

# MILES AND DODDS STREET RESERVE EXPANSION

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT  
MARCH 2024



CITY OF MELBOURNE

## **Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners**

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong / Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection they have maintained to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to walking together to build a better future.

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12 April 2024

Cover Image: Miles and Dodds Reserve. Photo Credit: Unknown

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A total of 123 responses were received via Participate Melbourne and handwritten surveys. This document summarises the feedback received, providing validation and clear direction regarding next steps to inform the concept development phase.

## Key findings

The feedback received was notably differing, with 54 per cent strongly supporting and 33 per cent strongly against, while 11 per cent of responses were impartial or unclear in their support. Further detail on the feedback is available in this report.

## Next steps

The outcome of this first phase of community engagement is to proceed with the development of a draft concept design, to explore design solutions that respond to the concerns raised around safety, traffic, parking and antisocial behaviour, along with other feedback themes received.

The draft concept plan will be presented back to the community for further consultation later this year.

## Background

Over six weeks in November and December 2023, Council invited community feedback on the proposal to expand Miles and Dodds Street Reserve, by discontinuing the east bound section of Miles Street, creating a larger green space for the community. The proposal aims to:

- Improve the design and value of the reserve
- Better cater to local recreational use
- Contribute to urban heat island effect mitigation.

Feedback was received via Participate Melbourne's online platform and two face-to-face pop-up consultation sessions at the Reserve.

The strategic backing for this is the Open Space Strategy (technical report page 261) concludes that City of Melbourne will "Investigate the potential to expand the size of Miles and Dodds Street Park to a local open space size to improve its design and value to better cater to local recreational use and contribution to urban heat island effect mitigation."

## Methodology

Responses were encouraged through the Participate Melbourne website, while information was also gathered in person at the two site pop-up sessions.

The invitation to participate in the community engagement was promoted by the City of Melbourne through a range of mediums including:

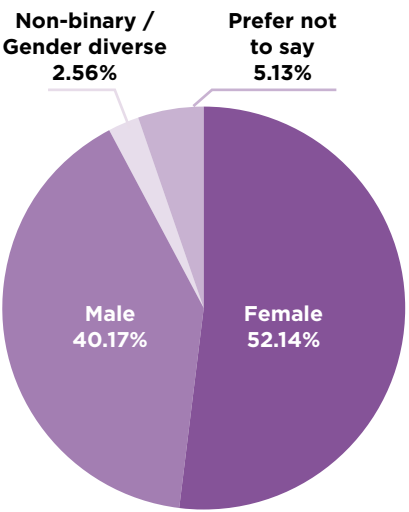
- Participate Melbourne website
- Online and paper / hard copy survey and questions which asked the community how they currently use the space and how they would use the space in the future
- High-level function layout plan and diagrams
- Information on potential traffic and car park changes
- Three x A3 information boards/ signs in the park with QR codes
- Face-to-face engagement at the existing Miles and Dodds park at a 2x pop-up session
- Meet and greet with local cafe owners adjacent the park
- Social media campaign.

# WHO WE HEARD FROM

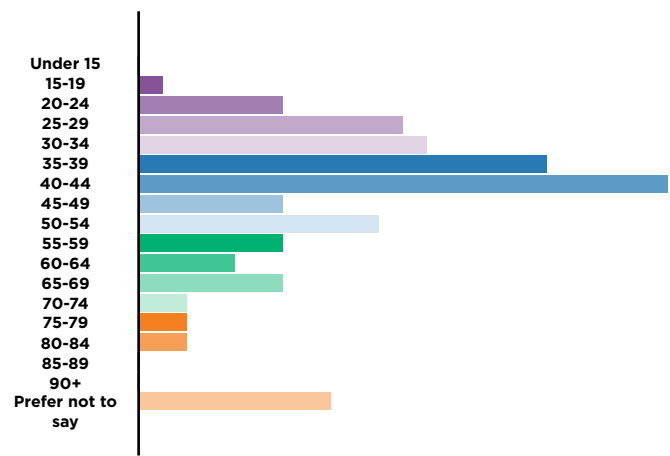
**123**  
total  
responses

Through the engagement participants had the opportunity to engage online through the Participate Melbourne Page and in person through pop-up events in the park. This is a snapshot of who we heard from.

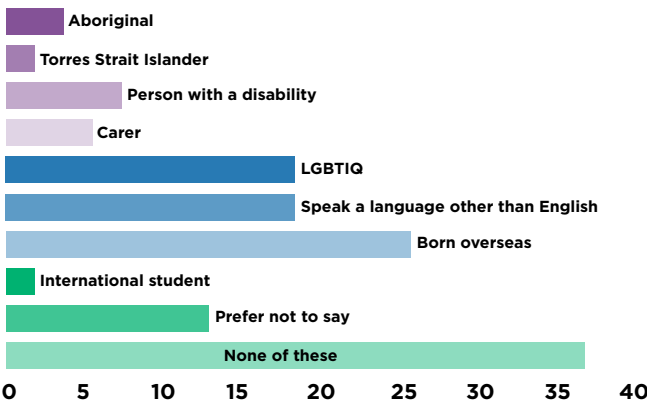
## How do you describe your gender?



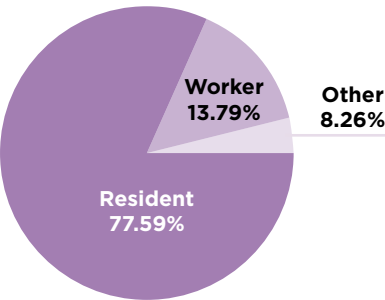
## What is your age?



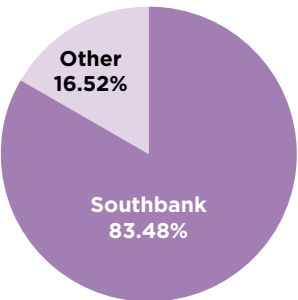
## Do you identify with any of the following?



## Connection to this City of Melbourne project



## Where do you live, work, own a business, study or visit from?

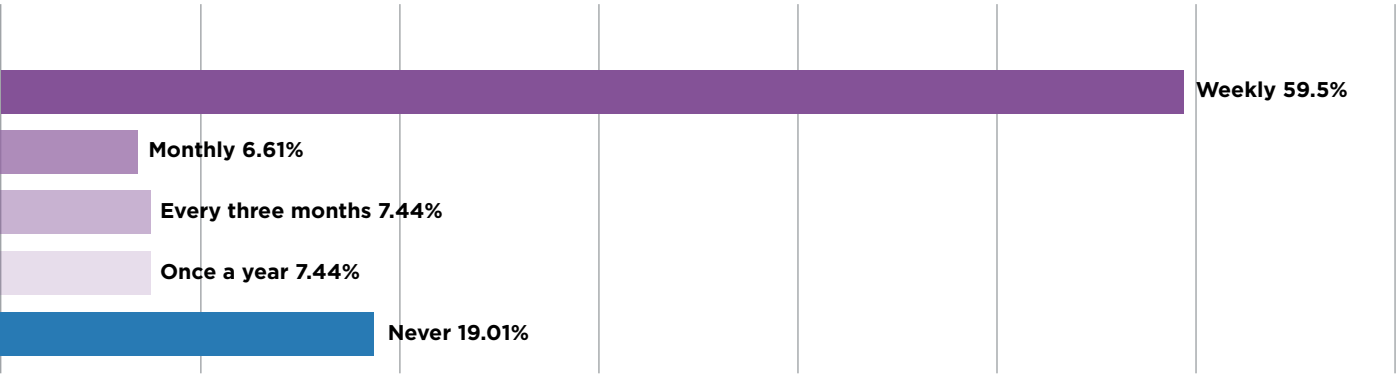


# WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE COMMUNITY

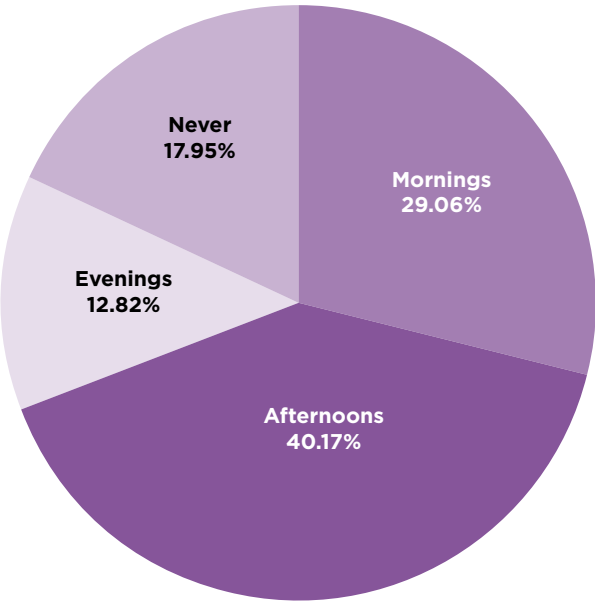
During the engagement we asked a variety of questions, hearing how the community currently use and would use the Miles and Dodds Reserve.

## Use of the Current Park

How often do you visit Miles and Dodds Street Reserve?



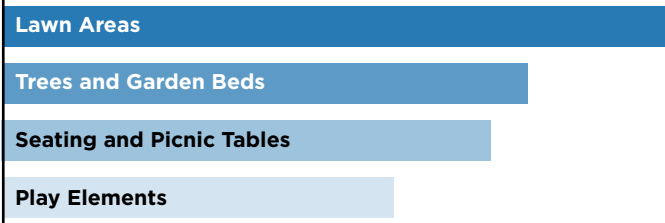
What time of day do you mostly visit Miles and Dodds Street Reserve?



# Future use of the Park



If Miles and Dodds Street Reserve was to be expanded, what amenities or features do you believe are most important to include?



Is there anything else you think a great local backyard should include?

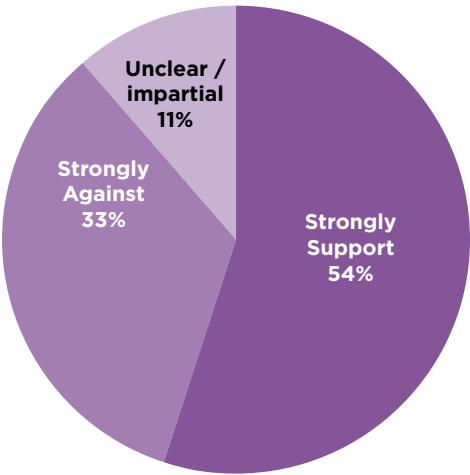
The following is a list of the top 15 additional items the community would like to see in the Miles and Dodds Street Reserve:

- Minimized traffic noise and natural barriers to create a peaceful environment
- Inviting and easily accessible space for community members and pedestrians
- Opportunities for social interaction, such as seating areas and activity infrastructure like BBQs and outdoor gym equipment
- More lawn space for picnics and sunbathing
- Safety features like lighting to ensure the park is safe to use, especially at night
- Dog off-leash areas to cater to pet owners in the community
- Playgrounds and play equipment for children.
- Community gardens for engagement and biodiversity
- Facilities like drinking fountains, rubbish bins and bicycle racks
- Consideration of traffic flow and parking needs in the surrounding area

- Indigenous elements such as native plants, artwork and bush foods gardens.
- Consideration of the impact on local businesses and parking availability.
- Respect for the concerns of local residents regarding safety, privacy and noise levels.
- Amenities catering to various demographics, including families with children, dog owners and seniors.
- Provision of seating, shade and social spaces conducive to relaxation and community gatherings.

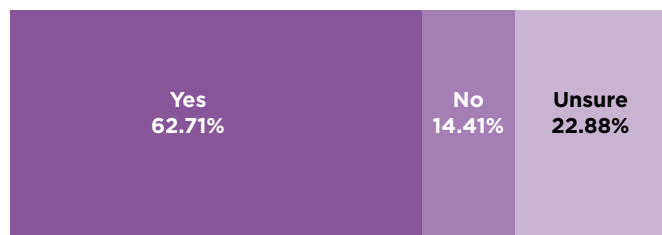
## Support for the project

Do you support expanding Miles and Dodds Street reserve by removing road space and approximately 12 car parks, as indicated in the high-level concept plan?



## What we heard about safety

Do you feel safe visiting Miles and Dodds Street reserve?



Majority of responders shared that they felt safe visiting the reserve.

Concerns were shared regarding antisocial behaviour, traffic and poor visibility into and out of the site. Some residents shared experiences of witnessing drug dealing or use, late night loitering / noise.

Concerns were also shared about the ongoing reduction in longer-stay parking for workers in the Southbank / Arts Precinct, particular women who work at night, walking back to their cars.

For those who answered 'No' to the question the top three themes were:

### Antisocial behaviour

- Many residents shared their concerns regarding drug dealing and use, late-night drinking, loitering and noise, theft and potential predatory behaviour. Some residents shared experiences of witnessing drug use and dealing within the reserve.

### Traffic

Local traffic speed, lack of signage and proximity of the park to the road are concerning to most residents. Multiple residents shared experiences of witnessing traffic incidents at the intersection of Miles and Dodds Street.

### Poor visibility

The dense shrubs surrounding the park visually isolate the park from the surrounding streets making it very difficult to see into the park, or out. Residents shared that the poor sightlines creates an unsafe, uninviting space for locals.

### Other themes include:

- poor lighting
- location next to substation
- lack of shade.

A series of recommendations and next steps have been included at the end of the report.

# ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

## What we heard in support of the project

### More greening

Generally, local residents are supportive of more greening in the neighbourhood and see the expansion of Miles and Dodds Reserve as a positive contribution to increasing green spaces for residents to enjoy. The benefits of increasing habitat and biodiversity for local wildlife was also frequently mentioned.

**“We live with two small kids on Wells Street in an apartment complex with no green space and no backyard. We travel daily to local green spaces with our kids.”**

### Improve usability / access to local park

Many local residents told us that they would visit the park more often if it was expanded / more accessible. Some residents mentioned that the space is small and uninviting and the proposed expansion would provide a new park for locals to enjoy.

**“People often say that the Shrine and Botanic gardens are a short walk away but with a pram it’s easily a 15 minute trip each way. Pedestrian crossings across St Kilda Road are spread out and the closest one on Coventry Street connects to the shrine gardens where it’s a steep hill with steps but no ramp. If you’ve got a pram, walking back to flat ground makes it easily a 20+ minute trip each way. The longer the trip with a kid under 5, the more likely it turns into an odyssey that you really didn’t need.”**

**“Expanding the reserve and removing car access from one side as proposed, would be a HUGE improvement to the reserve! It would greatly help foster a sense of community and an enjoyable green nature space. Both improving greatly mental health. Right now, it’s so small and fenced in...”**

### Traffic

There was support for changes to the road layout and parking as this will impact traffic speeds and reduce the likelihood and frequency of incidents at the intersection. It was also acknowledged that the park expansion could encourage more local walking and cycling.

### Other themes

Community benefits such as opportunities to socialise and health and wellbeing.

**“I’m supportive of the proposal because I value having a local and public neighbourhood park. At the moment I don’t see a lot of people using Miles and Dodds Street Reserve perhaps because it’s small and surrounded by roads.”**

## Some Concerns for the project were also captured

### Existing access to private and existing green spaces

Residents who are unsupportive of the project shared that the area is already well-serviced with green space and that there are many parks within walking distance. Some suggested that improvements should be made to Sturt Street Reserve and Grant Street Reserve instead. Some residents shared that they have access to private open space and amenities within their complex, so they don't see a need for additional open space in the area.

**“We get lots of youths walking drunk and they will just use the space to gather in the warmer months and make noise at night”**

### Traffic

There are concerns that the traffic issues will not be addressed, and be amplified if the expansion goes ahead. Local traffic speed, lack of signage and proximity of the park to the road are concerning to most residents. Multiple residents shared experiences of witnessing traffic incidents at the intersection of Miles and Dodds Street.

**“I’m concerned that closing the road in one direction will cause more traffic on my street and less parking.”**

### Parking

Many residents shared concerns about existing issues with the lack of parking in the area, that their guests struggle to find parking and were not supportive of removing parking from the area.

**“It is a completely unnecessary expense and extension, which will cause huge irritation to residents with noise, traffic upset, loss of parking, missuse, cost increased water use.”**

### Other concerns include:

- size / amenity
- increase in antisocial activity
- cost
- overall consultation process
- safety.

**“The park expansion will encourage drug users + needles, increased theft and potential violence.”**

**“Bigger Park, Bigger Problem.”**

# OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS

## Outcomes

Council would like to thank everyone who took the time to provide their feedback on the proposed expansion of Miles and Dodds Street Reserve.

Overall, the majority of responses indicated strong support for the proposal.

We heard a positive response from many local families who live nearby in residential apartments that do not have access to private open space within their properties.

We also heard some objections, suggestions and valid concerns around the proposed park expansion.

All consultation feedback has been reviewed and taken into consideration, with particular attention given to concerns raised and explanation behind the differing areas of support amongst the community.

The outcome of this first phase of community engagement is to proceed with the development of a draft concept design.

During development of the draft concept plan, design solutions will be explored that respond to the concerns raised around safety, traffic, parking and antisocial behaviour, along with other feedback themes received. The draft concept design will also be informed by an independent traffic impact assessment.

Council will also assist with identifying opportunities to embed safety in the decision making for the project and management of the Reserve now and into the future. This will include direct engagement with local police.

The draft concept plan will be presented back to the community for further consultation later this year.

If you have any feedback please respond to

Alli Coster, Senior Project Coordinator, Parks and City Greening [alli.coster@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:alli.coster@melbourne.vic.gov.au)

## Next steps and key dates

The next step and key dates include:

### March-June 2024

Independent traffic impact assessment and prepare a draft concept plan that reflects and addresses the key feedback themes.

### July-August

Present the draft concept plan back to the community for further consideration in a 2nd round of community engagement.

## How to contact us

### Online:

[melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au)

### In person:

Melbourne Town Hall - Administration Building  
120 Swanston Street, Melbourne  
Business hours, Monday to Friday  
(Public holidays excluded)

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03 9658 9658  
Business hours, Monday to Friday  
(Public holidays excluded)

### Fax:

03 9654 4854

### In writing:

City of Melbourne  
GPO Box 1603  
Melbourne VIC 3001  
Australia



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| 03 9280 0720 | Italiano            |
| 03 9280 0721 | 普通话                 |
| 03 9280 0722 | Soomaali            |
| 03 9280 0723 | Español             |
| 03 9280 0725 | Việt Ngữ            |
| 03 9280 0726 | عربي                |
| 03 9280 0726 | 한국어                 |
| 03 9280 0726 | हिंदी               |
| 03 9280 0726 | All other languages |

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users phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 03 9658 9658  
9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (Public holidays excluded)

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