

# CITY OF MELBOURNE PARKS AND GARDENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2013 – 2015

The City Of Melbourne established its first Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee in 2009. Over four years the Committee has assisted Council with advice on a range of issues involved in planning for and management of its urban landscapes.

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

The City believes it is best served by an Advisory Committee that comprises a mix of technical and community expertise due to the complexity and diversity of issues impacting on parks, gardens and urban landscapes now and into the future.

A number of technical experts have been identified and appointed to the Committee. They include representatives from:

- Parks Management, Horticulture and Recreation;
- Parks Victoria; and
- Royal Botanic Gardens.

To complement the proposed membership up to eight community members (City of Melbourne ratepayers or residents) will be selected to participate on the Committee.

In addition to the above positions, two City of Melbourne Councillors, the Chair of the Environment Committee and Chair of the People City Committee, will be on this Committee as Co-Chairs.

### 1. Background

Parks, gardens and urban landscapes in the City of Melbourne are fundamental to the City's liveability. Our parks and gardens are greatly loved and heavily used community assets attracting over 12 million visitors per year. Usage ranges from organised sport to major events such as Moomba or simple daily activities such as a walk in the park.

Our urban landscapes play a significant role in our response to climate change. To adapt our City to climate change we need to mitigate the urban heat island effect by bringing inner city temperatures down, create healthy ecosystems and become a water sensitive city.

The City's parks, gardens and urban landscapes are places that support important values and functions ranging from heritage to biodiversity, passive to active recreation. They play an important role in the ecology of the city. They are important for the health and wellbeing of the community on many levels, both physical and mental, for all ages and abilities.

One of the other key challenges for the city is the anticipated significant increase in population. By 2020 the City of Melbourne's population is expected to grow from around 80,000 residents today to around 111,000. By 2030 metropolitan Melbourne is expected to grow to 5 million people

Council has recently adopted its *Urban Forest Strategy* (2012) and *Open Space Strategy* (2012). These two key documents give strategic direction to efforts to adapt our city to climate change and to respond to significant increases in population.

There is growing pressure on our parks, gardens and urban landscapes from increasing use, competition for use of parks for other purposes and a lack of understanding of their value. Future uncertainty created by drought, water restrictions, decreasing rainfall and extreme weather all reinforce the need for a resilient landscape and sound management strategies. Creating a sustainable vision and ensuring our parks, gardens and urban landscapes can continue to be enjoyed by future generations and contribute to a healthy city are the long term focus.

## **2. Purpose:**

The purpose of the Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee is to advise the City of Melbourne on a range of technical and community issues involved in sustainable management of the City of Melbourne's parks, gardens and urban landscapes. The Committee will work with the Council to address issues, develop alternatives and assist with the identification of the preferred solutions as part of Council's decision making process. The Committee role will be advisory.

## **3. Objectives:**

The objectives of the Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee are to assist and advise Council on:

- the implementation of the City of Melbourne **Open Space Strategy** 2012 and **Urban Forest Strategy** 2012;
- the review of major parks and gardens **master plans**;
- the identification of **sustainability opportunities** including strategies and projects;
- the **planning and design** of new open spaces;
- the **review** of parks, gardens and recreation **policies**; and,
- methods and techniques to better **inform and engage the community** on parks, gardens and urban landscape issues.

## **4. The roles and responsibilities of the Community members are:**

- to be fully prepared for meetings;
- to agree to participate in a collaborative meeting format;
- to bring local knowledge and broad community experience to the table;
- to consider and raise issues, proposals and ideas; and
- to provide informed advice and guidance.

## **5. The roles and responsibilities of the technical representatives are:**

- to be fully prepared for meetings;
- to agree to participate in a collaborative meeting format;
- to bring technical and evidence based research and experience to the table;
- to consider and raise issues, proposals and ideas; and
- to provide expert advice and guidance.

## **6. The roles and responsibilities of the Council are:**

- to Chair the committee (Chair of Environment Committee or another nominated Councillor);
- to coordinate meetings and provide the Secretariat;
- to facilitate a collaborative meeting format;

- to support Committee members to fully engage in the issues on the table by providing information and research findings in a timely and accessible manner;
- to inform Council on the progress and outcomes of Committee work; and
- to co-opt additional support and/or sub committees as required.

## **7. Membership**

The membership of the Committee will be made up of:

- up to three experts from Parks Management, Horticulture and Recreation;
- one representative from Parks Victoria;
- one representative from Royal Botanic Gardens;
- up to eight community members who are residents or ratepayers in the City of Melbourne, selected via an expression of interest process; and
- the Chair of the City of Melbourne Environment Committee, (the Co-Chair); and.
- the Chair of the City of Melbourne People City Committee, (the Co-Chair)

All Councillors will have a standing invitation to attend meetings of the Parks and Gardens Advisory Committee.

## **8. Appointment**

The Committee will be appointed for two years commencing September 2013.

## **9. Meetings of the Committee**

The Committee will meet four times per year, with provision for additional meetings (including site visits) if required.

Meetings will be held at the Town Hall in Swanston Street between 5.30pm – 7.30pm on a week night. Supper will be provided.

## **10. Council support for committee members**

The committee will operate on a voluntary basis.

Resources, including printed materials will be provided by Council.