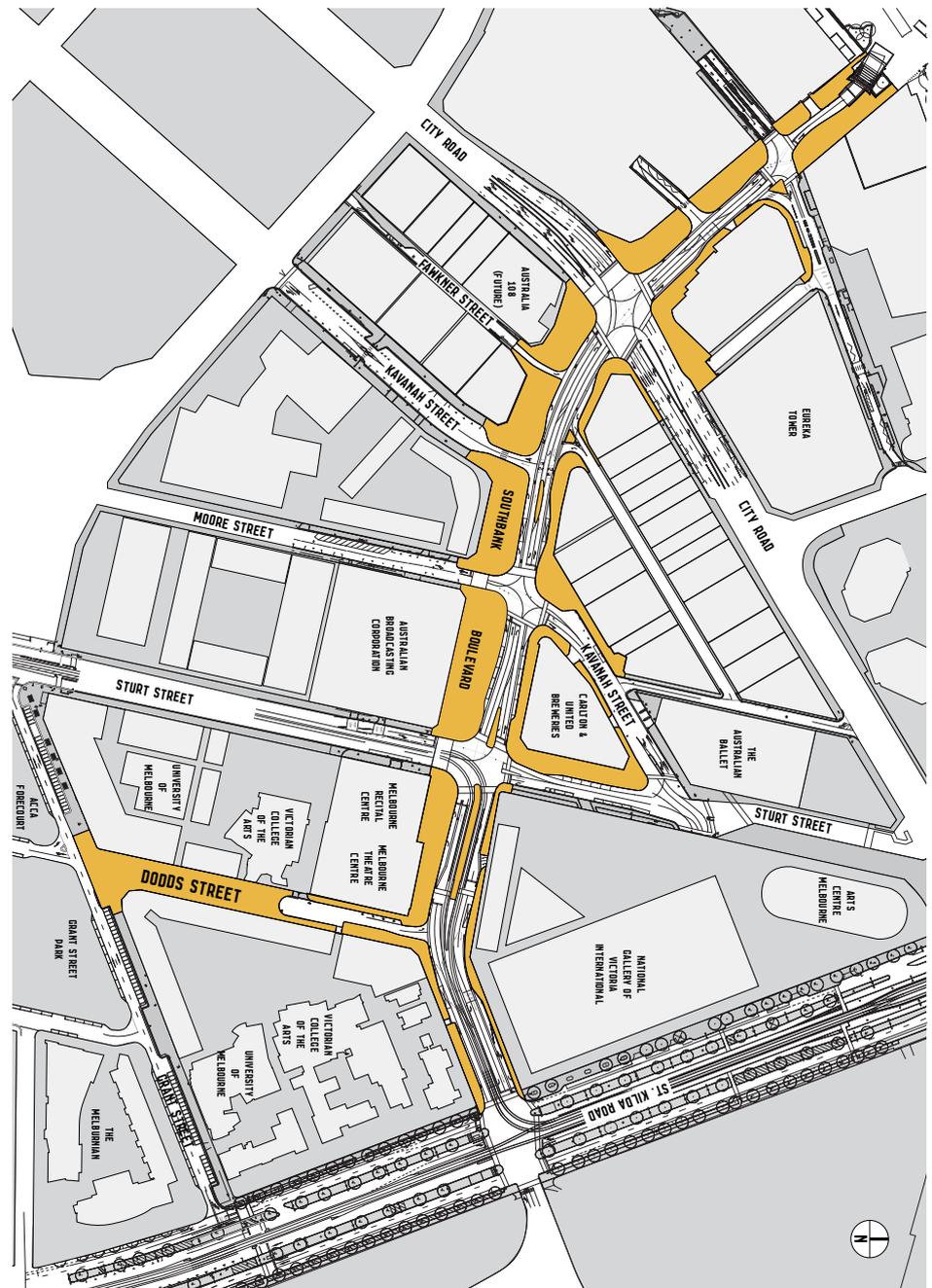
Council has recently completed testing ways by which we can create new public open space at Southbank Boulevard. It considered existing traffic, solar access, connectivity and service locations. We have now prepared a draft functional layout plan to illustrate how the road can be changed to create new public realm. **This work has been tested against a micro simulation model** to determine the impact on traffic in the precinct and it has been tested against the traffic needs of Southbank Boulevard addresses, Yarra Trams and Public Transport Victoria.

Up to 2.5 hectares of new public realm can be created in a linear chain extending from the Domain Parklands through to the Yarra River.

“The green artery that connects Southbank to the Domain”

Southbank Resident

PROPOSED NEW PUBLIC SPACE



Up to 2.5 hectares of new public realm can be created in a linear chain extending from the Domain Parklands through to the Yarra River.

“An environmentally conscious space, that caters for the young and old.”

Southbank Student

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Consultation Aims

The aim of the online and pop-up consultations is to capture a cross section of stakeholders including residents of Southbank, local workers, visitors, and students. More broadly, the consultations aim to inform, involve, and consult with residents, workers, and visitors to the City of Melbourne and beyond.

Stakeholder Groups

In addition to the community consultation and engagement, the City of Melbourne has undergone extensive preliminary consultation with key businesses and organisations in the Southbank area. These stakeholders were identified as being closely connected to the project and were consulted as part of the process of developing the transformation project. These organisations include:

ABC Victoria
ACCA (Australian Centre for Contemporary Art)
Arts Centre
Arts Victoria
Australia 108 (70 Southbank Boulevard) (URBIS)
Bicycle Network
Coroners Court of Victoria
Crown Casino
CUB - Carlton United Brewery
Freshwater Place (car park)
Malthouse Theatre
Melbourne Recital Centre
Melbourne Theatre Company
National Gallery of Victoria
Peckvohartel Architects
Public Transport Victoria
RACV
Southbank Residents Association
State Emergency Service (SES)
Sturt Street Arts Precinct Forum
Summer Salt Festival
The Australian Ballet Centre

*“Beautiful arts capital
of the world”*

Transdev & Ventura Bus
University of Melbourne (VCA Campus)
Yarra River Business Association (YRBA)
Yarra Trams
Blondie Café (Melbourne Recital Centre)

Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne is the traditional country of the Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung peoples. With a rich Aboriginal history, the Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street projects are an excellent opportunity to implement the recommendations of the recently adopted City of Melbourne Aboriginal Heritage Action Plan (2015-2018). Consultation with the traditional owner groups started in October, 2015 as part of phase one community engagement and these key stakeholder relationships will continue for the duration of the project.

*“An inner city
sanctuary to escape
the bustle of the city.”*

Resident of the Area

MEDIA SUMMARY

- Article in Southbank Local News 'Community Puts Its Future to the Test' (December 10)
- Update from the Southbank Residents Association in the Southbank Local News (December 10)
- Live Broadcast with Libbi Gorr at the Southbank Street Party (November 29)
- Interview with Councillor Arron Wood on ABC 774 Melbourne (November 29)
- Interview with Rob Adams, Director of City Design and Projects, City of Melbourne, on ABC 774 Melbourne. (November 29)
- Article in Urban Melbourne 'Transforming Southbank Boulevard' (November 25)
- Article in the Herald Sun 'Make Way for Space' (November 13)
- Article in The Age 'Dozens of parking spaces to go in mammoth Southbank park plan' (November 12)
- Article in Southbank Local News 'Southbank Boulevard Street Party' (November 12)

Social Media

The Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street post attracted:

- 1740 likes
- 158 shares
- 159 comments

This result was significantly higher than other consultations promoted on the City of Melbourne Facebook Page.

YouTube Video

A purpose made YouTube video that shares the project story was viewed 1877 times.

"Open, easy, free, interesting, and evocative."

Southbank Resident

PART B:
CONSULTATION
APPROACH



PHASE ONE CONSULTATIONS

As part of the first phase in a series of consultations to help design and inform the future public space along Southbank Boulevard, The City of Melbourne commissioned The Space Agency to:

- Deliver a broad, genuine, innovative and robust community engagement process - more than a traditional local government approach.
- Validate strategic directions and introduce the why and how of the project.
- Provide accurate information about proposed changes
- Inspire people about the project's potential.
- Inspire and generate ideas for the look, feel and activity in the new public space.
- Capture these ideas specifically to inform the creation of an ideas plan for Phase Two community engagement.
- Collect appropriate demographic data to bring more meaning to collected feedback and information.

METHODOLOGY

The Space Agency worked with the City of Melbourne to deliver a multi-activity consultation methodology. Each component was designed to drive engagement around the project and encourage interaction with the project materials and digital survey. These activities included:

- Pop up community consultations
- Community workshops
- Lobby installations
- Street party event

In addition to this, The City of Melbourne reached out to the project's diverse stakeholders via:

- The Participate web portal
- Direct mail conversation starters (7,800)
- Face-to-face meetings with 45+ stakeholder groups

QUESTIONNAIRE

The common element across all of these consultations was a digital questionnaire designed to determine how Southbank's various stakeholder groups used Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street and what their vision for the new public space might be.

The questionnaire was designed in collaboration with the City of Melbourne to be used on the Council's Participate Melbourne portal as well as on mobile devices at pop-up consultations and lobby installations. In order to achieve this, TSA provided a version of the questionnaire on its own consultation data gathering tool ePublic.

The questionnaire was designed to capture a high level vision for the new public space and gather insights around user's relationship, experience with Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street. The key areas of enquiry for the questionnaire were:

What is the participant's relationship with the public space in the Southbank area?

- Current usage
- Familiarity
- Barriers to access

What is the demand for public space and what do the community expect from public spaces?

- What do people want the space to offer them?

What impact will the project have on the community?

- How might it address barriers to access?
- How might it be utilised by the community?

What is the vision for the upcoming space?

- What are the 'big picture' elements that could be included in the space?
- How might these elements be realised in practicality?

The full questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

POP-UP CONSULTATIONS

What

The Space Agency conducted three pop up community consultations at which members of the public passing the consultation installation were invited to complete a digital survey.

The Space Agency created a consultation 'parklet' using its display caravan, synthetic turf, potted plants and seating.

Pop up consultations were held at:

- **Corner Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street**
Friday November 20th 3pm-7pm
- **Queensbridge Square**
December 3rd 7am-1pm
- **Boyd Community Hub**
December 10th 6pm-8pm

Locations and times were selected to target specific audience and stakeholder groups.

The consultation parklet created an eye-catching and engaging space in which consultation could take place. The installation invoked a vision of what the redevelopment might provide the area and provided a provocative feature in the locations it was activated.

Outcomes

278 responses were obtained directly from pop-up consultations. With an average response time of 12 minutes, the pop-up consultations provided over 55 hours of participant feedback.

By positioning the pop ups in the above locations and times, TSA was able to secure input from groups unlikely to otherwise be directly engaged, in particular local workers.



The pop up consultation caravan

S.W.O.T Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible location access • Partnership with existing events- Jazz Festival / Boyd Christmas • Installation design- context and feel for project • Engaging activation of unexpected spaces • Coordination with Council Events 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varying levels of engagement- compromise with high foot traffic • Existing engagement fatigue from previous consultations • Saturation of donation collectors in CBD locations
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater communication of pop up times and locations • Greater level of interaction between engagement activities - promotion of street party / workshops 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of Wi-Fi / high speed mobile data • Mobile device compatibility of Participate portal

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

What

Two community workshops were held in the Lawler Room of the Melbourne Theatre Company's Southbank Theatre. The two hour workshops consisted of table discussions about how participants viewed public space, their needs and expectations for public space and what their vision for what the Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street development might look like.

Workshops were held on the following dates:
December 8th 6pm-8pm and December 12th 9am-11am.

Why

- Inform participants of the project - where it has come from, what problem is it addressing, how the solution is being developed.
- Workshops were designed specifically to provide face to face time for people who wanted more detailed information.
- Involve participants in the consultation process - where they fit in, how their input will be used to support decision making.
- Identify and acknowledge their experiences and relationship with Southbank Boulevard.
- Listen and record their stories, insights and recommendations
- Support their visioning for the space - helping to transition them from big picture thinking to practical and actionable steps

Outcomes

31 participants took part in the two, two-hour workshops. Participants were able to hear directly from senior Council staff about the project and make enquiries to staff facilitators about specific details or clarifications. Council facilitators were able to smoothly guide participants through the structured workshop format and engage groups in rich conversation about their vision for Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street.



Workshops at Melbourne Theatre Company

S.W.O.T Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured format • Council officer involvement • High-profile location and setting • Consensus / outcome production- vision statement • Flexible timing • Catering • Visual materials- video, maps 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication / advertisement of workshops • Integration of event invitations into collateral / pop up scripts • Use of workshops by opposing residents as an avenue to aggressively vent frustration
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build greater attendance base • Advertise workshops more broadly / sooner • Incentivise attendance 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-attendance by participants with an RSVP- oversupply of seating, catering and a sense of emptiness • Access- language barriers

LOBBY ACTIVATIONS

What

The Space Agency installed five interactive consultation kiosks in the lobbies of key Southbank institutions. The kiosks were installed in the buildings for four weeks of the consultation period. Each of these kiosks consisted of a display banner advertising the transformation project alongside an iPad in an attractively designed stand displaying the digital survey. The buildings that housed these kiosks were:

- Malthouse Theatre
- Southbank Theatre
- Melbourne Recital Centre
- Boyd Community Hub
- Arts Centre

Why

These installations were used in order to target different audiences to the pop-ups and workshops. The installations were housed in key institutions in the Southbank area in order to capture input from the large volume of visitors that come to the precinct for these institutions. The installations were also intended to capture local workers from these buildings who are otherwise time constrained.

Outcome

The installations provided a clear communication of the project's existence and granted the consultation a high degree of exposure amongst an audience that would not normally be so intimately engaged with the precinct.

While this was the case, there was limited translation of this exposure into consultation data with few people completing the survey on the iPads.



Lobby Activation installed at the Malthouse Theatre

S.W.O.T Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High profile locations • High exposure • Collaborative approach / involvement of key building stakeholders • Reach of visitors and the less engaged 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More instruction or directions would have assisted participants • More supporting information would have been beneficial • Length of survey resulted in a low completion rate • Location in low exposure areas of buildings • Equipment failure and limited Wi-Fi signal
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate a shorter offering • Provide more supporting information / context • Brief venue staff to inform visitors / drive involvement 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power access • Wi-Fi access • Theft of infrastructure • Low surveillance of responses- misuse of survey • Deliberate poor quality / misinformed responses

POP-UP GARDEN PARTY

What

On November 29th between 9am and 2pm, The Space Agency held a pop-up garden party event that saw the section of Southbank Boulevard between Sturt and Moore Streets closed to traffic and activated with a series of themed parklets. Activities that were provided at the street party included:

9 different miniature parks | Free Yoga | Food trucks | Coffee cart | Live music & entertainment | Children's art activities | Boyd Library Book exchange | A dog park | Architectural walking tours | Arts and culture walking tours | ABC live broadcast

Why

Roaming facilitators conducted digital surveys with attendees in order to further engage them in the project and capture insights and feedback from those in attendance.

The parklets were designed to highlight how the space will be transformed by the project and give a sense of the activity and atmosphere that the new public space might provide in the future.

Local organisations and businesses were provided with an opportunity to be involved with the event to showcase their products or services. This granted the event community authenticity and celebrated Southbank.

Outcome

In total, nearly 1450 people attended the event. TSA was able to effectively transform Southbank Boulevard and encourage new conversations on how the space might be used. The ABC live broadcast also generated a strong point of communication of the project and improved its exposure. Local news publications were also in attendance and publicised the event.



View of the Street Party down Southbank Boulevard

S.W.O.T Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive planning and project management • Involvement of local groups • Strong mix of activities • Physical demonstration of potential • High dwell time in the space to drive engagement • Positive, celebratory environment 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Untested approach caused uncertainty in the planning phase • Lack of Aboriginal involvement- unable to secure operators in the timeframe • Proximity of event to other markets or events in the area • Weekend timing didn't capture workers
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased publicity for the event • Run a smaller-scale weekday lunch event for local workers • Host workshops before / after the event • Cost were commensurate with a project of this size. Future pop up parties will benefit from the experience. • regular use of space outside of community engagement 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather- need contingency for heat and rain • Opposition to traffic disruptions • Potential for lack of attendance and event fatigue at future activations

PART C:
DATA AND INSIGHTS



QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

A total of 639 responses to the digital questionnaire were recorded across the various components of the consultation project methodology.

293 of these responses were received through the Participate Melbourne platform while a further 346 responses were received through ePublic which was used at the street party, pop up community consultations as well as the lobby activations.

It is worth noting that collateral material distributed at the pop-up consultation events provided a link to the Participate Melbourne portal. This would have further driven people to complete the questionnaire.

The following section provides a more detailed breakdown of the results from the consultation data.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Respondent's Connection to Southbank

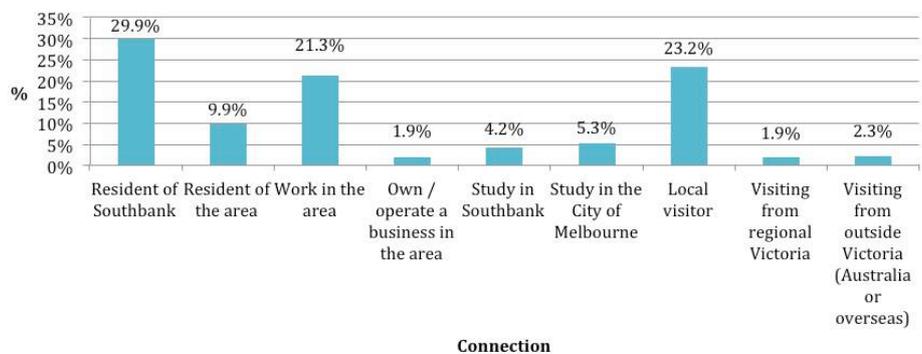


Figure 2: Connection to Southbank

The largest portion of survey respondents reported that they were residents of the Southbank at just fewer than 30%. A further 10% were residents of the local area. The second highest reported connection to Southbank was as a local visitor at 23.2% with a similar number indicating that they worked locally

Age

The most commonly reported age group amongst respondents was 30-39 with 28.2% of survey participants residing in this category. The second-most commonly reported age category was 18-24 years. In all, thirty per cent of survey respondents were under the age of 30. The age categories outside of the major 30-39 group were relatively consistent with one another, demonstrating a reasonably balanced pool of respondents in terms of their ages.

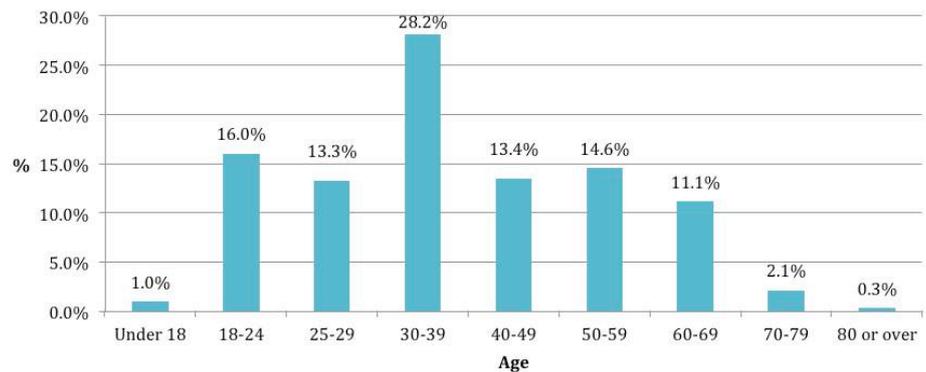


Figure 3: Age Groups

Gender Identity

The gender split of the consultation participants was evenly balanced between male and female. A small portion of respondents either elected to not answer the question or indicated that they preferred not to answer the question.

Gender Identity	No	%
Female	300	47%
Male	296	46%
Transgender	0	0
Intersex	1	1%
Other	0	0
Prefer not to answer	41	6%
Total	638	

Figure 4: Gender Identity

Household Type

Around one third of respondents to the consultation survey reported living in a couple household with no children. The relatively even distribution of age groups suggests that these respondents may be either young couples living together or older couples whose children have moved out of home.

The second-most reported household type was single with 18.8% and third was group or shared households. In all, 18% of respondents indicated that they lived in a family household with children living at home.

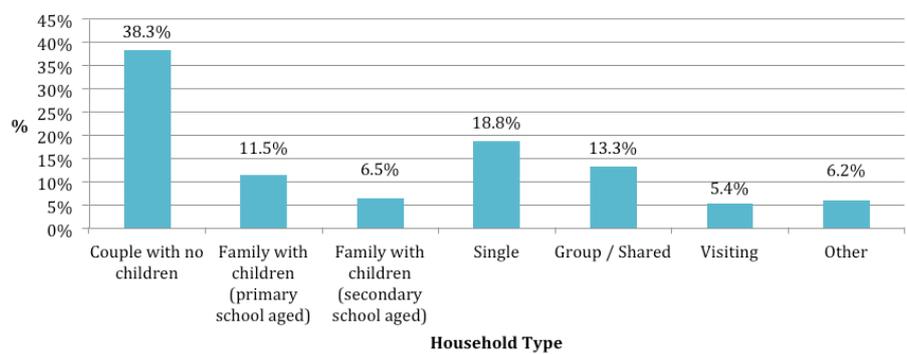


Figure 5: Household Type

INSIGHTS

Access to Public Space in Southbank

Respondents were asked the question:

In Southbank, where do you, your family and friends currently go to access public space?

Overall, the consultation received 608 responses about where participants accessed public space in the Southbank area. Missing responses might indicate that the respondent does not access public space in Southbank, if at all. The following table provides a breakdown of the highly mentioned public spaces frequented by survey respondents. These mentions were measured using a filtered keyword search of the responses to determine key themes.

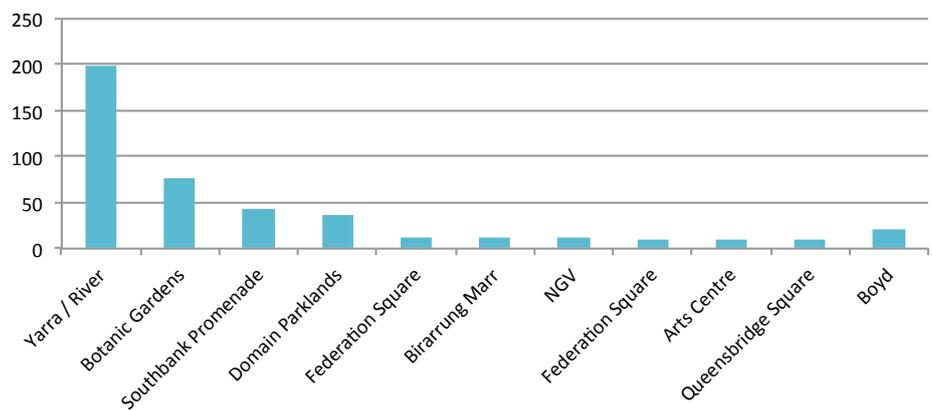


Figure 6: Popular Public Space in and around Southbank

The most commonly referenced public space accessed by consultation participants within Southbank was the Yarra River, most commonly through the Southbank Promenade area. The second-most popular public space in Southbank was Boyd Community Hub.

Notably, the second and fourth most popular public spaces amongst survey respondents – Botanic Gardens and the Domain Parklands – do not actually reside within Southbank itself.

Reasons for Accessing Public Space in Southbank

Respondents were asked the question:

Why do you choose this location?

The following table provides the top results of a keyword search of the responses. These recurring reasons form the key themes from the responses obtained through the questionnaire.

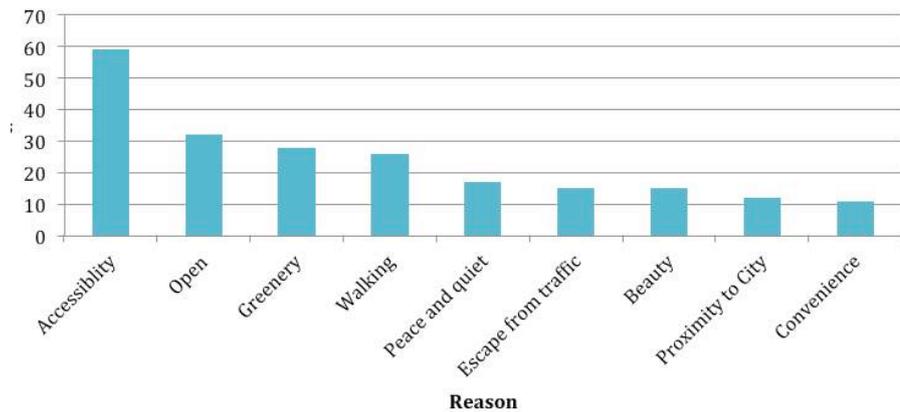


Figure 7: Reasons for accessing public space in Southbank (mentions vs reasons)

The reasons given by respondents indicate that they select their public spaces based on a number of lifestyle and environmental factors. The primary driver for public space usage is accessibility from either home, work or other services. Respondents strongly indicated that they utilised the public space most easily accessible, in particular by walking. Other features of public space which contributed to their use by respondents included being open and large as well the level of greenery and beauty.

Peace and quiet and escape from traffic were two key reasons behind respondent's selection of public space. These factors are the two key environmental drivers for public space demand and are significant given the Southbank's population trajectory.

Accessing Public Space: Key Themes

The comments below provide a snapshot of typical responses received for each category.

Accessibility

“Access to arts, sports, outdoors, bike paths, public transport. Can live without car.”

Resident, Female, 50-59

“Near place of work, near good facilities and amenities like Fed Square, shopping centres, markets and free and accessible public transport.”

Resident, Female, 60-69

“We go to the Botanic Gardens or Fed Square because of its proximity and lack of a garden on Southbank side of St Kilda Road.”

Resident, Male, 60-69

Open Space

“We have a 2 year old son so most of our walking trips or bike rides are based on where we can find a playground or an open space.”

Resident, Male, 30-39

“Only open space close by to restaurants and events.”

Local Visitor, Female, 18-24

Greenery

“There’s plenty of space and greenery to relax.”

Live and work in the area, Female, 25-29

“Its beautiful and green and it’s just a short walk!”

Resident, Female, 30-39

Barriers to Accessing Public Space in Southbank

Respondents were asked the question:

Are there any barriers to you accessing public space?

The following table provides the top results of a keyword search of the responses.

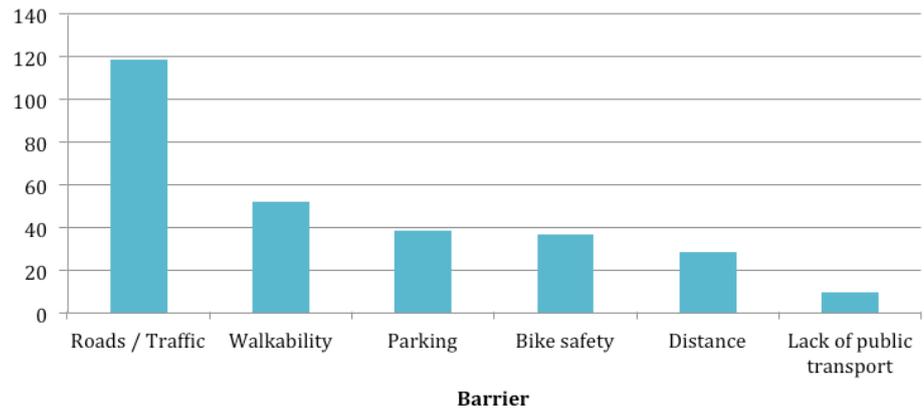


Figure 8: Barriers to accessing public space in Southbank (mentions vs reasons)

The most commonly referenced barrier to accessing public space in Southbank was roads and their associated traffic. This category had the highest number of unique mentions and consisted largely of details such as crossing major roads such as City Rd and St Kilda Rd. Traffic also cut across many of the other barriers mentioned frequently by influencing factors such as walkability, parking and bike safety.

Accessing Public Space: Key Themes

The comments below provide a snapshot of typical responses received for each category.

Roads / Traffic

“Public space is one thing that this area sorely needs, city road is a barrier to access. The traffic is just too busy and there is no ground level space”

Local visitor, Male, 30-39

"Busy roads with lots of people, traffic and trams."
Resident, Male, 50-59

"The roads are very busy, you have to be careful"
Resident, Male, 40-49

Walkability

"Walking distance from home, very little interesting public space in the Southbank area."
Resident, Male, 18-24

"Busy roads and the non-walkability of Southbank."
Local visitor, Female, 60-69

Parking

"Costly parking and access to cost effective and easy to use public transport systems get in the way of a pleasant day out at places like Southbank"
Local worker, Male, 40-49

"It is hard as a visitor to the area because there is not much parking."
Local visitor, Male, 50-59

Southbank Boulevard: Current Public Usage

Respondents were asked the question:

How do you currently use Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street?

Participants selected as many responses as were appropriate to them from a list of twelve uses. The following table provides a breakdown of the frequency of reported current uses of Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street.

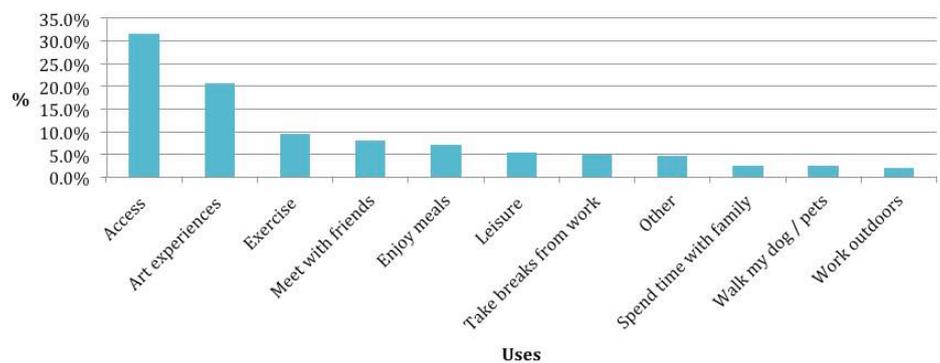


Figure 8: Current public use of Southbank Boulevard

The most highly reported use of Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street was for access. This reflects its current configuration as a major transport route, as well its location on travel routes to the city, the arts precinct and surrounding parks and gardens. The second most reported use was for arts experiences, which speaks to the areas identity and character. Overall, slightly more than half of the reported uses were in these two categories. The remaining uses were relatively evenly distributed by comparison, suggesting that there is not a clear diversity of primary usage amongst the users of the precinct.

Southbank Boulevard: Special Features

Respondents were asked the question:

Currently, does Southbank Boulevard or Dodds Street have a special feature, aspect or character that is important to you?

The following table provides the top results of a keyword search of the responses.

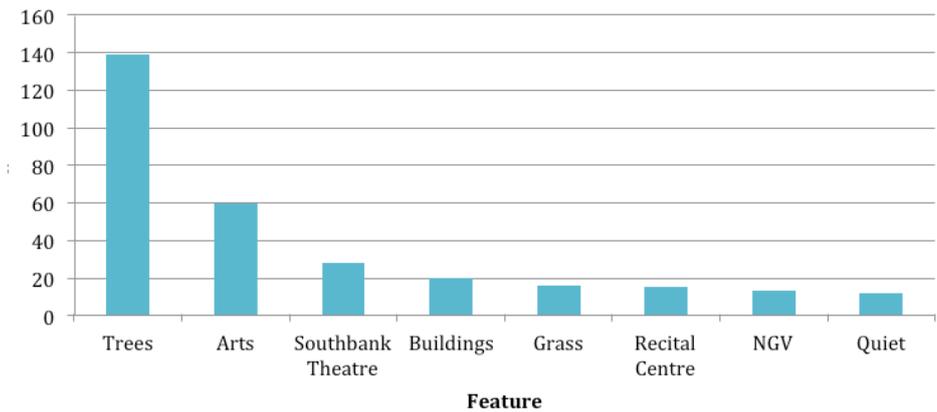


Figure 9: Special features of Southbank (mentions vs features)

The consultation received 419 responses from participants about the features or aspect of Southbank Boulevard and Dodds St that were important to them. Over 150 respondents said there were no special features to speak of.

Trees were the standout feature of the precinct which just under 140 respondents mentioning them as an important feature. Participants also highlighted that the arts is a central feature of the precinct and gives it a unique character and identity. The Southbank Theatre was highlighted as a key driver of this identity. Other features that were highlighted as being important were the street's architectural buildings, grassed areas and its quiet atmosphere.

Special Features: Key Themes

The comments below provide a snapshot of typical responses received for each category.

Trees

“As it is called a Boulevard it maintains that character. The huge trees along the walking path and the trees in the centre isle all make this a beautiful boulevard to walk along and drive along.”

Resident, Female, 60-69

“The trees which are fragrant in the spring near the corner of St. Kilda Road and Southbank Blvd the Police Horse Building”

Local worker, Female, 40-49

Arts

“Yes, it is the arts precinct. It is where we come to watch great theatre, ballet and performances.”

Local visitor, Male, 30-39

“There are a lot of exhibitions on here and the area is known for the arts.”

Student. Female, 18-24

Southbank Theatre

“The lights on the theatre company are great.”

Local worker, Female, 30-39

“If it wasn't for Southbank Theatre, I would avoid them both completely.”

Resident, Male, 25-29

Southbank Boulevard: Public Space Needs

Respondents were asked the question:

What do you need from public space in Southbank?

The following table provides the top results of a keyword search of the responses.

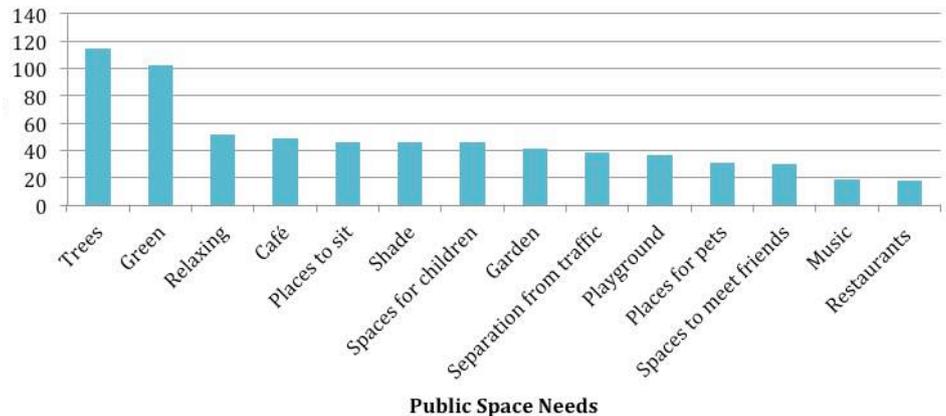


Figure 10: Public space needs in Southbank (mentions vs features)

The consultation received 639 responses from participants outlining their needs from public space in Southbank. The top responses related to the need for a green space with trees being the most frequently mentioned feature amongst participant needs. Other features that were commonly reported as being desired were spaces for relaxing, cafes, seating areas and shade.

While a relatively low level of respondents living in families with children, playgrounds and spaces for children to play were a commonly requested feature which suggests a desire for the space to be a place for the whole community and to spend time with extended family.

Public Space Needs: Key Themes

The comments below provide a snapshot of typical responses received for each category.

Trees

"Big trees! No one will want to access open space that is bare and right near a busy road."

Resident, Female, 30-39

"Fenced parks with trees please!"

Local worker, Female, 18-24

Green

"More green areas with trees and grass."

Resident and worker, Male, 25-29

"More green places to relax with friends."

Resident, Female, 30-39

Relaxing

"Space to chill out and relax"

Resident, Male, 30-39

"A place to relax. An oasis from the ever rising high rise jungle that Southbank has become."

Resident, Male, 30-39

Southbank Boulevard: Future Needs

Respondents were asked the question:

How do you see yourself, your family and friends using new public space in Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street in the future?

The following table provides the top results of a keyword search of the responses.

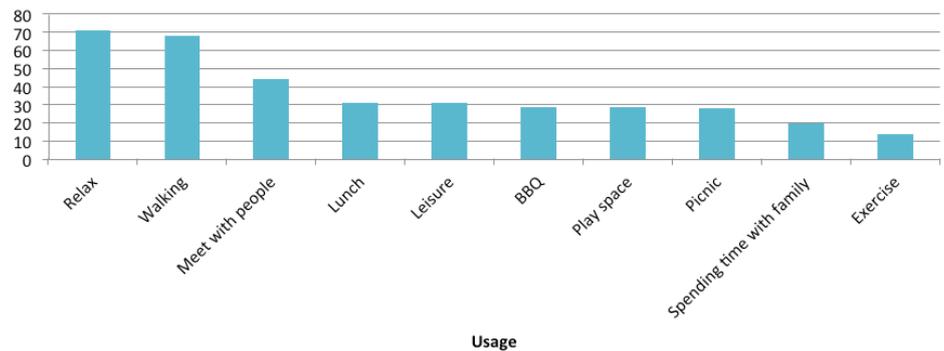


Figure 11: Future needs in Southbank (mentions vs features)

The consultation received 556 responses regarding how participants saw themselves using the new public space on Southbank Boulevard and Dodds St in the future.

The most commonly reported future uses were relaxing, walking and meeting people. The number of people reporting that relaxation is a key feature in their future usage of the space supports the themes from previous questions around participant's reasons for visiting public spaces and their needs from public space in Southbank. Similarly, the proportion of participants indicating that they would use the space for walking complements the number of people that currently use Southbank Boulevard for access to other parts of the suburb and Melbourne.

Future Needs: Key Themes

The comments below provide a snapshot of typical responses received for each category.

Relax

“A place to relax and escape the traffic and noise pressures of the inner city.”

Local business owner, Male, 50-59

“I would use this space as a place to relax and take a break from studies and work.”

Local student, Male, 18-24

Walking

“Ability on a beautiful autumn, spring or summer day to enjoy fresh air walking through”

Local worker, Male, 30-39

“Go for long walks, escape the city, find out what is taking place at the art centre and galleries.”

Local visitor, Female, 18-24

Meet with People

“As a new side of town to meet, eat and be merry, especially for summer.”

Local worker, Male, 30-39

“BBQs for family get-togethers. We would invite friends and meet them there instead of at home”

Resident and local worker, Male, 40-49

Southbank Boulevard: Future Vision

Respondents were asked the question:

Thinking big, what's your vision for this space?

The following table provides the top results of a keyword search of the responses.

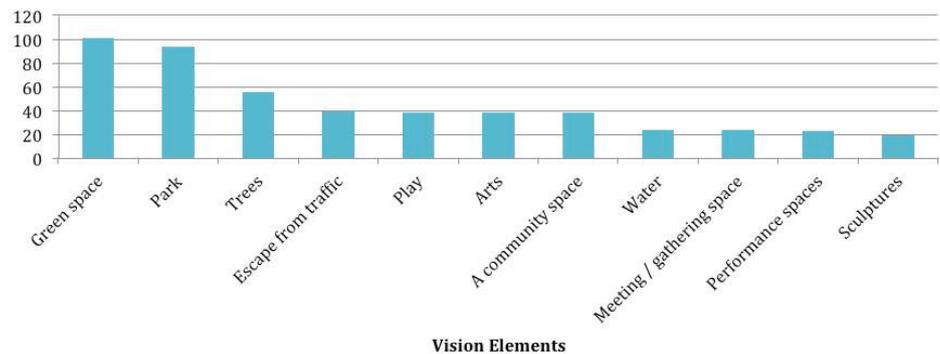


Figure 12: Future vision for Southbank Boulevard (mentions vs features)

The consultation received 580 responses regarding participant's vision for the new public space along Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street. The most commonly mentioned elements of green space, parks and trees reflect the key themes emergent from the feedback from previous questions.

Similarly, participants envisioned that the new space will offer an escape from the busy traffic within the area, and represent a community space with spaces to play, gather with friends and family. Respondents also highlighted that the new space should speak to the precinct's existing arts identity with performance spaces and sculptures.

Future Vision Key Themes

The comments below provide a snapshot of typical responses received for each category.

Green Space

“The best way to compliment the big steel and concrete buildings is to implement greenery and people at ground level.”

Local worker, Male, 30-39

“A green swathe, an atrium, a pause in the traffic and the bustle”

Local worker, Female, 50-59

Park

“A large inner city park that is peaceful and a place for workers and residents to relax.”

Local worker, Male, 40-49

“A space that looks and feels like a parkland with space for community and artistic activities such as outdoor theatre, discreet bicycle paths and perimeter retail dining options, vehicles volumes & noise reduced and placed so as to be almost invisible.”

Resident, Male, 50-59

Trees

A cathedral of trees and perfumed flowers with tasteful, quiet cafes.”

Local visitor, Female, 70-79

“Lots of beautiful full trees and grass surface replicating and continuing on from the botanical gardens.”

Local visitor, Male, 25-29

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Outcomes

31 participants took part in two, two-hour community workshops held at the Melbourne Theatre Company's Southbank Theatre.

The workshops were a combined informative and collaborative exercise with presentations by City of Melbourne staff as well as small table discussions and visioning for the project.

Data was recorded in the form of responses to eight key questions designed to guide the group discussions. These questions were designed to replicate the themes from the digital survey and to encourage the development of an outcome of consensus in the form of a 'vision statement' from each group. *The list of questions used can be found in Appendix B.*

The following section outlines key themes emerging from these responses and vision statements.

Workshops: Key Themes

Community

Community was a key feature of discussion amongst the groups. Many participants outlined a need for a space where members of the Southbank community could meet one another, interact and simply be visible. Participants outlined a desire for the space to primarily provide amenity for local residents of Southbank.

Features that were suggested to facilitate this included community gardens, cafes and restaurants as well as shared facilities like BBQs and eating areas.

- *"Turn buildings 'inside out' and support community interaction"*
- *"A space to get to know the neighbours."*
- *"Not just a place for tourists."*
- *"A free public for community- like the State Library forecourt."*

Diversity

Participants expressed a desire for the public space to reflect the diversity of the community and provide a mix of features, facilities and infrastructure to encourage but also manage this diversity of use. Participants highlighted that cyclist traffic was a concern in existing public spaces in Southbank that might be managed by dedicated bike paths and the creation of deliberate quiet areas. Similarly, diversity of age groups was a key feature of the discussion with participants referencing changing demographics and a desire to see people from all stages of life using the space together.

Participants also expressed a desire to see the space activated with a variety of features across the whole day and into the evening in order to bring activity and vibrancy to the area.

- “It needs diversity- plants, trees, people, activities, ages, education and cultural features.”
- “Design the spaces to transform throughout the day.”
- “More activity at street level.”
- “Multi-age and multi-use.”

Safety

Participants expressed a desire for the new public space to be a safe place. This includes aspects of safety such as walkability, protection from traffic, enclosure of play areas, lighting and nighttime safety. Participants highlighted that this could be achieved through night trading and activity as well as a security features such as improved lighting.

- *“Safety- lighting and activation.”*
- *“Safe spaces for kids.”*
- *“Safe road crossings.”*
- *Peace and Quiet*

Peace and quiet was a key theme raised from the discussions with participants outlining issues similar to those emerging from the consultation.

Separation from busy traffic was a common theme with participants envisioning a quiet, secluded space protected from traffic with landscaping or other traffic management measures. Participants highlighted the potential for the use of natural screening such as plants and trees as well as raised garden beds and topographical features.

"A sanctuary"

"Buffers to noise and pollution."

"Planting- change grey cement to tranquil green"

"Green and softening- vertical and horizontal"

TRANSFORMING SOUTHBANK BOULEVARD AND DODDS STREET: KEY THEMES

Green Space

Overwhelmingly, consultation participants expressed a need and a vision for the Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street transformation to take the form of a green space. Participants frequently referenced features such as trees, grass and natural shade as desired elements within the space and as a core element of their vision for the project.

Participants highlighted that greenery was a key driver in their decision to access specific public spaces with the Botanic Gardens and other parts of the Domain area being very popular destinations for this reason.

Respondents indicated that they desired horizontal and vertical integration of green elements as well as a diverse range of plants. Responses suggested the use of the natural landscape to screen areas in order to create a separation from nearby traffic and to soften what was otherwise described as a grey and concrete-dominated area.

Community

Community was a theme that ran through the consultation and respondents identified the benefits that the project would have for the local population. Participants highlighted a lack of a sense of community in the Southbank area and suggested that this was caused by a lack of accessible and truly public spaces in which to interact. Respondents expressed a desire for spaces in which they could see and meet their neighbours as well as gather with friends and families.

Respondents expressed a desire and a vision for the space as a place that brought people together and would offer much-needed amenity to the local residential population

Peace and Quiet

Peace and quiet was a strongly desired element of the new public space amongst participants. This theme was very strong across the consultation findings and overlaps with elements of other themes, especially green space.

The most common aspect of this theme referenced by respondents was the need for there to be a separation or escape from the busy traffic in the area. Traffic concerns were another prominent theme throughout the consultation and a major barrier to accessing public space in Southbank. Respondents highlighted that the new public space needed to adequately manage the impact of local traffic through the provision of safe road crossings, bicycle and walking paths as well as natural and artificial screening within the space.

Participants also referenced the need for the space to be designed and managed effectively in order to create spaces for quiet contemplation and reflection. This concept complements the desire for green spaces that instill a sense of connection with nature.

Diversity

The issue of diversity was a prominent theme across the consultation responses. The issue of diversity covered a broad range of areas including physical form, demographics and usage. Overwhelmingly, respondents expressed a desire and a vision for the new public space to reflect the diversity of the local community and its visitors and offer a range of spaces and facilities to accommodate the variety of potential uses for the space.

Participants expressed a vision for the space to be one that was active across the whole day and at various times of the week. Responses suggested the need for improved night trading, facilities to encourage usage by different age groups, as well as regularly programmed events, programs and performances. This diversity of activities and features was also highlighted as a key driver towards creating the sense of

community that was desired by a large number of respondents.

Participants indicated that they desired a space that was physically diverse. Responses suggested a need for the landscape to be varied in terms of its horizontal and vertical design with programmed features such as running water, diverse planting, sculptures, seating and tables as well as stages or performance space to create a sense of activity and specific zones for different uses.

TRANSFORMING SOUTHBANK BOULEVARD AND DODDS STREET: CONCERNS

There were concerns raised as part of the consultation about the project. These concerns, whilst not specifically related to the purpose of the consultation project, are worth noting and considering as part of ongoing strategy development and space design.

Traffic Management

Traffic management was a key area of concern amongst participants opposed to the project as well as those who broadly support the initiative. The bulk of the opposition to the project was based on concerns that the redevelopment of Southbank Boulevard would adversely affect traffic congestion on the street. Participants highlighted that peak hour traffic is an existing and ongoing issue for residents and commuters that use the road.

A significant portion of this concern originated from a lack of awareness about the exact proposal and fear that parts of Southbank Boulevard would be closed to traffic entirely.

Residential Amenity

As part of the consultation, participants expressed concerns that the public space would not adequately cater for the needs of local residents. Resident respondents to the survey highlighted a desire for the space

to first and foremost provide amenity to the local population and not function solely as a tourist destination.

Participants expressed a need for events, activity and noise from the space to be managed effectively so that it did not impact on local amenity. Overall, most of the concerns expressed related to a need for balance in the use of the space in order that the local population was not adversely affected.

PART D:
APPENDICES



APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your main connection to Southbank?
2. In Southbank, where do you, your family and friends currently go to access public space?
 - a. Why do you choose this location?
 - b. Are there any barriers to you accessing public space?
3. How familiar are you with Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street?
4. How do you currently use Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street?
5. Currently, does Southbank Boulevard or Dodds Street have a special feature, aspect or character that is important to you?
6. Thinking about the creation of new public space in Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street: What do you need from public space in Southbank?
7. How do you see yourself, your family and friends using the new public space in Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street in the future?
8. Thinking big, what's your vision for this space?
9. Tell us a little about yourself:
 - a. What is your age group?
 - b. If you live in Southbank, what best describes your household?
 - c. What is your gender identity?
 - d. What is your postcode?

APPENDIX A: WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Where do you currently go to access public space and why do you go there?
2. Are there any barriers to you accessing public space?
3. How do you currently use Southbank Boulevard?
4. What do you need from public space in Southbank?
5. What are the commonalities / differences between our uses of public space?
6. What would make Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street the world's best public space?
7. What features will contribute most to this perfect world scenario?
8. What is your group's vision for Southbank Boulevard and Dodds Street?

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT PROFILES

This section highlight a selection of typical responses that have been collected from the consultations.

Local visitor, Female. 25-29

"I come here with my husband for the theatre. We don't really come here for anything else. It would be nice to have some variety here with shops, food, and outdoor entertainment.

The new space needs to be pedestrian friendly, lit at night, and there needs to be activity in the area so that people can come and use it at all hours of the day. I would like to see this area become more accessible in the evenings with better lighting and more security."

Local worker, Female, 30-39

"The place I got to access public space is along the river I guess. There's not much open green space around here, it's a bit of a concrete jungle.

We need more variety of food options at different price points. More trees and green spaces, bike paths, accessible parking, better crosswalks, secure bike parking.

Would like to go outside more at lunchtime and have more shelter and shade. Would like to ride to work, would like to have meals, hang out with friends and see more art

My vision for the space is a cultural precinct, a desired destination that is cool and green with good food and coffee, lots of art."

Resident, Male, 18-24

"The public space I visit is the Clarendon St / South Melbourne market area- there is lots to do, interesting shops, cafes, things to buy and places to hang out. It is walking distance from home, and there is very little interesting public space in the Southbank area

Southbank public space needs things to do- places to eat, drink coffee and tea and buy things. It needs to incorporate greenery and trees. There are not enough of them in Southbank

I would use the new space as a great place to hang out and grab a coffee with friends on afternoons or weekends. If there were nice places to hang out in the area I would probably stay longer and visit the theatres more often

My vision is for a creative, seasonally changing space that offers new delights for Southbank residents so they can stay longer and appreciate the abundance of arts groups on our doorstep.”

Resident, Male, 60-69

“We go to Grant Street, Port Melbourne, and The Tan. There is also some communal space in our building.

On days that we would like to use the outdoors, we will drive to port Melbourne or bayside. It’s quite stuffy in the city and along Southbank Boulevard in summer. I don’t think it is very nice to sit out here because of all the concrete. It’s a heat island.

It’s a nice street, but it doesn’t really have any character.

It needs to be a space that is active on weekends and cool in summer. If there was a small cafe or tea room we could enjoy afternoons here similar to the botanic gardens (that cafe is horrible though, only for tourists. A tea and cake is \$20).

With the new public space we would probably spend more time outdoors and not drive as much on weekends going out of the city. It would be nice to have friends visit and stay in Southbank.

My vision is a space similar to Rathdowne Street or places in Port Melbourne where there is a nice village feel. Everyone comes down to the street for a quiet breakfast and to enjoy the sunshine.”

Resident, Female, 50-59

I travel mostly to Port Melbourne for public space. We don't spend very much time in Southbank for leisure. We are happy to travel. There is no natural light in Southbank. It can be very cold and windy.

I rarely use Southbank Boulevard other than for getting around Southbank when I drive.

We would use the space more if we could enjoy the sunshine and if there were interesting trees and planting that make the architecture of the buildings stand out more.

There needs to be a variety of offer. If you are to spend time in this area, there need to be more things to see and do outside. There needs to be more of a village feel. This won't be achieved just with public space. It would be good to have the features of a small village square where there is a good baker, newsagency, cafe, wine shop and maybe a deli. If this were the case, we would come down and do some shopping, pick up a paper and read it in the cafe. Or sit in the square and watch people - just like in Europe.

Overseas visitor, Female, 25-29

I am just exploring the city currently so have only walked Southbank a couple of times during city visits. It is nice to be by the water, I like Ponytail Island bar under the bridge

More green space would be nice, too many skyscrapers and not enough pleasant space to relax in and feel like you can get away from the hustle and bustle

I could see myself relaxing in nice leisure areas, eating and drinking in bars and restaurants, checking out the city views from the tall buildings

My vision is just somewhere nice to be able to relax and get away from the city. Maybe a separate, dog friendly area for residents to walk their dogs, as there doesn't seem to be much space for dog owners to let their dogs off for a run.

Resident, Male, 18-24

There is nowhere in Southbank so I go to the Botanic Gardens. It's the only space in the area

The barriers to access for me are a lack of amenities, too many roads and no public transport along the river on the south side.

Southbank Boulevard currently has absolutely zero special features. No unique architecture or spaces. It looks like any other commercial big city in the world.

The area needs low and mid level dwellings with a mixture of old architecture with extremely contemporary and uniquely Australian architecture. Thick grasses and native Australian plants with paths for cyclists and joggers as well as innovative playgrounds for kids. It needs trendy hospitality and cafes along with a use of laneways similar to inner city Melbourne creating shortcuts to the city and Southbank that are open and exposed to the elements.

I would use the space for picnics, lunches and a general space to spend a Friday afternoon as housing and balconies are too small to actually be a human on.

My vision is for open green spaces with native Australian plants and thick grasses with something that's similar to the volcano at the botanic gardens, the sounds of birds on top of the city noise with extremely unique community spaces and architecture with a space where dogs don't have to be on a lead.

Resident, Female, 60-69

We access public space by the Yarra - we love all the restaurants and activities available

I would like an area where we can walk, picnic and relax. I would also like a BBQ and kid's playground. I would like a farmers market My vision is for the space to hold craft markets, farmer's markets, BBQs, playgrounds, rubbish bins. A lake area would be my dream if possible.