Gilbert Reserve – Wetland  
Community Engagement Summary

Community engagement for the proposed wetland at Gilbert Reserve was undertaken between the period of 19/09/23 to 18/10/23. Feedback on the project was invited by the community through the Council online platform Have Your Say. 340 different visitors to the Have Your Say page with 16 individuals providing input, 14 of which have requested updates to the project.

Key stakeholders to the reserve such as Knox Baseball Club, Baseball Victoria and Softball Victoria were contacted directly to seek feedback on the project and to understand any concerns that they may have.

2 drop in sessions were run at the reserve on 26/09/23 and 10/10/23. These were undertaken to meet the community in person, talk through the proposed design in more detail and respond to any questions the community may have about the project. Between the 2 drop in sessions there were approx. 25-30 people who attended, consisting of a mix of families, the sporting clubs, and regular users of the skate park (including children, teenagers and young adults).

Throughout the various community engagement platforms, we’ve received plenty of great feedback from the community which has now been reviewed. Where possible, community feedback has been considered and incorporated into the proposed design. A summary of comments received and outcomes are detailed below.

We received a few comments identifying the hazard of an open water area being a risk to child safety, as well as inviting mosquito habitation. These have been considered through the design, by providing safety fencing and shallow water depths around the edges of the wetland to mitigate children entering the wetland. In addition, the wetland is designed to carry a constant flow of water and encourage growth of native flora and fauna which will deter mosquitoes from utilising the space for breeding.

There were some suggestions about information signage and artwork/sculptures being great features to the wetland. Information boards/signage have been explored internally and further discussions will be undertaken with our Stormwater, Biodiversity and Communications teams in regards to the content and implementation. Opportunities to provide artwork at the reserve is currently being explored with the Arts and Cultural Services team.

A comment received from regular users of the skate park was regarding the proposed viewing platform adjacent to the existing skate park, that would look out to the wetland. Concerns were mainly around the strength and material choice of the viewing platform, as skateboarders would very likely attempt to skate it and the associated benching. Alternative material options are currently being reviewed to inform a suitable viewing platform solution.

A few comments received on the desire to see more trees planting to provide more shade around the wetland as well as consideration on the tree selection to reduce the hazard of falling leaves and nuts particularly around the skate park. Tree will be planted in strategic locations around the wetland and species will only consist of evergreen trees to reduce the risk of slips and trips caused by tree droppings.

Many suggested of providing seating, drinking taps, and picnic spots were considered. Whilst drinking taps and picnic spots are not able to be facilitated in this project specifically, seating will be provided in strategic locations around the wetland. This has been coordinated with the Open Spaces team to inform type and placement of seating.

Following the completion of the wetland, there will be invitation to the community to join us in planting the wetland – to make your mark and contribute to this exciting new space.