

Moonee Ponds Creek Draft Strategic Opportunities Plan

ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

FULL REPORT

14 June 2019

Prepared by Global Research Ltd

For



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# INTRODUCTION

## Background

On 19 March 2019, City of Melbourne endorsed a draft Moonee Ponds Creek Strategic Opportunities Plan (MPC SOP) for public consultation. The Draft proposed a future vision for the Creek corridor to increase the creek’s ecological, recreational, cultural heritage and economic value. It would see the creek “become a thriving corridor that supports the liveability and resilience of the city”.

The Moonee Ponds Creek is an important north-south waterway in the City of Melbourne, that links several central city urban renewal precincts. The creek has been highly degraded by the impacts of industry and infrastructure over decades, and floods frequently impact the corridor.

The Draft Moonee Ponds Creek Strategic Opportunities Plan (MPC SOP) proposes a future vision for the creek corridor to increase the creek’s ecological, recreational, cultural heritage and economic value.

This vision is underpinned by six thematic Goals; Water Management, Open Space, Biodiversity, Movement, History and Culture, and Collaborative Governance. Thirty-one ‘Strategic Opportunities’ are presented to help realise these Goals.

## Engagement approach

Community and other stakeholder engagement on the draft MPC SOP took place between 20 March and 28 April 2019, with both on-line and face-to-face engagement activities. The purpose of the engagement was threefold:

* to raise awareness for Council’s draft vision
* to gather feedback on the key themes and the strategic opportunities presented – so as to refine the drafted list of ideas and establish if additional Opportunities should be added – and gauge whether any emerge as clear public priorities to advocate for
* to mobilise community support for action along the corridor.

Newspaper articles, a series of social media posts, plus paid advertisements invited the broader community, and particularly residents of suburbs neighbouring the creek to participate in one of five ‘pop-up’ engagement stations at Docklands Community Forum, Macaulay Train station, Kensington Community Festival, Errol Street Shopping and Kensington Village, or to complete a digital survey via participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/moonee-ponds-creek .

Over one hundred emails were sent to identified community organisations, recreation user groups, government agencies, property owners and resident associations, promoting the opportunity to be involved in the consultation process.

Traditional Owner groups, and ‘friends of’ groups were among some of the primary beneficiaries that were invited to individual consultation sessions.

When engaged face-to-face, participants were asked to mark their “top three” of the six Goals using stickers on large format banners. They were also encouraged to share their views on the Opportunities via ‘post-it’ notes or through the online survey.

All online survey respondents were required to choose their “top three” Goals and Opportunities, as well as explain why those ideas were important to them. An optional question gave space for people to suggest any additional opportunities that we should consider.

## Purpose

This document presents an analysis of the combined community engagement feedback received through the public consultation period. It provides City of Melbourne, partner agencies, and interested stakeholders with a comprehensive assessment of the statistical trends, along with a grouped interpretation of narrative contributions.

These results have been further synthesised in the Community Engagement Summary document.

Both the Draft Moonee Ponds Creek Strategic Opportunities Plan and the Analysis of Community Engagement Summary Report can be accessed via <https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/moonee-ponds-creek>.

## Methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative analysis has been undertaken to present the most popular Goals and Opportunities selected by participants and – in order of most frequently recurring – the range of comments they shared by way of explanation for their choices. Every comment recorded as part of the consultation activities has been read by analysts and grouped into common themes and topics prior to being synthesised in the discussion section within the body of the report.

To give a clear and consistent indication of the amount of comments received on each topic, the following key has been used to describe the relative number of comments on each topic:

* Substantial amount = 26–50
* Considerable amount = 16–25
* Moderate amount = 11–15
* Several comments = 8–10
* Small number = 4–7
* Few = 3
* Couple = 2

Synthesised results are presented first in charts, with findings discussed. The second part of this report provides a more in-depth representation of all the comments made on the Goals and Opportunities, including more general comments on the MPC SOP submitted via email or post.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| MOONEE PONDS CREEK FLOWS FOR 5KM THROUGH THE CITY OF MELBOURNE | AFTER 2025 URBAN DEVELOPMENT  WILL ACCELERATE | BY 2100 FLOODING RISKS  INCREASE SIGNIFICANTLY |

## Engagement reach and range

At face-to-face engagement activities, staff recorded a tally of all their interactions and estimates of the age range of individuals counted. On-line survey respondents were required to self-record their age group and postcode.

In total, 324 respondents provided feedback on the Moonee Ponds Creek Draft Strategic Opportunities Plan, consisting of:

* 122 Face-to-face contributors
* 105 Online survey respondents
* 10 emailed submissions

The total number of individuals reached during the engagement process was:

* 1,872 Participate Melbourne visitors
* 209 Face-to-face contacts
* Social media: 86,498 impressions, 884 reactions, 340 likes, 80 retweets/shares, 11,740 video views

Traditional Owner groups, and ‘friends of’ groups were invited to individual consultation sessions.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Engagement participation: | | | Engagement reach: | |
| FACE TO FACE CONTRIBUTORS | ONLINE SURVEY RESPONDENTS | EMAILED  SUBMISSIONS | FACE-TO-FACE CONTACTS | PARTICIPATE MELBOURNE VISITORS |
| Social media reach: | | | | |
| IMPRESSIONS | REACTIONS | LIKES | RETWEETS/SHARES | VIDEO VIEWS |

### Participant profile

#### Respondent ages

This chart presents the seven age ranges of those who responded through the online survey and face-to-face activities. The green bar represents the total percentage of both engagement groups.

Of those who self-selected to participate in the online survey, or whose ages were estimated by staff at face-to-face activities, the largest proportion (79 or 27%), were aged between 35-44 years of age, with those aged under 18 years represented least. Across the age ranges, there were similar proportions of individuals who participated either online or face-to-face.

#### Place of residence

This chart presents the place of residence of those who responded through the Participate Melbourne online survey and through face-to-face activities. The green bar represents the total percentage of both engagement groups.

Of those who provided their place of residence in the online survey, or to staff at face-to-face activities, the largest proportion (112 or 40%), were from Kensington/Flemington; North Melbourne residents were the second largest group (34 or 12%). A high proportion of respondents (87 or 31%) were from ‘other’ suburbs, which were suburbs not shown individually on the chart because only a small number of respondents were from each place.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SIX GOALS

Six Goals have been proposed to deliver the Strategic Opportunities Plan:

1. Water Management
2. Open Space
3. Biodiversity
4. Movement
5. History and Culture
6. Collaborative Governance

This section commences with analysis of the most important Goals selected by respondents and then presents a synthesis of the written comments made in the online survey, face-to-face community exercises, as well as in emails/documents sent to City of Melbourne.

### The frequency that each Goal was selected

The chart below presents the percentage of times each Goal was selected as one of the three most important Goals by engagement participants.

Participants were asked: **Which goals are most important to you?** – (Select your top three)

In total, 228 people answered this question.

**Biodiversity** was the most important Goal, selected by 73% or 166 participants. Overall, *natural environment* Goals were the three most commonly selected – **Biodiversity**, **Open Space** (68% or 154) and **Water Management** (64% or 146). Movement was a top three Goal for just over half of the participants (57% or 130). Human interpretation and management of the natural environment were the least commonly selected Goals – **History and Culture** (22% or 51) and **Collaborative Governance** (16% or 37).

## Why these Goals are considered important to respondents

Each Goal is discussed below, in order of popularity. The comments that were analysed come from the question asked of respondents: ***Why are these themes important to you?***, along with comments received in face-to-face engagement exercises with the public and in emails/documents received by City of Melbourne.

The total number of comments made on each of the Goals is presented and further broken down by the number of comments on particular topics. These numbers indicate the relative importance of each Goal and topic, based on how frequently they featured in respondents’ comments.

### Biodiversity 70 comments

A healthy waterway and thriving ecosystem.

#### Summary

* Restoring Moonee Ponds Creek to a natural state, developing healthy ecosystems and building habitats for flora and fauna are all important.
* Biodiversity is also linked with public enjoyment. Natural spaces are limited in the urban setting and the creek provides an excellent opportunity for the public to come together, engage with and appreciate the natural wildlife the creek offers.
* Litter and pollution negatively impact biodiversity in the creek. Rubbish, weeds, polluted water and contaminated soil are concerns.
* Preserving nature and minimising species loss is a priority, with wildlife placed under increasing pressure from urban development and climate change.

#### Healthy ecosystems 15 comments

A moderate number of participants who viewed **Biodiversity** as a key goalspoke of the importance of healthy ecosystems and the vital services they provide. These participants wanted to see a “thriving ecosystem”, a cleaner and natural creek and habitat provided for a diverse range of wildlife. Participants generally wanted the creek restored to a more natural state, which would in turn provide a range of benefits including attracting wildlife, improving liveability, providing educational opportunities and managing the impacts of climate change. The following comments discuss these ideas:

“Biodiversity - This area has been neglected & degraded for too long. It's important this area undergoes ecological restoration for the Indigenous flora & fauna to thrive.”

“Biodiversity. A cleaner, naturalised creek will attract more wildlife.”

“Biodiversity - micro/biology is just awesome. All the algae, bacteria, vegetation, birds, insects, animals... All have an important role to play. We should protect them while we still can, and create excellent opportunities to teach the community about the importance of biodiversity.”

#### Public enjoyment 14 comments

A moderate number of participants supported enhancing biodiversity for the benefits to public enjoyment. They stated that they currently use the creek and enjoy the opportunity it offers to experience and connect with nature. It was suggested that improving biodiversity would make the area more attractive and bring people together to enjoy the natural environment. It was also noted by a few participants that natural spaces are currently limited in the urban setting and therefore opportunities should be taken to bring nature back into the city. The following quotes best summarise these ideas:

“As a runner and cyclist movement (theme) through the space is important and the reason I do cardio work not on a treadmill is to see the outdoors and biodiveristy (theme)!”

“Biodiversity: Not only good for the environment to encourage Australian flora and fauna, but good for the community to come together, appreciate the parklands and benefit the economic status of the community.”

“Reclaiming and providing habitat to ecology / flora and fauna which is quickly being lost in cities and opportunity to engage with nature”

#### Litter and pollution 11 comments

A moderate number of participants drew attention to current litter and pollution issues in Moonee Ponds Creek. Comments noted problems with weeds, litter, polluted water and contaminated soil and were particularly concerned about the impact this is having on local flora and fauna. The following quote best summarises these ideas:

“Water management - the creek is so important for fauna, but it's pretty disgusting at certain regions, with a lot of rubbish and smells plaguing it”

#### Preservation of nature 10 comments

Several comments mentioned the importance of preserving the natural spaces we have left. Participants noted that biodiversity is currently a “natural crisis” and wildlife is being placed under increased pressure from urban development and climate change. Preserving natural areas and minimising further species loss was therefore supported. This was one comment:

“Biodiversity- the world is all we have. Cherish both the fauna and flora endemic to Victoria. Celebrate introduced species capable of thriving.”

#### Urban conflict 6 comments

A small number of participants specifically mentioned the current conflict between urban and natural environments. Comments called for reclamation of nature in the urban setting, which is currently being lost in a sea of concrete, as outlined in the following quote:

“Reclaiming and providing habitat to ecology / flora and fauna which is quickly being lost in cities and opportunity to engage with nature”

#### Other comments 14 comments

A few participants supported the **Biodiversity** Goal for the chance to educate the public on the importance of biodiversity and to foster a sense of engagement with nature. This was one of these comments:

“Protecting biodiversity is an important consideration when opening up spaces to community; signage and programs to involve community to help build pride and a sense of ownership over the space would further help protect the area.”

A couple of participants noted the importance of biodiversity in relation to managing the impacts of climate change, as discussed in the following comment:

“Biodiversity and water management are important because we need to fortify our urban and non-urban areas with significant green, ecological, and climate change mitigation areas if we’re going to keep Melbourne and our planet habitable.”

Two participants discussed in significant detail the diverse range of bird life the creek supports. These participants were particularly concerned that extensive development in the area, including the provision of more cycling infrastructure would come at the expense of bird populations.

A small number of participants expressed general support for the **Biodiversity** Goal, without offering further explanation.

### Open space 97 comments

A diverse network of open spaces to support the growing needs of the city.

#### Summary

* Open space is highly supported for the recreational benefits it offers. Space is valued for activities such as jogging, dog walking, engaging with nature and generally enjoying the creek and surrounding environment.
* Liveability and wellbeing are closely linked with open space – the creek provides an effective break from the highly developed city environment. Usable, natural and safe public spaces are necessary to bring people together and provide some relief from the urban setting.
* The current condition of Moonee Ponds Creek is viewed unfavourably and is visually unappealing. Open space is an important component of improving the overall aesthetic of the area.

#### Recreation opportunities 23 comments

A considerable number of participants considered **Open space** a key Goal for the possible recreational opportunities. These comments noted the potential to make use of the park and environment surrounding the creek for activities such as jogging, engaging with nature, dog walking, accessing the water and flying a kite or drone. Others simply noted the chance to create a safe recreational space to be enjoyed by residents, children and the wider public. Some of these comments included:

“Open Space: There is a lost opportunity for the community to utilise the park and surrounds of the creek”

“Movement and open spaces - safe car free corridors and spaces that I feel comfortable having my children run around freely.”

“Open Space - I use Travancore park frequently with my kids, and occasionally want to fly a kite or my drone.”

A moderate number of these comments made suggestions regarding what participants would like to see in open spaces at Moonee Ponds Creek. Suggestions included a playground, scooter park, place to observe birds, pet farm, exercise park, engagement hub, campsite, dog park, picnic area and a passive recreational space.

#### Improved liveability and wellbeing 23 comments

A considerable number of participants also supported the Goal of **Open space** for its benefits to liveability and wellbeing. These participants viewed open space as a critical component of good urban design and noted the conflict between urban development and natural areas in Melbourne. It was suggested that areas in inner Melbourne are becoming heavily urbanised and quality open spaces are necessary for wellbeing and general peace of mind. The following quotes summarise these ideas:

“Open Space is a no-brainer as our inner suburbs are overdeveloped losing gardens to bricks and concrete.”

“Open space - because Melbourne and its surrounds have become ugly with over-development and over-populated. We have lost our spaciousness and it is important to physical, mental and spiritual health to get it back.”

“The inner area of Melbourne is desperately short of usable open space. This should be increased, provided it can be done within the parameters of improving biodiversity & movement.”

#### Bringing people together 9 comments

Several participants valued open space for the benefit of bringing people together. It was noted that if the space is attractive and usable, it is more likely to engage and bring communities together, thereby enhancing liveability and public enjoyment. The following quote best describes this idea:

“Open space - kid and pet friendly spaces provide a great benefit to the whole community. It draws people to the town, which then spend money etc in all the local shops.”

#### Improved aesthetic 8 comments

Several participants spoke of this Goal regarding the impact that open space has on the aesthetic appeal of an area. The area was described as currently a “wasteland” and an “eyesore”, and more open space was viewed as necessary to improve attractiveness. This idea is summarised simply in the following quote:

“Open Space. People would spend time next to the creek if it wasn't a concrete eyesore.”

#### Safety 5 comments

A small number of comments spoke of safety and the benefits of increased open space for safety. A few participants mentioned that they would feel safer in open space that is attractive, well-lit and car-free. It was also noted that having more people in an area brings improved feelings of safety. One suggested crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), while another suggested that regardless of the way Moonee Ponds Creek is developed, it should be done in a way that considers safety and security. This was one comment:

“I’d feel safer to walk if there were more people around + attraction + lighting”

#### Other comments 19 comments

A small number of participants supported inclusivity in open spaces. It was suggested that spaces should accommodate the needs of everyone, young and old, as noted in the following quote:

“we need to get people moving + enaging with each other for liveable cities designed for 8-80 year olds!”

A few made specific suggestions or referred to specific areas regarding open space. These comments are included below:

“next to Macaulay Station theres a steep bit of land that’s a waste. If it were leveled it could be utilised for open space”

“don't lose the rocky waterfall at Macaulay station - lots of people sit, watch and listen to the water”

“Open Space stepped ahead of others because of the enticing suggestion in the plan of significant widening of the open space into E-Gate and F-Gate.”

One noted the benefits of open space in managing the impacts of population growth and climate change. Another stated that open spaces and green infrastructure are important for acting as a sponge during storm events as well as preserving nature. A small number of participants expressed general support for **Open space**. These comments noted that the area is currently lacking in open space and that land is not being used to its full potential.

### Water management 36 comments

A resilient creek adapted to current and future extreme weather events.

#### Summary

* Effective water management influences the success of other Goals.
* Flooding inhibits movement, disturbs open space use, threatens biodiversity, undermines the natural environment, damages surrounding infrastructure, and impacts open space usability.
* Pollution, particularly rubbish in the creek is a problem. It degrades the natural environment and detracts from public enjoyment of the area.
* Effective water management that considers climate change impacts, improves liveability, and ensures the creek isn’t an arid environment.

#### Need to reduce flooding 10 comments

Several comments simply identified that flooding occurs in the area and needs to be managed to reduce the human impacts and damage to surrounding infrastructure. Because of this reason, **Water management** was considered an essential Goal to deliver. This was a typical comment:

“Water management is essential to ensure water quality and to manage any flooding issues.”

#### Reduce pollution and retain water quality 9 comments

Several participants identified the need to improve water quality by reducing pollution of the creek. The most commonly discussed pollutant was rubbish. This was a typical comment:

“water quality m

anagement is important for maintaining biodiversity in the Moonee ponds creek and to reduce the impacts of flooding on surrounding infrastructure.”

#### Other comments 17 comments

A small number of participants discussed a variety of other topics. A small number of participants discussed climate change, stating that water management will become more important and challenging as the impacts of climate change increase. This was a typical comment:

“Biodiversity and water management are important because we need to fortify our urban and non-urban areas with significant green, ecological, and climate change mitigation areas if we’re going to keep Melbourne and our planet habitable.”

Other topics discussed by participants were: managing water to maintain health and safety; improving city liveability through improved water management; avoiding arid and desert-like conditions.

A small number of participants provided general support for this Goal.

### Movement 79 comments

A highly accessible and connected creek corridor.

#### Summary

* Moonee Ponds Creek is a significant commuting corridor and improvements that promote safe and efficient pedestrian and cycle movement are welcomed.
* Current cycling and pedestrian infrastructure are criticised, with many improvements suggested. Bike paths are uneven, poorly lit, overrun with weeds, subject to flooding and too narrow to accommodate current use levels.
* Safety is a high priority for cyclists and pedestrians who want better maintained, well-lit trails. Cycle separation from pedestrians is necessary to support safe and efficient movement through the corridor.

#### Cycling and pedestrian movement 34 comments

A substantial number of participants broadly supported the Goal of **Movement** for the benefits to cycling and pedestrian mobility along Moonee Ponds Creek, particularly for the purpose of commuting. The majority of comments discussed cycling and noted the importance of people being able to ride to work. Participants frequently noted that they currently use the trail to get to work and were consequently supportive of any improvements to make commuting a more efficient, safe and enjoyable process. These quotes are indicative of many received:

“movement is important to me as i use the creek path to cycle into the city”

“Movement- as a daily bike commuter I love the creek and want it’s ability to be used as a means of transport enhanced.”

“I believe that the Moonee Ponds Creek path could be the best commuter cycle path in Melbourne, as it has the unique advantage of no road crossings to navigate, whilst still being a relatively direct route from the North Western suburbs all the way to the Docklands, therefore I see the movement theme as by far the most important. However, the more attractive the ride is, the more enticing it will be to the potential cyclists.”

Improved cycling infrastructure and connections were widely supported, with comments indicating that the creek is not living up to its full potential as a pedestrian and cycling thoroughfare, as noted in the following comment:

“Movement - Moonee Ponds Creek Trail is sub-standard and has a lot of potential to be a major thoroughfare for both bikes and pedestrians (separated).”

A small number of participants supported this Goal for the benefits of promoting active transport and removing cars from the road. This was one of these comments:

“Support active transport for health and environmental outcomes.”

#### Improvements needed 19 comments

A considerable number of participants who selected **Movement** as a key Goal commented on the current condition of the Moonee Ponds Creek trail, implying that improvements are necessary to facilitate smooth and enjoyable movement in the area. All comments on the current condition of the trail were critical, describing the area as neglected, dirty, uninviting, sub-standard and “a wasteland”. Participants questioned the safety and enjoyability of the current bike path – stating that it is uneven, cracked, poorly lit and overrun with weeds. Issues with regular flooding and the path not being wide enough to accommodate the volume of users were also noted. The following quotes are indicative of many of these comments:

“The area is a wasteland and wasted opportunity to use a large corridor for improved amenity. It is unwelcoming with flooding, no lighting and concrete surrounds. The area is not a desirable place to be and is only used as a shuttle area to get you to where you want to go. It is not a destination itself.”

“Movement - there is great potential for the Moonee Ponds Path to be a valuable cycling link but at the moment sections of it are genuinely dangerous, especially for beginner cyclists. It needs a lot of work.”

#### Safety 13 comments

A moderate number of suggestions were made to improve the safety of movementthrough Moonee Ponds Creek. Comments typically expanded on the matter of the condition of the trail discussed above and suggested that it should be better maintained, with a level surface and improved lighting at night. The following are examples of these comments:

“levelling of surface of bike path along Moonee Ponds Creek, make it safe.”

“better lighting on bike path (solar + sensor lighting)”

Several comments on safety called for better separation of lanes in cycling infrastructure. While participants did not typically offer an explanation, it was implied that separation would improve safety for everyone and facilitate easy and efficient movement through the corridor. This is summarised in the following quote:

“Movement - I cycle & walk as a form of active transport, also for sport & recreation. It's becoming increasing more dangerous to ride on roads with poor or lack of cycling infrastructure, negligent drivers & congested roads. Separated, efficient & effective bike paths (designed by people who actually cycle) are necessary for our city to be liveable & more people cycling to reduce congestion. So many bike paths/lanes in the CoM have been very poorly designed & are quite unsafe.”

#### Specific locations 9 comments

Several participants referred to specific locations in Melbourne in their reasons for supporting the Goal of **Movement**. The majority of these comments simply favoured better connections between north-south and east-west suburbs, noting that cycling between the Docklands areas, the northern suburbs and Kensington is currently difficult or unsafe, as outlined in the following comment:

“There are big opportunities to improve the Moonee Ponds Creek and nearby areas. There's currently no safe way to ride from Kensington to North Melbourne - none of the bridges that connect these suburbs have a bike lane on them that is as wide as bicycle handlebars [Movement]”

One specifically stated that Melbourne’s north and north-west suburbs are lacking in cycling infrastructure. Another comment presented below discusses the safety of bridges on Macaulay Road and Arden Street:

“The existing road bridges in Macaulay Rd and Arden St are a very significant hazard for cyclists and are in urgent need of redesign and replacement. I take my life in my hands every time I ride across these bridges; the existing bike lanes are very narrow - almost token - and offer no real protection for cyclists.”

#### Recreational movement 5 Comments

A small number of participants supported the **Movement** Goal for the enjoyment of cycling in the area. The following comments effectively summarise this sentiment:

“I like to cycle through a natural environment, even if it results in a slower commuter trip.”

“I cycle for leisure. I moved to a Melbourne from overseas 6 years ago and cycling is wonderful for exploring my city, keeping fit and enjoying the fresh air all year round I am not a very brave cyclist and prefer to use paths away from traffic. I love seeing the city and nature co existing. It's wonderful. Gardiner Creek is one of my favorites with the reserves and highways.”

#### Other comments 14 comments

A moderate number of other comments were made that did not fit into a consistent topic. One participant supported provision for pedestrians and dog walkers, but not for bikes. One stated that fishermen are creating conflicts with cyclists and pedestrians. One called for stronger policing of cyclists. One stated the importance of movement, but through “quality spaces”. One supported the contribution towards managing the impacts of climate change and population growth. One was concerned the area would become a “monoculture of high-speed cyclists, to the detriment of others”. One mentioned that movement is essential for community participation and passive surveillance.

A few participants expressed general support for **Movement**, without offering further explanation.

### History and culture 24 comments

A celebrated past and shared vision for the future.

#### Summary

* Recognition of Aboriginal peoples and their culture is valued highly.
* Acknowledgement of the Aboriginal connection to Moonee Ponds Creek is a step towards righting past wrongs and respecting the importance of the area for Aboriginal peoples.
* Educational interpretation strategies that increase public appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal peoples, knowledge and history are supported.
* Breaking down cultural barriers and enhancing Melbourne’s identity is linked to this Goal.

#### Indigenous recognition 10 comments

Several participants supported the Goal of **History and culture** for the opportunities to recognise the Indigenous people’s connection to the area. It was suggested that redevelopment and regeneration of the creek should include acknowledgment of Aboriginal history and culture as well as the importance of Moonee Ponds Creek to Indigenous people. For a couple of participants, this was seen as a step towards righting past wrongs. The following comments were made:

“We need to be recognising and prioritising the history of this land and the Indigenous people who's land it still is. This can help forge an understanding and appreciation of Indigenous people and history.”

“… Foregrounding Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung voices in the Moonee Ponds Creek Collaboration is the most critical act of reparation to the acknowledgement that this always was and always will be Aboriginal land.”

#### Educational benefits 6 comments

A small number of participants favoured opportunities to educate the public on the history and culture of the area. It was expected that this would increase an appreciation and understanding of Indigenous people history and knowledge, the importance of which is outlined in this quote:

“History and culture - it's a given. What is a country without a past? How do we learn to grow, without our predecessor's experiences and traditions?”

#### Other comments 8 comments

The Goal of **History and culture** was believed to foster a connection with the Indigenous culture by a few participants. These comments supported building connections and “breaking down barriers” with the traditional owners of the land as well as understanding how they lived with the creek. One comment stated that the Goal was important as a way to give identity to the city. This was one of these comments:

“Also, I would love to see some connection to the traditional owners of the land with information about how Indigenous people used and lived with the creek.”

One participant discussed the history behind the naming of Moonee Ponds Creek. Another comment is outlined below:

“History and culture .... what can I say ...read Blue Lake!!!! we owe it to future generations to restore the "Moonee Moonee Chain of Ponds" (quoting a beautiful by the Orbweavers).”

A couple of participants expressed general support for the **History and culture** Goal without offering further explanation.

### Collaborative governance 23 comments

Advocate for transformational change.

#### Summary

* Collaborative governance is deemed necessary to progress the development of Moonee Ponds Creek.
* A variety of groups have linked interests, roles and responsibilities in the creek’s management.
* Groups must work together to achieve productive and positive results.

#### Critical for progress 10 comments

Several participants supported the Goal of **Collaborative governance** as they believe it is critical for progress. Comments noted the challenges associated with managing the creek given the overlapping roles and responsibilities of the different agencies and parties involved. Comments noted that it is essential to consider how these plans for the creek would be implemented, with a few suggesting that nothing would be achieved without the support from all levels and divisions of government. One suggested giving power to a central body to manage the creek, while another noted the importance of working with the public to ensure they are given a level of investment and ownership. These ideas are expressed in the following comments:

“The city of Melbourne won't be able to do these works on their own and collaborative work is crucial for the success of any public spaces at present. Locals need to have a say in their priorities so that they help conserve projects and enforce them.”

“MPC presents unique governance challenges given the overlapping roles and responsibilities and the myriad of agencies and parties. Well meaning attempts at revitalization have been thwarted by this fact in the past.”

#### Multiple interested parties 6 comments

A small number of participants viewed the Goal of **Collaborative governance** as necessary, given the multiple groups with an interest in Moonee Ponds Creek. It was noted that the creek has lots of users and runs through many suburbs, so it is important that all groups work together. These were some comments:

“There are lots of creek users and it runs through multiple suburbs - need to get everyone on board and pulling in same direction - otherwise things are half done and money wasted (collab gov).”

“All six are important. Preference on Collaboration is for broader contextual reasons building on the productivity of the Moonee Ponds Creek Catchment Collaboration run by Melbourne Water at the behest of the City of Melbourne and Melbourne Water's parallel Healthy Waterways Strategy refresh Catchment Collaborations.”

#### Other comments 7 comments

A couple of participants mentioned CityLink. One stated that CityLink has already caused significant damage to the creek with no one taking responsibility for mitigation measures. The other stated that CityLink should provide more noise barriers if open space was to be developed and that those working at the railway should take more steps to manage litter. These were some other comments:

“Moonee Ponds/Activist friends of MP Creek”

“Melbourne Water - problem because of litter traps in south racecourse rd, regard the creek as a drain and there is a misunderstanding of the water conditions that has meant that they're planting a banksia etc. have all died”

A couple of participants expressed general support for the **Collaborative governance** Goal without offering further explanation.

### Discussion of inter-connected Goals 36 comments

#### Summary

* The success of individual Goals is dependent on and influenced by the success of others.
* Water management is important to manage flooding, which is inhibiting movement, damaging biodiversity and impacting the usability of open space.
* Open space contributes to enjoyment of movement through Moonee Ponds Creek and offers opportunities for water management.
* Biodiversity enhances water management and can protect and enhance open space.
* Movement is more enjoyable when Moonee Ponds Creek’s biodiversity and open space are enhanced.

#### Water management 14 comments

A moderate number of participants commented that the other Strategic Opportunity Plan Goals are contingent on **Water management**, most importantly reducing the impacts of flooding and subsequent pollution.

Specifically, **Movement** is impacted by paths being flooded, which currently impacts rider and walker access. In some instances, paths become unusable. This was one participant’s comment:

“Water management is important primarily because of its impact on movement. The area around the creek floods every time there is a major rain event and that impacts not just the cycling trails next to it but also the major roads which is dangerous.”

**Biodiversity** progress was considered to be contingent on improvements to water quality and reducing the negative impacts of flood events. The point was also made that the approaches used to manage flooding need to enhance, rather than detract from biodiversity:

“Water management is key, having enough water to support new plantings, filtration and reducing speed of flood waters. Managing movement of water, pollution, rubbish, people, pets to enable the creation of a wildlife corridors and islands.”

Regarding the **Open space** Goal, it was considered essential to manage flooding impacts to ensure enhanced open space remains usable. This was one comment:

“Many [strategic opportunities] are contingent on addressing flood mitigation to convert the present, compromised open space to more publicly usable open space to provide for the large population increases of the adjoining urban renewal areas.”

#### Open space 10 comments

A small number of participants supported the **Open space** Goal, believing it would also enhance the Goal of **Movement**. It was recognised that Moonee Ponds Creek currently forms an important commuting corridor and that movement would be enhanced if it were through quality open spaces, as described in the following quote:

“Currently the creek corridor provides great connectivity but it an eyesore. Movement needs to be the key consideration but its needs to be through quality spaces.”

A few participants believed the **Water management** Goal may be achieved through the provision of open space. It was noted that the “wetland nature” of the creek would naturally require open space and that “green infrastructure” would act as a sponge during storm events.

A couple stated that open space should be provided in a way that supports the Goal of **Biodiversity**, as noted in the following quote:

“Open space is at a premium in urban Melbourne, and intelligent development that encourages biodiversity is crucial.”

One participant stated that the Goal of **History and culture** would be achieved if open space is done well.

#### Biodiversity 9 comments

Several participants made comments indicating that the Goal of **Biodiversity** is linked with the success of other Goals. Most common were links with **Water management**, discussed by a small number of participants. It was noted that efforts to improve water management should be matched with restoring biodiversity to improve water quality and provide benefits for environmental conservation and human recreation. One participant stated that it is important to manage the risk of flooding, but in ways that enhance, rather than deplete biodiversity. This was one comment:

“Biodiversity along with water management must be integrated to optimally provide multiple benefits, for both environmental conservation and human recreation.”

A couple of participants noted that **Biodiversity** can be protected and enhanced through **Open space**. It was noted that providing for biodiversity through open space could offer a range of benefits including: strengthening the resilience of open space to storm events and climate change; enhancing the role of the creek as a habitat corridor while improving habitat links to adjoining open space; and, providing the community with a connection to nature.

A couple of participants mentioned the Goal of **History and culture**. One stated that history and culture would follow on naturally if enhancing open space and biodiversity is done successfully. The other stated that history and culture is a part of biodiversity and recognised the importance of restoring biodiversity to its standard prior to European settlement. This was that comment:

“Biodiversity includes history and culture. It is impossible to wind back the hands of time but great to see effort put into revegetation which may improve biodiversity. Rivers are the cooling system to help mitigate the heating of hard surfaces. My mum remembers walking along the creek before it was turned into a drain. I’m now living in Cade Way and think often about how the area I live in, prior to European settlement and the damage that’s been done to the people who lived here and to the plants and animals.”

The following quote explains the link between the Goals of **Biodiversity** and **Movement**:

“As a runner and cyclist movement (theme) through the space is important and the reason I do cardio work not on a treadmill is to see the outdoors and biodiveristy (theme)!”

#### Movement 3 comments

A couple of participants suggested that the Goal of **Biodiversity** should support **Movement** as they enjoy the chance to engage with nature when they travel through the Moonee Ponds Creek corridor.

One comment, outlined below, stated “everything else will fall into place” once the Goal of movement is achieved:

“If the movement of people and bicycles can be a high priority then everything else will fall into place as people come to use this space more and more.”

# POPULARITY OF OPPORTUNITIES

This section commences with analysis of the options selected by respondents when asked to identify the three Opportunities, of the 31 proposed, that they would most like to see created for Moonee Ponds Creek. A synthesis is then presented of the written comments made in the online survey, in the face-to-face community exercises and in emails and documents sent to the City of Melbourne, describing why these Opportunities are important.

### The frequency that each Opportunity was selected

Participants were asked to select three out of the 31 Opportunities that they would most like created for Moonee Ponds Creek, with the question: ***Which opportunities would you most like to see created for Moonee Ponds Creek?*** – *(Select your top three).*

The chart on the following page presents the percentage of times each Opportunity was selected as one of the top three Opportunities by participants.

#### Result

The popularity of Opportunities is presented in the chart on the following page. In total, 105 people answered this question.

**Moonee Ponds Creek Cycling and Walking Trails Length of Creek (M6)** was by far the most important Opportunity for participants, selected by 23% or 52 participants. Other Opportunities that were selected as important by more than 15 participants were: **Moonee Ponds Creek Forest (B5)** (10% or 22); **Travancore Park Creek Naturalisation (W2)** (9% or 21); **Redesign of Bridges (W1)** (8% or 19); and, **The Connected Veloway** (M3) (8% or 18).

### Number (horizontal axis) and percentage of times each opportunity was selected

0 11 22 33 44 55

## Why these Opportunities were considered important by respondents

Below this table is a synthesis of all the comments received on each opportunity. While some of these comments were recorded by staff at face-to-face activities or received via email, the majority of these comments came from answers to the online survey question, ***Why are these opportunities important to you***?

### Summary table of the narrative points made in relation to each Opportunity

| 31 OPPORTUNITIES WERE PRESENTED | WE HEARD | NUMBER OF COMMENTS |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Moonee Ponds Creek Cycling and Walking Trails Length of Creek (M6) | * Cycling safety and condition improvements * Walking and cycling network improvements * Improve Melbourne connectivity * Benefits of prioritising active transport * Community use, wellbeing and cohesion * A variety of positive and negative cycle path comments | 60 |
| Moonee Ponds Creek Forest (B5) | * Increased biodiversity, wildlife habitat and water quality improvements * A variety of comments discussing urban forest benefits | 21 |
| Travancore Park Creek Naturalisation (W2) | * Returning the creek to its natural state * A variety of environment improvements topics | 19 |
| The Connected Veloway (M3) | * Walking and cycling improvements * Improved safety from improved cycle infrastructure * Cycle connectivity for commuting * Vehicle reduction and general support | 19 |
| Redesign of Bridges (W1) | * Redesign bridges for safety * Better connections from redesigned bridges * Other topics, including heritage, flooding and human interaction | 18 |
| Macaulay Terraces (OS4) | * Open space public land for recreation use * A variety of environmental and community benefits will be delivered | 16 |
| Native Grassland Restoration (B6) | * Improved amenity and public enjoyment * Improved natural environment, reduced emissions and general support | 14 |
| Expanded Creek Environs (OS3) | * Improved natural amenity * Improved open space, increasingly important as population grows * Water management particularly with regard to flooding | 14 |
| Dynon Canal Cycle Link (M2) | * Enhanced active transport experience through improved cycling and walking * Cycle safety improvements * Improved connectivity, encouragement of cycling and reduced emissions | 13 |
| Flemington Bridge Station Connection Upgrade (M1) | * Improved cycle commuting, connectivity and safety * Reduced cycle congestion and better train access | 13 |
| Arden-Macaulay Pedestrian Bridges (M5) | * Improved connectivity between Melbourne suburbs * Improvements to cycling infrastructure and safety * Improved accessible space and general amenity | 12 |
| The Research Wetlands (B8) | * Restoration of biodiversity and the creek’s natural state | 10 |
| Mt Alexander Road Nature Gateway (W3) | * Improved amenity and engagement with nature | 9 |
| CityLink Land Bridge (B1) | * Support for connectivity, some improvement suggestions proposed | 9 |
| Fisherman’s Bend Connection (M4) | * Improved connections, safety and pedestrians and cycling conditions supported | 7 |
| Moonee Ponds Creek Civic Overflow Route Central (W5) | * Improvements to access and space provision, flood management, good management needed | 7 |
| Moonee Ponds Creek Art Trail Length of Creek (H1) | * A colourful space, telling traditional stories and benefiting the whole community | 7 |
| Macaulay Green Links (OS2) | * Open space and biodiversity improvements | 7 |
| Levees as Places for People (OS1) | * An enhanced space will improve recreation use and community respect | 7 |
| Expanded Salt Marsh Zone (B3) | * Support for regeneration of native aquatic plants, integration with other Opportunities | 6 |
| CityLink Water Collection (W10) | * Improved water management, water quality and improvement to surrounding areas | 6 |
| Novel Habitats (B7) | * Habitat and biodiversity restoration supported | 5 |
| Docklands Biodiversity Hotspot (B4) | * A variety of ideas including increased biodiversity, boating, native vegetation restoration | 5 |
| Travancore Park Ponds (W9) | * Benefits to water management, biodiversity and water open space supported, alternative underground storage suggested | 5 |
| E-Gate Saltmarsh and Mangrove Reserve (B2) | * Biodiversity benefits, particularly for tidal marine life | 4 |
| Langford Road Linear Stormwater Park (W6) | * Increased recreation space and biodiversity enhancement for the growing population | 4 |
| E-Gate Stormwater Park (W7) | * Working with nature to improve wetlands and accommodate flooding | 4 |
| Debneys Water Park (W4) | * General comments, one supporting Moonee Valley Council design | 2 |
| Levee Banks Water Storage (W8) | * Environmental sensitivity needed in delivering this Opportunity | 2 |
| Moonee Ponds Creek Mouth – A Community Hotspot (OS5) | * Natural environment improvements | 1 |
| Community Canvas (H2) | * One comment opposed wasted energy and light pollution | 1 |

## What was said about each Opportunity

### Moonee Ponds Creek Cycling and Walking Trails Length of Creek (M6) 60 comments

#### Cycling safety and condition improvements 15 comments

A moderate number of participants who supported the **Moonee Ponds Creek Cycling and Walking Trails** Opportunity referred to the current condition of cycling infrastructure in the area and suggested that more could be done to improve the safety of the track. It was noted that current infrastructure is prone to flooding and is narrow, bumpy and has multiple blind bends. The opportunity was viewed favourably as a safe way for cyclists and pedestrians to move through the city, away from roads – and participants wanted to see separated, adequately maintained, well-lit and reliable infrastructure. These were some comments:

“Trail needs massive improvements for cyclists. It has multiple blind bends, is narrow, prone to flooding and is bumpy in parts.”

“M6 - Well separated and night-lit pedestrian and bike paths are good to reduce traffic and improve health”

#### Walking and cycling network improvements 13 comments

A moderate number of participants simply favoured this Opportunity for its benefits for walkers and cyclists. It was noted that existing tracks are regularly used for commuting and that there is room for general improvement to the condition and reliability of walking and cycling networks. This would consequently encourage the uptake of active transport in the area, which would have a range of flow-on benefits, as discussed in the following comment:

“M6 - I believe that the Moonee Ponds Creek offers the best opportunity to create a cycling superhighway from the North Western Suburbs (I live in Strathmore) to the Docklands and City of Melbourne. Construction of a such a cycling highway would almost certainly entice thousands of cycling commuters to be using it within 5 years. This path could offer a non-stop trip from as far North as Craigieburn, and with the increasing availability of electric bicycles, it would offer the fastest possible route from at least 20km away. Clearly this would be far cheaper than creating the same capacity on our roads or public transport system, and would be more than paid for by the health benefits gained by those utilising it.”

#### Improve Melbourne connectivity 9 comments

Several participants specifically supported this Opportunity for its improvements to connectivity within Melbourne. Connecting more parts of the city with cycling and walking infrastructure was viewed positively by all of these participants. The following quote summarises the sentiment of these comments:

“M6; cycleways for easy transport options, yes please. Connected & joining other tracks or hubs very beneficial.”

#### Benefits of prioritising active transport 6 comments

A small number of participants drew attention to the benefits of planning for active transport and shifting the focus away from cars. It was noted that the Opportunity would encourage the public to walk or cycle more, thereby reducing congestion, promoting health and improving the state of the environment through vehicle emissions reduction. Some of these ideas are discussed in the quotes below:

“1. For commuting and leisure. Cycle paths will enable and encourage people to travel for work and study and reduce the numbers of cars on the road and free up public transport for others. Good for the environment and more affordable, also physical health and mental wellbeing.”

“The need for improved cycling and active transport infrastructure is critical, particularly with regard to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The existing ad-hoc bike paths need to be taken seriously as important transport corridors”

#### Community use, wellbeing and cohesion 5 comments

A small number of participants stated that this Opportunity would be well-used by the community and improve general liveability and wellbeing. It was suggested that walking and cycling tracks would bring people together, connect recreational spaces, improve health and provide opportunities to engage with nature. Some of these ideas are presented below:

“I believe in ecologically sustainable transportation options that unify our community and provide safe spaces for women, children and families, and which respect the cultural diversity of our communities.”

“I cycle for leisure. I moved to a Melbourne from overseas 6 years ago and cycling is wonderful for exploring my city, keeping fit and enjoying the fresh air all year round I am not a very brave cyclist and prefer to use paths away from traffic. I love seeing the city and nature co existing. It's wonderful. Gardiner Creek is one of my favorites with the reserves and highways.”

#### A variety of positive and negative cycle path comments 12 comments

One participant was opposed to a high-speed commuter cycle path through Debneys Park as it cuts through the children’s play area. One stated that Melbourne should emulate Adelaide’s cycling infrastructure. One stated that this Opportunity would be “great to take a date to”.

One other participant criticised the creation of a separated high-speed commuter path for cyclists on the western side of the creek as the existing path on the eastern side is dangerous for pedestrians. They stated:

“Any shared paths on the western side should be recreational cyclists and pedestrian priority (Racecourse Rd to Macaulay Rd). No formal path should be created along the western side between Macaulay Rd and Arden St; this narrow section should remain grassy open space and pedestrian access only. Ditto for the western side downstream of the Arden St Bridge. Formation of a pedestrian link beyond AusNet would be problematical due to the railway lines/CityLink infrastructure/proximity of the waterway.”

Several participants expressed general support for the Moonee Ponds Creek Cycling and Walking Trails Opportunity without providing further explanation.

### Moonee Ponds Creek Forest (B5) 21 comments

#### Increased biodiversity, wildlife habitat and water quality improvements 8 comments

Several participants supported the **Moonee Ponds Creek Forest** Opportunity for its benefits to wildlife through improving habitat and biodiversity. The creek was described as being in urgent need of vegetation and a forest was viewed as an excellent way to restore biodiversity. The flow-on effects of restoring biodiversity included creating more habitat for wildlife, encouraging the continued greening of the corridor, enhancing Indigenous species relationships and improving the water quality of the creek system. The following comment sums up these ideas:

“B4, B5 and B8 are important as they will provide important habitat for native animals, thus increasing the biodiversity and water quality of the creek system.”

#### Community enjoyment of natural areas 5 comments

A small number of participants favoured a **Moonee Ponds Creek Forest** for the benefits to community enjoyment. It was stated that a forest would improve the natural experience of the area and create open green spaces that are likely to attract visitors and be widely enjoyed by the community. This comment outlines some of these benefits:

“Biodiversity: Not only good for the environment to encourage Australian flora and fauna, but good for the community to come together, appreciate the parklands and benefit the economic status of the community.”

#### A variety of comments discussing urban forest 8 comments

A variety of other comments were made. A few participants believed that this Opportunity would provide some relief from the negative impacts of the urban environment. These participants supported breaking the “sea of concrete” with enjoyable green spaces. This comment provides an effective summary of these ideas:

“to help bring more of nature into this inner urban area for a visual break away from concrete and roads; and to help offset some of the air and car pollution”

A couple of participants simply noted that a Moonee Ponds Creek forest would be more visually appealing than the current situation. This was one comment:

“Because the current creek is ugly and full of rubbish”

A few other supporting comments were made. One expressed general support along with a number of other opportunities. One favoured Opportunities B3 to B8 for their potential to integrate performance and visual artwork as part of a traditional knowledge cultural hub. This comment summed up the value of trees:

“Forest ... trees are our friends.”

One participant was widely supportive of efforts to improve Moonee Ponds Creek, but stated that land on the west bank, south of Footscray Road should be removed from the Opportunity proposals, specifically from the **Moonee Ponds Creek Forest** Opportunity. It was noted that this land is an operational area of the Port of Melbourne and a Landside Restricted Zone. They stated that public access is not appropriate as the area is only accessible through land leased by a port operator at Victoria Dock. In addition, this area is also the location of the Webb Dock Rail Link reservation, which is supported by a range of existing government policies.

### Travancore Park Creek Naturalisation (W2) 19 comments

#### Returning the Creek to its natural state 8 comments

A small number of participants supported the **Travancore Park Creek Naturalisation** Opportunity for bringing the creek back to a more natural state. The current concrete lining of the creek was described as an “eyesore” and a “crime against nature” and restoring this area to a more natural environment was viewed as necessary for enjoyment as well as providing habitat and biodiversity. These are some examples:

“W2 - again improving the open space - getting rid of the eye sore that is the storm water drain.”

“W2. Moonee Ponds Creek between Brunswick Rd & Racecourse Rd is a drain and is a crime against nature. Restoring the section of the creek to its pre-colonisation condition (or as close as is reasonably practicable at the moment) is a high priority.”

#### A variety of environment improvements topics 11 comments

A small number of participants supported this Opportunity for reasons related to water management, noting that the area regularly floods and that naturalisation would help slow water, increase recharge and improve water quality.

One participant stated that the Travancore Park Creek Naturalisation would show that the City of Melbourne is committed to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Another noted that retarding basins would be necessary if the concrete channel lining is removed.

One participant stated that they would like to see the grass at Travancore Park kept green and improvements made to the playground. They also noted that the recently completed path to the park should only be for cyclists.

One person noted that delivering this opportunity would acknowledge a catchment-based approach to resolving flooding and suggested that it would be a great collaborative project between bordering councils in partnership with Melbourne Water, CityLink and the local community.

A few participants expressed general support for the Travancore Park Creek Naturalisation opportunity without offering further explanation.

### The Connected Veloway (M3) 19 comments

#### Walking and cycling improvements 6 comments

A small number of participants supported **The Connected Veloway** Opportunity for its general improvements for walking and cycling. It was noted that pedestrians and cyclists are the main users of this space so any project that benefits these modes would be well-received, as stated in this comment:

“Foot traffic and bike traffic are the main utilises of the space. They're needs should be given priority in upgrading the facilities along the creek.”

#### Improved safety from improved cycle infrastructure 5 comments

Safety improvements were valued by a small number of participants who considered current cycling infrastructure to be unsafe. This was one comment:

“The Connected Veloway (M3) is something that I had always wanted when I used to cycle down here. I now work in the Spring Street end and I have not been cycling because I just don't feel safe cycling in that part of the CBD.”

#### Cycle connectivity for commuting 5 comments

A connected and accessible cycle network was called for by a small number of participants who noted that these tracks would be heavily used for commuting. The following comment mentions these ideas:

“M3 - Better bike connections along and across the Creek are vital for sustainable transport movement.”

#### Vehicle reduction and general support 3 comments

A couple of comments noted the importance of cycling infrastructure to remove cars from roads and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

One comment expressed general support for **The Connected Veloway** Opportunity without offering further explanation.

### Redesign of Bridges (W1) 18 comments

#### Redesign bridges for safety 5 comments

A small number of participants spoke of safety in regard to the **Redesign of Bridges** Opportunity. A couple noted that existing bridges are dark, scary and unsafe. Another couple liked that this Opportunity allowed for the separation of pedestrians and cyclists. One stated that there would be safety and security risks if bridges were designed the same (as the existing bridges). These were some comments:

“W1 necessary to provide better separation for bike riders and walkers and good links along the Moonee Ponds Creek.”

“1) lighting. The bridge is pitch black! So scary and unsafe!”

#### Better connections from redesigned bridges 5 comments

A small number of participants valued the increased connection and access this Opportunity would bring. It was noted that access to these bridges is currently poor and redesigning would create more usable and accessible community space. Bridges were also favoured for allowing cyclists and pedestrians to avoid main roads, as mentioned in the following quote:

“W1. Footbridges are important so people walking and riding can get around independently of major roads networks. They will definitely help get people out of their cars by making riding and walking safer and more convenient.”

#### Other topics, including heritage, flooding and human interaction 8 comments

A few participants were concerned about the heritage status of these bridges and stated that this should be considered in the redesign process.

A few noted flooding issues on cycling paths.

One participant believed bridges allow humans to interact and appreciate nature.

### Macaulay Terraces (OS4) 16 comments

#### Open space public land for recreation use 4 comments

A small number of participants believed the **Macaulay Terraces** Opportunity would activate the creek and create usable public space. This was one comment:

“OS4 creates a useable space out of an area that is currently unused.”

A small number of participants supported the opportunity to develop quality open spaces in an area that is currently underutilised, as noted in this quote:

“Macaulay Terraces (OS4) provides fantastic open space in an area that is currently not very pleasant. Being close to a train station would also improve its usage, hopefully.”

#### A variety of environmental and community benefits will be delivered 12 comments

One participant suggested that the Opportunity would provide valuable lessons that can be applied to other waterways. Another stated that the project embraces the creek, provides connections to nature and water, manages existing risks, and would “fundamentally solve the challenges through positive social, environmental and economic opportunities”. This was their comment:

“Every element of the Macaulay Terraces is exciting and challenges the existing approach of largely turning our back on the creek by embracing it, providing connections to nature and water, managing existing risks, and fundamentally solving the challenges through positive social, environmental and economic opportunities. The delivery of the creek crossing an at-grade through stepping stones would be the key element of this project.”

Another participant believed that the Opportunity is “admirable” but outlined a number of concerns. Concerns included: misleading artistic diagrams that do not show elevation and boundaries and appear to overestimate proportions; the amount of property to be acquired along Stubbs Street; access for trucks; pumping stations and the capacity to manage large rainfall events; low level steps not approved by Melbourne water; unrealistic sloped lawn down to the creek without hydrological intervention; pollution and saline water damaging vegetation; litter accompanying high rainfall events; high rainfall damaging infrastructure such as boardwalks, pedestrian bridges, concrete pathways and picnic terraces; and, how flood mitigation measures protecting adjoining urban renewal areas would impact the proposed **Macaulay Terraces**.

One submitter stated:

A few participants expressed general support for the **Macaulay Terraces** Opportunity without offering further explanation.

### Native Grassland Restoration (B6) 14 comments

#### Improved amenity and public enjoyment 4 comments

A small number of participants believed the **Native Grassland Restoration** Opportunity would improve amenity and public enjoyment of the creek. It was noted that restoring the area to a more natural state would contribute to making the creek more “lovely” as well as providing an effective visual break in the urban environment, as noted in the following quote:

“In a sea of concrete it provides connection to nature and potential for Indigenous species relationship”

#### Improved natural environment, reduced emissions and general support 10 comments

A few participants supported the opportunity to enhance the natural environment and restore biodiversity in the area.

One participant believed this opportunity would contribute to offsetting carbon emissions. Another favoured Opportunities B3 to B8 for their potential to integrate performance and visual artwork as part of a traditional knowledge cultural hub. One stated that the Opportunity fails to recognise existing established vegetation, which should be maintained along with establishing grassland.

A small number of participants expressed general support for the **Native Grassland Restoration** Opportunity without offering further explanation.

### Expanded Creek Environs (OS3) 14 comments

#### Improved natural amenity 4 comments

A small number of participants supported the **Expanded Creek Environs** Opportunity for its improved natural amenity. It was noted that currently the creek is “ugly and full of rubbish” and expanding the environs would improve it. It was also suggested that recreational areas are becoming more important as development increases because recreational spaces improve the experience of the inner city. This idea is discussed in the following quote:

“any developments that enhance the natural environment and offers respite for the intensity of the built environment will improve the experience of living in the inner city.”

#### Improved open space, increasingly important as population grows 4 comments

A small number of participants believed this opportunity would help develop quality open space and provide recreation opportunities, which were viewed as necessary given anticipated population growth.

#### Water management particularly with regard to flooding 6 comments

A couple of participants supported this Opportunity for reasons related to water management, noting the history of flooding in the creek.

One participant favoured the Opportunity as it has previously been recognised by the collaboration group. One participant supported the idea but was concerned about whether the space would withstand flooding.

A small number of participants expressed general support for the **Expanded Creek Environs** Opportunity without offering further explanation.

### Dynon Canal Cycle Link (M2) 13 comments

#### Enhanced active transport experience through improved cycling and walking 4 comments

A small number of participants supported the **Dynon Canal Cycle Link** Opportunity for its cycling and pedestrian improvements. It was noted that as the area is frequently used by cycle and foot traffic the chance to enhance the active transport experience was valued. This was one comment:

“M2 - as a cyclist I'm pro extra infrastructure. (also M6 is important, but can only pick 3)”

#### Cycle safety improvements 3 comments

A few participants discussed safety, noting the benefits of removing cyclists from the road and improving the current trails, which were described as unsafe. The following comment discusses removing bikes from the road:

“Because off-road cycle routes are what keep my family and I alive as we commute and travel.”

#### Improved connectivity, encouragement of cycling and reduced emissions 6 comments

A couple favoured improved connectivity. One mentioned the benefits of encouraging cyclists and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. One more stated that the **Dynon Canal Cycle Link** should include signage with information about the historical piece of infrastructure.

A couple of participants expressed general support for the **Dynon Canal Cycle Link** Opportunity without offering further explanation.

### Flemington Bridge Station Connection Upgrade (M1) 13 comments

#### Improved cycle commuting, connectivity and safety 11 comments

A small number of participants valued the **Flemington Bridge Station Connection Upgrade** Opportunity for the improved cycling connectivity in the area. The project was described as easy to achieve and as an idea that would enhance the off-road network, as mentioned in the following comment:

“Improving the connectivity of the cycling path is a high priority as it enhances the off-road network”

A few participants supported the general improvements for walking and cycling in the area, particularly the opportunity to minimise conflict between cyclists and pedestrians. It was noted that the path is used for commuting and needs improvement due to its steepness and narrow space, which is shared with pedestrians. This comment goes into detail:

“Flemington bridge station connection upgrade is probably the most evident area for changing infrastructure to minimise conflict between cyclists and other users. Possibly not the cheapest treatment, but almost certainly the one that would bring the greatest benefits (accommodating pedestrian and cyclist volume increases in a safe manner). Note - this should be done in a way which does NOT incentivise greater speeds by cyclists!”

Safety was important for a small number of participants who noted that bridges in the area are poorly lit and flood regularly. They called for better separation from pedestrians and a more easily rideable cycle track. The following comment discussed difficulties and safety issues with the current track:

“M1: Flemington Bridge Station hairpins are the part of my commute I absolutely loathe. I can't do those hairpins mounted, I just can't. (I tried day one of that commute and fell off quite awkwardly, so now i take about 30 seconds to do each turn and hold people up behind me). It's awful and too narrow and I hate it. Why not something more like that curly bridge on Southbank (coming from Docklands) with nice wide bends, and separated pedestrians and cyclists?”

#### Reduced cycle congestion and better train access 2 comments

One participant stated that the Flemington Bridge is too congested for cyclists and pedestrians. Another mentioned that this Opportunity would encourage the use of trains by improving access to rail lines.

### Arden-Macaulay Pedestrian Bridges (M5) 12 comments

#### Improved connectivity between Melbourne suburbs 4 comments

A small number of participants valued the connectivity brought about by the **Arden-Macaulay Pedestrian Bridges** Opportunity. It was noted that the project would be excellent in connecting the streets of Kensington to North Melbourne and the growing pocket of Macauley with new infrastructure in Arden, as noted in the following comment:

“M5 This option and the bridge support is really important in improving walkability across the ponds, linking the growing pocket of Macauley with new infrastructure in Arden will enliven the area.”

#### Improvements to cycling infrastructure and safety 4 comments

A few favoured the improvements for walking and cycling. One stated that pedestrian and cycling infrastructure is aged and inadequate for demand. Another wanted to ensure bridges are wide enough to ride across, or that at least one is dedicated to cycling.

A couple mentioned safety, stating that the area is unappealing and currently feels unsafe for cycling or walking in the evening. Another called for better separation of cyclists and pedestrians.

#### Improved accessible space and general amenity 4 comments

One stated that this Opportunity would create “usable, accessible community space”. Another wanted to incorporate “rubbish-collection devices” to improve the waterway for water birds.

A couple of participants expressed general support for the **Arden-Macaulay Pedestrian Bridges** Opportunity without offering further explanation.

### The Research Wetlands (B8) 10 comments

#### Restoration of biodiversity and the creek’s natural state 5 comments

A small number of participants supported **The Research Wetlands** Opportunity for the potential to increase biodiversity and restore the creek to a natural state. It was noted that this would attract and provide habitat for a variety of wildlife. One participant stated that about 95% of the vegetation is exotic and should be replaced with native aquatic plants. Another particularly supported the idea of strengthening the saltmarsh community as so little of it survives. This was one comment:

“Restoring the creek and surrounds is imperative to water health and general environmental regeneration. Improving these will naturally drawer people to these areas. As a cyclist who uses the Moonee Ponds Creek bike path everyday, I am always moved by the wildlife of the area and the rapid changes after a storm.”

#### Improved amenity and engagement with nature 5 comments

A couple of participants believed this Opportunity would improve the amenity and enjoyment of a highly urban area. One stated that the proposal is interesting and innovative. One favoured Opportunities B3 to B8 for their potential to integrate performance and visual artwork as part of a traditional knowledge cultural hub. One stated that the Opportunity would help people become more engaged with nature. This was that comment:

“If the general population became aware of these, they would be much more respectful and appreciative of 'What's on their doorstep'.”

One other participant expressed general support for **The Research Wetlands** Opportunity without offering further explanation.

### Mt Alexander Road Nature Gateway (W3) 9 comments

#### Improved biodiversity, visual appeal, stormwater and water management 9 comments

A couple of participants supported the **Mt Alexander Road Nature Gateway** Opportunity for its benefits to biodiversity and restoring the creek to a natural state, including removal of extensive concrete in the area. This was one comment:

“Reversal of the extensive concretisation and the loss of vegetation undertaken as part of the CityLinkTullaWidening project here at Flemington Bridge is supported. Re-naturalisation is supported, so that the detention basin can provide a biolink upstream and downstream.”

A couple of participants favoured the outcomes for water management by increasing storm capacity.

A couple believed this Opportunity would fix a “dreadful eyesore” and generally improve amenity.

One person stated that the nature gateway would be “good to take a date to”.

A few participants expressed general support for the **Mt Alexander Road Nature Gateway** Opportunity without offering further explanation.

### CityLink Land Bridge (B1) 9 comments

#### Support for connectivity, some improvement suggestions proposed 9 comments

A few supported the **CityLink Land Bridge** Opportunity for the connections it creates. One stated that it would encourage the commute between Coburg and Docklands. A couple noted the benefits of connecting Royal Park and Travancore Park. This was one of these comments:

“B1, presuming the exact location is up for negotiation, because a connection between Travancore and Royal Park for active (human) transport and wildlife has long been on the wish list.”

A couple supported the Opportunity because it has been recognised by the Chain of Ponds collaboration.

One participant outlined their negative experiences as a pedestrian in the area, as outlined below:

“(B1) - walking along Mt Alexander Road down to and over the bridges is very unpleasant. The footpath brings pedestrians much too close to the traffic and there is soooo much traffic - 6 lanes of it - it is an awful place to walk. Makes sense to create a pedestrian bridge to the station and beyond so that people can walk through Debney's Park and onto the bridge - keeping cars and people separate.”

One participant also noted that the concept has been put forward in the Chain of Ponds Plan (2018) and stated that it is a good idea to create land bridges over freeways, linking biodiversity and open space. It was noted, however, that caution should be taken to ensure biodiversity, habitat and amenity values are not negatively impacted. They suggested that the proposed location of the bridge is unsuitable as it would impact the Trin Warren Tam-boore wetland and consequently suggested the location be moved.

A couple of participants expressed general support for the **CityLink Land Bridge** Opportunity without offering further explanation.

### Fisherman’s Bend Connection (M4) 7 comments

#### Improved connections, safety and pedestrians and cycling conditions supported 7 comments

Participants who commented on the **Fisherman’s Bend Connection** Opportunity valued building connections, improving safety and generally improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. It was noted that many pedestrians and cyclists who use the area should be given priority in creating an efficient, safe and connected active transport highway. These were some comments:

“Fishermans bend connection would save me from riding through Docklands every day on my way to work”

“M4: This would be an efficient & safe active transport (cycling super highway) option from north to south of CoM. A much better option for cyclists to be separated from pedestrians/cars along the current bike path in docklands.”

### Moonee Ponds Creek Civic Overflow Route Central (W5) 7 comments

#### Improvements to access and space provision, flood management, good management needed 7 comments

The **Moonee Ponds Creek Civic Overflow Route Central** Opportunity was supported for a range of reasons. Access and space were important for a couple of participants who noted that this Opportunity, among other proposals, provides “great opportunities to improve the accessibility and public usage of the creek environs”. One mentioned flooding and noted the issue of flood waters subsiding and leaving a layer of slippery mud, which is “never cleaned up”. This was another comment:

“I believe in ecologically sustainable transportation options that unify our community and provide safe spaces for women, children and families, and which respect the cultural diversity of our communities.”

One participant stated that the acquisition of land to the east of the Upfield rail line (to serve as open space in the Macaulay urban renewal) is supported. It was noted, however, that expert input will have to be made to achieve viable public space with vegetation and sunlight access, as significant overshadowing may be caused through urban renewal developments.

### Moonee Ponds Creek Art Trail Length of Creek (H1) 7 comments

#### A colourful space, telling traditional stories and benefiting the whole community 7 comments

Participants stated that the **Moonee Ponds Creek Art Trail** Opportunity would “benefit the whole community and be a real drawcard for visitors”. The Opportunity was favoured for its potential to create colourful spaces and give walkers the chance to understand traditional knowledge perspectives and pay tribute to the original custodians of the area. These are some comments:

“H1 an Art Trail - ideally incorporating a majority of Indigenous artworks - would not only make the walks more attractive, but also pay tribute to the original custodians of the area.”

“H1 Catchment wide projects are essential to present bigger and global environmental considerations for walkers to experience diversity and Traditional Knowledge perspectives of the Moonee Ponds Creek”

One stated that this idea had been recognised as part of the Chain of Ponds collaboration. Another participant generally supported the **Moonee Ponds Creek Art Trail** without offering further explanation.

### Macaulay Green Links (OS2) 7 comments

#### Open space and biodiversity improvements 7 comments

Participants who supported the **Macaulay Green Links** Opportunity did so for reasons related to open space and biodiversity. It was noted that there is currently limited biodiversity in the inner-city environment and the opportunity would help create accessible and usable open space. These were some comments:

“Open space - this is an area recognised in the CoM Open Space strategy as critically lacking in open space.”

“biodiversity in the central area would be improved with these and I live nearby”

One participant stated that the opportunity should be linked to the **Moonee Ponds Creek Civic Overflow Route** Opportunity.

### Levees as Places for People (OS1) 7 comments

#### An enhanced space will improve recreation use and community respect 7 comments

The **Levees as Places for People** Opportunity was primarily supported for its improvements to usability, recreation and public enjoyment of the creek. It was noted that the creek is currently unappealing and feels unsafe at night and participants suggested that enhancing the area would make the population “much more respectful of what’s on their doorstep”. Recreational opportunities were particularly favoured. One participant outlined a range of possible activities outlined below:

“3] The redesign of the levies is strongly supported to make them usable are seating and recreation. Even BBQs skateparks or bocce courts could be considered.”

One participant drew attention to the mature remnant River Red Gum trees on the western side of the creek corridor that should be protected if levees are altered.

### Expanded Salt Marsh Zone (B3) 6 comments

#### Support for regeneration of native aquatic plants, integration with other opportunities 6 comments

Comments on the **Expanded Salt Marsh Zone** Opportunity reflected those about the E-Gate Saltmarsh and Mangrove Reserve, stating that these tidal areas are important for biodiversity and as habitat for marine wildlife. It was noted that most of the vegetation in the area is exotic and should be replaced with native aquatic plants. A couple viewed this Opportunity in conjunction with others, including B2, B4, B8 and W7. One favoured Opportunities B3 to B8 for their potential to integrate performance and visual artwork as part of a traditional knowledge cultural hub. One other participant stated that litter in the area needs to be addressed. This comment is outlined below:

“B3 Expanded Salt Marsh Zone Unfortunately the extensive litter problem in this ‘pondage’ requires addressing in the SOP document.”

### CityLink Water Collection (W10) 6 comments

#### Improved water management, water quality and improvement to surrounding areas 6 comments

A few Participants favoured the **CityLink Water Collection** Opportunity for its benefits to water management. One noted the importance of controlling marine debris. Another discussed the benefits of directing run-off into wetland systems. This comment is outlined below:

“W10 because it is vital to direct all run off from roads into wetland systems which can intercept pollutants before they get into waterways and the Bay.”

Another comment which is also presented below, discusses the opportunity for developing ecological artwork in the area:

“W9 / 10 Ideal sites for developing Ecological artworks demonstrating confluence between Wurundjeri Boonwurrung Traditional Knowledge / Environmental Science and Art Practice in Aboriginal led cultural works based on Traditional Knowledge”

One participant stated that the **CityLink Water Collection** and **Moonee Ponds Creek Mouth** Opportunities should be integrated with the Port of Melbourne Interface Landscape Masterplan as they align with the aims and recommendations. It was also noted that the plan fails to mention the significant remnant vegetation patch adjoining the eastern side of the creek south of Footscray Road. They suggested this area should be protected along with the riparian zone, including allowing no high-speed commuter path. The same participant suggested water from CityLink should be piped to irrigate a revegetated embankment next to the cycle path under CityLink, stating that “the current desert is a disgrace”.

### Novel Habitats (B7) 5 comments

#### Habitat and biodiversity restoration supported 5 comments

A small number of participants supported the **Novel Habitats** Opportunity due to restoration of habitat and biodiversity in the area. One favoured Opportunities B3 to B8 for their potential to integrate performance and visual artwork as part of a traditional knowledge cultural hub. This comment is outlined below:

“B3 - 8 / Opportunity to develop sound, performance, and visual Artworks such as Hydrophones River Listening, Scarred Trees (depending upon permission from Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung) as part of a Traditional Knowledge Cultural Hub (depending on agreement with Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung Traditional Owners)”

### Docklands Biodiversity Hotspot (B4) 5 comments

#### A variety of ideas including increased biodiversity, boating, native vegetation restoration 5 comments

A couple of participants favoured the **Docklands Biodiversity Hotspot** Opportunity for increasing biodiversity and providing habitats for a range of native wildlife. One participant stated that there would be more options to use boats in the river. One favoured Opportunities B3 to B8 for their potential to integrate performance and visual artwork as part of a traditional knowledge cultural hub. One other participant believed the location set aside for this Opportunity would be better suited to mangroves, as outlined in the quote below:

“B4 Docklands Biodiversity Hot Spot It is in this area that mangroves should be re-established. The same misgivings are put forward about creating artificial mangrove reserves in B8 The Research Wetlands. Caution is expressed about the high likelihood of polluted/toxic land in both B2 and B3 areas and projected public use.”

### Travancore Park Ponds (W9) 5 comments

#### Benefits to water management, biodiversity and water open space supported, alternative underground storage suggested 5 comments

A couple of participants supported the **Travancore Park Ponds** Opportunity for its benefits to water management, biodiversity and water open space. This was one comment:

“Travancore ponds for filtration. All for increasing biodiversity.”

One saw the site as an opportunity for developing ecological artworks. Another generally wanted the park upgraded, including keeping the grass green and improving the playground.

One participant did not support the Opportunity as it would take away the current open space in the area. They instead suggested investigating underground water storage.

### E-Gate Saltmarsh and Mangrove Reserve (B2) 4 comments

#### Biodiversity benefits, particularly for tidal marine life 4 comments

Nearly all participants who supported the **E-Gate Saltmarsh and Mangrove Reserve** Opportunity valued the benefits for biodiversity. It was noted that specific attention should be paid to the intertidal zone, as these areas are critically important for marine wildlife. Mangroves and mudflats were supported for the symbiotic relationships they create with other species. The following comments discuss these ideas:

“Focus on the intertidal zone for biodiversity purposes I see as a priority given the critical importance of such habitat for marine wildlife, and the pressures on such habitat in the Port Phillip region.

I love mangroves and mud flats, amazing plants, the symbiotic relationship with crabs. I want to be involved in revelation of this area.”

One participant was against the planting of mangroves and an artificially created reserve and instead stated that existing vegetation along the creek should be protected and enhanced.

### Langford Road Linear Stormwater Park (W6) 4 comments

#### Increased recreation space and biodiversity enhancement for the growing population 4 comments

A couple of participants expressed support for the **Langford Road Linear Stormwater Park** Opportunity as it would create more recreational space to be used by a growing population. This was one comment:

“Langford Road Linear Stormwater Park (W6) - This space also provides an opportunity for a picnic area and rest stops for both pedestrians and cyclists. The introduction of drinking taps should also be considered.”

One participant noted that this Opportunity would improve biodiversity. One additional participant supported this proposal as a key water management and open space opportunity. It was noted that most of the area is government owned and that the one privately owned warehouse should be purchased for the block to “reach full water management/open space potential”.

### E-Gate Stormwater Park (W7) 4 comments

#### Working with nature to improve wetlands and accommodate flooding 4 comments

One participant stated that removing concrete lining would improve amenity, but suggested that retarding basins would be necessary if concrete is removed. One noted the importance of controlling marine debris. One other participant went into detail about the benefits of the **E-Gate Stormwater Park** Opportunity. This comment is presented below:

“The restoration of the wetlands at E-Gate amongst the concrete pylons of all the transport infrastructure is really exciting. Rather than ignore urban stormwater problems through traditional grey infrastructure, the stormwater park works with nature to tackle the challenges of accommodating flooding, stormwater, poor water quality and estuarine transitions with natural and sustainable solutions. For the past four decades, this area has been neglected by the major landowners and it would be wonderful to witness their commitment to the project through the generous accommodation of the stormwater park. The provision of boardwalks would provide great educational opportunities as well as improved connectivity.”

### Debneys Water Park (W4) 2 comments

#### General comments, one supporting Moonee Valley Council design 2 comments

These comments were made about the **Debneys Water Park** Opportunity:

“It's where the work is needed the most”

“Moonee Valley Council has prepared a concept plan for Debney’s Park - Flemington Community @ Debneys Park, which incorporates wetlands in more coherent design options for the park, compared to the W4 proposal. We believe the Moonee Valley designs are preferable and the CoM Strategic Opportunities Plan when finalised should adopt the Moonee Valley final plan.”

### Levee Banks Water Storage (W8) 2 comments

#### Environmental sensitivity needed in delivering this Opportunity 2 comments

One participant noted that the banks of the Moonee Ponds Creek have been revegetated and now form a pleasant section of open space between Macaulay Road and Arden Street Bridges. They opposed any work that would damage this vegetated area, including the installation of culverts and raising of concrete levee walls to address flood mitigation. They stated that any work to raise levee walls should be undertaken from the western side, within the VicTrack easement. They also drew attention to remnant River Red Gum trees downstream from the Arden Street Bridge, stating that these should be protected from development.

This was one other comment:

“Controlling Marine Debris is a key not only for the Creek but Port Phillip Bay.”

### Moonee Ponds Creek Mouth – A Community Hotspot (OS5) 1 comment

#### Natural environment improvements 1 comment

This comment was made by a participant who supported the **Moonee Ponds Creek Mouth** Opportunity:

“Tremendously excited by the vision painted in this document, especially at the mouth of the Creek. Like the idea of strengthening the saltmarsh community since so little of that survives (although the creek at the entrance to the Yarra has some good saltmarsh plants). I really like the idea of returning care to this much abused waterway. The challenges posed by the number of authorities are explicitly recognised and the role of CoM clearly articulated. There is vast potential in the many projects listed to achieve the objectives sought. I commend the whole document.”

### Community Canvas (H2) 1 comment

#### One comment opposed wasted energy and light pollution 1 comment

This comment was made on the **Community Canvas** opportunity:

“With the exception of the suggested light show for H2 (which is an unnecessary use of electricity and creation of light pollution), my understanding of the above is that they are all important and therefore should not be pitted against each other in competition for completion.”

# SUGGESTED OPPORTUNITIES

The following section contains a summary of comments and suggestions that participants made and were not discussed under Opportunities and Goals. Many of these comments came from responses to the question: ***Are there any other opportunities that we should consider?* Based on your experience of the area.**

### General project suggestions 70 comments

#### Cycling and pedestrian improvements 17 comments

A considerable number of participants made statements in general support of improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. These comments noted that the creek is currently frequently used for movement and made a number of suggestions to enhance the active transport experience. Suggestions included separating pedestrians and cyclists; widening the paths to accommodate use; general improvements to the condition of the trail; and, resolving flooding issues. These were some comments:

“Improve drainage and elevation of the Moonee Ponds bike trail to prevent flooding”

“Look at the way Canberra and Scandinavia has built its green zones and cycleways. Use these as an example on how to make the Moonee Ponds Creek multiuse and a positive place to visit.”

“The opportunities to create a world-class cycling infrastructure cannot be underestimated. I can imagine a series of family friendly parks, perhaps with different themes all linked by safe and exclusive cycling paths. The parks could be themed eg. families with younger kids, those with older kids, fitness, etc. Please keep in mind commuter cyclists are probably the primary users of the route and seek a safe, fast (direct) route throughout.”

#### Safety improvements 16 comments

A considerable number of participants commented on issues related to safety at Moonee Ponds Creek and made a range of suggestions to enhance safety in the area. Lighting was a primary concern, with participants seeking more lighting throughout the trail. Other suggestions included enhancing safety for women; separating high-speed commuter cyclists; and, utilising Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

#### Pollution reduction 7 comments

A small number of participants discussed issues surrounding litter and pollution. It was noted that the creek currently has problems with litter that could negatively influence the public enjoyment of the proposed Opportunities. Litter reduction programmes were therefore considered necessary, with participants seeking strategies that are effective and visually appealing. One participant sought collection systems located further upstream to protect the upper wetlands. Another stated that more should be done to protect the stream from irreparable damage caused by large infrastructure works such as the West Gate Tunnel project. This was one comment:

“Rubbish removal - seems to collect in places (some are clean!) but this seems like an easy thing to improve, esp with help of volunteer groups etc.”

#### Recreation opportunities 7 comments

A small number of participants made specific suggestions regarding the types of recreational opportunities and amenities they sought. Suggestions included a community space for performances and markets; a bookable event space for parties and larger gatherings; spaces for dogs to exercise off the leash; a mix of partially shaded and sunny seating; and, permanent homeless shelters with public toilets and showers to provide people in difficult situations with independent spaces. One participant discussed what to do with “dead spaces” under bridges, suggesting local art, exhibitions, light installations and “making the most of the worst”.

#### Inclusion 6 comments

Greater inclusion was sought by a small number of participants. A couple stated that collaboration with Indigenous people is critical for the success, sustainability and cultural sensitivity of the project, as noted below:

“I believe that more inclusive consultation with the Koolin Nation first peoples is essential to the success, sustainability and cultural sensitivity of this project.”

One sought greater promotion of the ‘Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek Group’. Another suggested more support for the EcoArts working group. One participant stated that there should be a shift in focus from supporting the works of individual artists to a collaborative approach that crosses art and ecology silos:

“Another major consideration is transforming local government art policy from individual artist works to collaborative works from many artists to cross the ecology and art silos to develop the momentum for urgent critical changes to connecting to country in our own backyards. This aligns with the investment in the Moonee Ponds Creek Collaboration. Crossing this Arts Science divide unites creative systems thinking towards problem solving and acknowledgement for the prioritisation of reparation of land and Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge systems.”

One participant supported the intention of the plan but believed it would have been constructive to have consulted Transurban as they would have been able to provide input on the feasibility of a number of proposed initiatives. The participant encouraged the next Strategic Opportunities Plan to incorporate the latest West Gate Tunnel Project designs and consider initiatives that are complimentary to these designs. It was noted that CityLink lease boundaries vary and access is required for maintenance. Consequently, it was stated that development in the area must not encroach on these lease boundaries.

#### Freeway 6 comments

A small number of participants mentioned the freeway in their responses. A few spoke of minimising the impact of concrete pylons and “harsh concrete structures” by painting them with murals or developing vertical gardens with vines and natural greenery. It was suggested that this may help calm drivers, cyclists and walkers as well as offer varied ecological benefits. A couple discussed noise from the freeway, noting that noise should be reduced if the public are to enjoy open space created by this project. This was one comment:

“Focus naturalisation efforts on reaches that would attract people if amenity improved. People won't hang out on the riverbank where there is non-stop highway noise. Keep the sections concrete lined near highway overpasses, as they will remain unattractive despite naturalisation efforts.”

One participant advocated for the removal of any offramps from the new freeway.

#### Other comments 11 comments

A few mentioned flooding problems in the creek, particularly around underpasses, stating that these need to be addressed. One mentioned that a better signalling and diversion system should be put in place.

Art was mentioned by a few participants. One supported a small area for a sculpture park to bring some artistic influence to the urban area. Another comment listed below discussed the idea of leaving some existing walls in the area for use by graffiti artists:

“Some cues as to culturally significant places and aboriginal history would also be good”

“Use of existing walls as canvas is good. One thing i like about the creek trail is it feels like such changes occur as you go down stream. Although the changes are a little gross toward the centre it is still interesting to pass by changes in graffiti and urban junk. It'd be nice if there is subtle points left alone like a random concrete wall easily seen passing, which can be altered to help support biodiversity but also might be of interest to a graffiti artist as a challenge to cover without formal invitation or presentation”

One was against art but did support the creek having some sort of Indigenous connection.

A couple more participants commented on the cultural significance of the creek, stating that the plans did not adequately consider the importance of the creek to Indigenous people. This was one comment:

“Some cues as to culturally significant places and aboriginal history would also be good”

A couple wanted to see the project expanded. One noted that there should be emphasis on the full length of the creek, rather than individual spaces. One wanted to see trails extended into the CBD.

A couple noted the importance of a catchment-wide approach to dealing with the challenges faced in the stream. One went into detail about ways to promote such an approach, as discussed in the following quote:

“Opportunities to improve and tackle some of the many catchment wide challenges should be addressed in more detail. This can be achieved through: (i) ongoing support for the Chain of Ponds Moonee Ponds Creek Collaboration; (ii) support and advocacy for catchment wide solutions to tackle downstream challenges; (iii) support for upstream wsud and flood mitigation projects; and, (iv) the sharing of the lessons, technical, biodiversity and legal assessments/reports, feasibility studies, business cases, standards etc. arising from this Plan.”

Other suggestions included: a potential tram route through the area; removing concrete to avoid the feeling of being in the central city; strictly Indigenous plant species; and opportunities for a “bush kinder initiative”.

### Specific project suggestions 30 comments

A substantial number of participants referred to or made suggestions regarding specific areas in Moonee Ponds Creek. Comments were difficult to group and have instead been altered for readability and presented as bullet points.

#### Specific place suggestions 19 comments

* Redevelop great community space under the CityLink freeway off Newmarket road bridge. It is a grey and neglected area, which desperately needs more greenery and birdlife. Something to absorb the emissions from the motorways.
* Nothing north of Brunswick Road is included. Why isn’t the creek through Pascoe Vale included and why are the residents there missing out?
* There should be a new park/garden in the area to the west of the creek, bounded by Macaulay and Arden Streets – to deliver the CoM's commitment in its Open Space Strategy in recognition of the lack of recreational space for this part of Kensington.
* Reinstate the Westbreen Creek.
* A specialised area in Travancore Park for dog owners and a separate area for others could be considered. The rolling hills of this park could also lend themselves to some interesting designs, perhaps something like the park/playground at the Royal Children's Hospital. A local resident has had a lot of input into the local flora along the creek and would be a useful consultant regarding further planting in the park.
* Connecting with linear park from Birrarung Marr to Docklands.
* Open space planning should build in opportunity, where possible, for public and community events, given the thriving and engaged community of the Flemington/Kensington area.
* The port history should not be ignored where the modified creek meets the Yarra, and referenced in interpretation and experiences.
* West bank between Macaulay St and Arden St should include some open space. As the recently mixed zone area of Macaulay becomes populated, connection and access to this beautiful strip would be great to utilise and support improved wellbeing. Given the lack of green space available in this old industrial area, there is an opportunity to expand space along the creek bank by purchasing Government land or existing private land. There is also some current space available just north of Arden Street, which could be better connected to the creek.
* The area between Racecourse Road and Macaulay Road is suitable for two urban stream wetland areas, to contain a range of native aquatic plants, to support water birds, for the treatment of incoming storm water, as well as provide a good area for human recreation. The current litter collection system (installed by Transurban) should be removed and replaced by a Melbourne Water litter collection system, and located further upstream to make way for the upper wetland.
* South of Macaulay Road to at least E-gate, native reeds, rushes, and other aquatic plants should be planted on each side of the water, to provide habitats for a range of aquatic organisms.
* The removal of the concrete along the creek in Brosnan Crescent. This project is currently being investigated.
* More places to park boats, especially at Flemington racecourse.
* A connection (physical, and visual) to nearby parkland at Royal Park, near Oak Street/ Bellbird waterhole.
* Sightings of wildlife have been sparse downstream of Flemington Bridge.
* Not City of Melbourne territory, but the interface between Debneys Park and the Creek could only be improved. The current limit of tidal action outside Macaulay Station is one of the most accessible places for public awareness of sea level rise, which could be a good place for an interpretive centre.
* The area under CityLink between the creek and Dynon Road would be great for an undercover play area and park.
* Acquisition/use of nearby open spaces, for example the old nursery, adjacent to the western bank of the creek, can be acquired to create a new large open space.

#### Specific movement suggestions 11 comments

* There needs to be a connection (bridge or underpass) from the Arden Precinct (and the new North Melbourne Station) to the creek, through the OS3 area. Arden Street is too far out of the way.
* Extend the cycle path under Footscray Road. Currently, it is very dangerous, with many cyclists struggling to fit on to the median strip trying to cross.
* Minimise impact of works for Westgate Tunnel and Arden gardens metro on existing track.
* The University of Melbourne’s new engineering campus will be in Fisherman’s Bend, students will mostly be cycling and will need safe paths. Currently they are contending with large trucks and traffic.
* Fix Flemington Bridge station access.
* Improve the section from Moonee Ponds Creek up to Flemington Bridge as it is very steep and narrow.
* Around Flemington Bridge Station travelling north: have a bike bridge to cross Moonee Ponds Creek underneath Mount Alexander Road – presently cyclists have to ride to Mount Alexander Road footpath, cross the creek on the combined footpath/cycle trail, then do a horseshoe bend to get back on the creek trail. There are too many pedestrians around Flemington Bridge Station, and on the Mount Alexander Road bridge. A direct crossing would eliminate that congestion.
* There is no easy access to the trail throughout Glenroy.
* Alternative routes for cyclists coming from Kensington to the North Melbourne Recreation Centre and Pool. Footbridges are strongly supported in this regard.
* Access to the path from Racecourse Rd/Travancore Estate needs to be fixed urgently. At present access is via the footpath, which is very narrow. Cyclists from the west either need to merge with traffic or take the footpath in front of the housing commission estate. A dedicated cycling path from Holland Court to the creek is urgently required.
* Access from Macauley Road is broken. Citybound cyclists must either use the steps, ride on the footpath on the south side of Macauley Road or do a dangerous right turn across the train lines to get to the path. The building on the corner of Macauley Road and Bent Street is about to be redeveloped, putting a lot more pedestrian traffic into this area, increasing the risk of conflict. A dedicated cycle bridge across the river is required here.

### Other comments 14 comments

A moderate number of other comments were made that did not fall within previously discussed topics. In general, these comments either expressed broad support for the plan as a whole, explained the participant’s interest in the project or encouraged future contact as development progresses.

One participant noted that the artistic impression of the tidal underpass fails to show existing situations under CityLink bridges, overpasses and ramps or provide information about how these will be addressed. The same participant stated that the West Gate Tunnel Project would have noise impacts that would be detrimental to a range of opportunities and deter passive recreation.

One participant stated that 31 projects is too many and that it is important they are actually delivered.

One stated that the vision is great, but unrealistic and believed control of the creek should be given to a single body.

One stated that the **Collaborative governance** Goal is inappropriate as governance is not an end in itself, but a means to an end.

# HOW YOUR FEEDBACK WILL BE USED

We’ve received overwhelming community and stakeholder support for this vision.

Your feedback is helping us revise our Moonee Ponds Creek Strategic Opportunities Plan. Specific suggestions to refine concepts and new opportunity ideas put forward are now being investigated for possible inclusion in the final Strategic Opportunities Plan document. This Plan will then be recommended for endorsement by the Future Melbourne Committee later this year. The vision and priorities articulated in the Plan will provide Council with a formal position from which to advocate to the State government, and to better facilitate collaboration across the full length of the creek corridor.

Your feedback is also being shared with and considered by the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA), who is tasked with undertaking further in-depth technical and feasibility studies to understand cost and implementation issues. The insights gained through our consultation activities will provide them with an understanding of which thematic Goals are most important to the realisation of our vision and why, as well as the range of Opportunities for creek improvement that have the greatest community support. The VPA will formulate advice to the Victorian Government later this year, about how to move forward with the creek’s revitalisation, including any possible short-term project opportunities.

Thank you to everyone who’s shown interest in this Plan and contributed to our consultation process. Your positivity and constructive ideas are helping Melbourne make the most of the incredible natural asset that is Moonee Ponds Creek.



This report has been prepared by:

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