

## Greening Port Phillip – Developing our new Urban Forest Strategy Testing the Draft Vision and Principles - Summary of Stage 1B Engagement (Draft 1, 26 September)

From 10 July to 6 August 2023, we asked the Port Phillip community for feedback on a draft Vision and set of Principles to guide our new Urban Forest Strategy, and for ideas about the best ways to green Port Phillip.

This input will be used to help us prepare a full Draft Urban Forest Strategy and Action Plan, which will then be released for final feedback.

### Who we heard from

Over 520 people visited the Urban Forest Strategy project page on the [Have Your Say Port Phillip](#) website.

Around 475 people provided feedback:

- 315 shared ideas at the Elwood Farmers Market, South Melbourne Market, and Veg Out Market in St Kilda
- 119 completed a detailed survey (paper and online)
- 47 submitted ideas in our online forum
- 3 sent email submissions.

People of all suburbs, genders, and connections to Port Phillip (live, work, run a business etc) participated. Most age groups were represented, and a range of diverse characteristics were identified.

### What you told us

#### **Strong support for the draft Vision and five draft Principles**

88.1% supported the draft Vision to a large or very large extent:

*“In the City of Port Phillip, urban greening is healthy and abundant, biodiversity is valued and supported, and nature connects community.”*

All draft Principles were also strongly supported:

1. 90.4% - We work **together** to value, protect, grow and care for healthy and sustainable greening everywhere
2. 83.9% - We retain first, respecting established character, and adapt by adding more **resilient** plant species where they are most needed to reduce heat and flood vulnerabilities
3. 95.1% - We prioritise **biodiversity**, supporting healthy ecosystems and establishing wildlife corridors
4. 90.3% - We invest in thriving **integrated** urban greening in streetscapes, buildings and gardens
5. 93.6% - We value the urban forest as a long-term asset that is critical to the health and wellbeing of our community and to our city’s character and function, through **quality** design, construction and maintenance

Some participants suggested strengthening these further with more detail, ambitious targets, and clear suburb-based actions.

#### **Support for ambitious tree canopy targets**

At the market pop-up consultations, 67.3% (of 202 participants) said Port Phillip is not green enough, and in the survey 93.5% (of 107 participants) supported increasing tree canopy across Port Phillip.

Most survey respondents (66.4% of 107 participants) supported the ambitious tree canopy target of *around 40% to 50% throughout the municipality* (currently it’s 17.7%).

While all proposed actions were supported to achieve this, the top three most strongly supported (of 117 survey participants) were:

- 99.1% - Advocacy or joint projects to plant trees and green along state government roads
- 97.4% - Council property: Finding more space to plant more biodiverse areas in parks and reserves
- 94.7% - Private property: Strengthening vegetation requirements in new developments

The three actions that were supported, but to a lesser extent, were:

- 81.7% - Council property: Removing some on street car parking spaces to plant street trees
- 87.5% - Private property: Strengthening tree protection regulations and compliance
- 91.1% - Private property: Offering incentives to private landowners to keep trees

### **Actions Council could take to green Port Phillip**

Of 14 potential action ideas developed by key stakeholders during the Stage 1A consultation, the top five most supported by survey respondents were:

- 52.2% - Plant biodiverse nature strips
- 47.0% - Create green spaces in new developments
- 46.1% - Create new nature strips where there are none
- 39.1% - Partner with environmental groups and experts
- 33.0% - More indigenous plants, trees, shrubs, ground cover in parks

The three potential action ideas with the least support were:

- 1.7% - Sharing information about selecting and planting new trees and plants
- 5.2% - Re-introducing an 'adopt a tree garden' program for new plantings
- 6.0% - Offering incentives for sharing private land for neighbourhood gardens

A further 90 people suggested action ideas through surveys and pop-ups around:

- Ways to create more green spaces (nature strips, de-paving, pocket parks, green roofs etc)
- Specific spaces or locations to green
- How community members could be encouraged and supported to act
- Retaining trees, planting more and focusing on native and indigenous species

### **Many are already actively helping to green Port Phillip, and interested in doing more at home and in the community**

Over a quarter of survey participants (28.4%) are already greening Port Phillip to a *large or very large extent*, while another third (37.1%) are greening to *some extent*. Over one third of participants (34.5%) are greening to a *small extent or not at all*.

In their homes, many participants already:

- 70.1% - Have a garden
- 47.0% - Grow fruit or vegetables or Have large tree/s
- 46.2% - Plant trees and vegetation or Have a balcony or windowsill garden

Many participants don't do, but would consider:

- 52.1% - Planting vegetation on their nature strip
- 41.0% - Installing water sensitive urban design (such as saving and using grey water)
- 37.6% - Incorporating greening options like a vertical garden or green roof

In the community, many participants already:

- 44.4% - Advocate to improve biodiversity and urban forest
- 43.6% - Advocate to protect trees

Many participants don't do, but would consider:

- 55.5% - Joining community tree planting, 'friends of' group or other local community organisation

- 51.3% - Volunteer time and expertise to support greening (community garden, bush, or coast site)
- 49.6% - Maintain and water local plants and trees

Through surveys and pop-ups, a further 79 people made suggestions of how they could be supported to take action, such as:

- Financial incentives, subsidies, and plant giveaways
- A range of educational and community involvement opportunities
- Advocacy and practical support for apartment dwellers and renters
- Provide information, guidelines, advice and communicate to raise awareness.

**Find out more**

View the detailed findings report on the [Have Your Say Port Phillip](#) website or call us on 03 9209 6777 for a copy.