



Victoria Park, Ballarat



**Victoria Park Visioning
Summary of Submissions
June 2012
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The community was invited to submit comments, suggestions and thoughts about a future vision for Victoria Park. A total of 23 submissions were received over a 4-5 month period and are summarised as follows.

Submission 1: Local resident

There is a need to slow the traffic on the roads through the park – consider speed humps, and the gravel roads could be sealed to prevent dust and ‘hoon’ driving.

More rubbish **and recycling** bins are required in the park.

A toilet block should be installed on the southern side of the park.

Submission 2: Local business owner

Often asked to recommend a nearby park where people can enjoy a take-away meal. The only suitable location is Lake Wendouree. Would love to recommend Victoria Park but there are no facilities in the south-west corner for people who are on their way to Geelong, and the maze of internal roads of the Park makes it confusing to give directions to the play and picnic area on the eastern side of the park. It would be great if the south-west corner had a playground, seating and/or other amenities. It would be of benefit to visitors and local residents also.

Also, the stand of pine trees is ugly, dark and uninviting – chop it down and develop a botanical garden that is more appealing. The trimming of the trees along the border is overdue, but now looks great and well maintained – thank-you.

Submission 3: Internal Council Manager

Issues that arise regularly regarding the maintenance of Victoria Park:

- Boundaries of the native grassland are not clearly defined
- Utilisation of the ovals and the required numbers of playing fields
- Impacts of 4WD vehicles in the park and the damage occurring to turf oval assets
- Tree maintenance requirements
- Tree planting and future stock requirements
- Drainage issues in the park
- Car parking and car parking arrangements
- Illegal rubbish dumping
- Anti-social behaviour
- The velodrome and its uncertain future
- Inappropriate uses of the reserve (pony club?)
- Entrances
- The boundary and internal fencing – bollards and treated pine
- Road shoulders and road surfaces

Submission 4: National Trust Branch of Ballarat

- Recognition of the heritage significance of Victoria Park and the many facets of history to be preserved including the remnant native grasslands, regrowth of indigenous trees, establishment of the park on Arbour day in 1890 and the mining history of the park.
- Acknowledgement of the significance of the current use of the park as becoming part of the cultural heritage of the future.
- Concern that the development of roads, buildings and barriers will diminish the openness of the park intended in its original design of an open parkland.

- Importance of correctly maintaining and identifying the large significant trees, grasses and landscape, add and preserve more mature trees to complement the old plantings, creating wetland for the benefit of wildlife, restricting traffic, installing themed signage and recognising through current structures the rich history of Victoria Park.

Submission 5: Local resident

- Victoria Park should be planned in the same way as Faulkner Park in Melbourne, its features being a multi-purpose park for various sports and events, playgrounds for the shared use of local schools, kindergarten and senior citizens centre, network of paths (for maintenance vehicles only), car parking on the park perimeter only, extremely safe and pleasant.
- Concern about the fishing activities at the pond near the playground – incompatible with children, damage and untidiness caused by car parking, cigarette litter and broken glass as a result of the fishing activities. Would like to see fishing policy in Victoria Park reviewed.

Submission 6: Local resident

- Victoria Park is one of Ballarat's greatest assets.
- Trees in Military Drive need attention for improved visibility for speeding drivers leaving sporting activities.
- Suggests consideration of a toilet block in the vicinity of the lakes, playground and Poplar and Plane Avenues (consider a replica of historic army huts to express some park history).
- Requests a secure fenced off-lead dog area for dogs to be kept contained – the area of oval 11 would be suitable.

Submission 7: Local resident

Requests consideration of a traffic safety school with a mini road system with mini traffic lights at Victoria Park. Helps children to learn about road rules while riding bicycles. A mini road system would be publicly available at any time and could be booked for a fee for use by traffic schools and schools.

Submission 8: Local resident

Support for a traffic school at Victoria Park for children to gain confidence and develop road safety skills away from the road. Such a facility could include traffic lights, crossings, road signs, intersection for bikes and scooters, etc.

Submission 9: Local resident

Would like to see Victoria Park considered as a green space like Collingwood Children's Farm in Collingwood or CERES in Fitzroy with vegetable gardens, walkways, meandering paths, animals wandering, etc... It is a good way to teach sustainable living as well as being an attractor for visitors.

Submission 10: Local resident

Requests a fenced off-leash dog park for Victoria Park in particular for dogs that are not well trained and breeds that are prone to chasing. Such an area would have the benefits of a) being a place for all owners to take their dogs for socialisation and exercise, and b) offering confidence to joggers, cyclists and general park users that they can enjoy the amenity of Victoria Park without being hindered by uncontrolled dogs. Some details about this proposal include:

- Area of 1.5-2.5ha required that is visible from the main road and access to car parking (it is suggested that some land unusable for playing fields be used) (4 locations proposed as options).
- A fenced off area 100mx200m for medium and large dogs and areas 50mx100m for small dogs and puppies, vestibule areas and access for maintenance.
- Simple construction of 1.5m and 1m high chain mesh fencing with infrastructure including dog bag dispenser and signage, with later consideration of water supply, bench seating, shade cloth pavilion, expanded car parking and lighting.

Submission 11: Local residents

Suggest that Victoria Park could be a suitable location for an overnight parking point for travellers (grey nomads) with the installation of a dumping point for grey and black water, potable water supply and preferably close to toilets, tourist amenities, BBQ and table and chair areas. Suggest the area along Oak Street on the Sturt Street side just behind the toilet block and playground (where a dump point was previously installed for the scout jamboree). This request is made for members of the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia.

Submission 12: Local resident

Requesting a safe fenced area for letting dogs off the lead where they can be safe from traffic in Victoria Park.

Submission 13: Ballarat Environment Network, Birds Australia Ballarat

Document (Nature Plan) outlining environmental priorities for Victoria Park that includes:

- Removal of 'unauthorised' lake weed dump from the park.
- Flora survey to identify all areas of local indigenous vegetation.
- Conservation of existing local vegetation and new plantings / regeneration.
- Construction of wetlands / lakes / flood retention basins.

This document continues in some detail to comment on the Victoria Park South and Ballarat Livestock Selling Centre Precinct Plan 2007, making specific comments about Victoria Park and environmental issues and priorities.

Submission 14: Local resident

Commenting on the Discussion Paper as a user of the park for walking, jogging, cycling and exercising the dog. Victoria Park is a fantastic community facility for both residents and visitors, maintained for many years minimally. The following comments and suggestions were offered:

- Victoria Park shouldn't be a self-funded asset, but treated more like Lake Wendouree, as a site for free recreation activity and benefit.
- Improve public presence and passive surveillance to increase safety and reduce vandalism.
- Improve road constructions through the park to better manage traffic flow and speed – suggest treatments such as roundabouts or channelisation at the key park intersection. Also consider extension and construction of Quercus Ave to create an additional entrance.
- Improvements and maintenance of safe road crossings leading to the park.
- Extend the tree pruning program (removal of many lower limbs) throughout the park to improve sightlines and therefore passive surveillance.
- Provide for events by exploring various management approaches such as the closing of gates for cycling events.

Submission 15: Local residents

Would like to see the historical significance of the park highlighted more; some residents hosted members of the US marine corps during WWII and established friendships that have remained strong over the years – suggest an appropriate display about the military use of the park?

Victoria Park has huge potential for a wide range of recreational uses for the community as well as enhancing the reputation of Ballarat – the Discussion Paper raises some excellent ideas.

Vehicle access to the park has resulted in significant damage to many areas of the park and undesirable activity affects public safety and safety of pedestrians and joggers using the park. If through traffic was prevented, an immediate improvement would be obvious. Council should consider a road closure in the vicinity of the intersection of Cedar, Elm and Poplar Avenues, then provide some perimeter parking on the fringes of the park.

Victoria Park could be like Hyde Park in London or consider the features of Yarrambat Park in Nillumbik and the following are suggested improvements:

- A Speakers Corner near Sturt St – a series of statues and ‘the black stump’
- Honouring military history by providing clubhouses resembling military huts
- Signage interpreting historic uses and features of the park
- Boating / canoe / lake in the area of the old velodrome
- Tennis courts
- Garden walks, horse, roller skating and bike tracks
- Other statues / monuments of significance
- South-east corner as a “Fossickers Corner” or “Miners Corner”
- North-west corner as “Lucas Corner”, linked to Arch of Victory and Avenue of Honour
- Marathon course linked to Lake Wendouree and even other sites such as Sovereign Hill
- Sound Shell
- Area for model aircraft linked to Ballarat Aerodrome and its use during WWII as a famed wireless operator / aircraft gunner training school
- Developing a coach park (“R.M. Ansett Coach Park”) with signage explaining connection to Ballarat
- Add some areas of native trees to complement the European trees, e.g. Australia’s floral emblem Golden Wattle – re-enact the first Arbour Day. Mass plantings could reflect the gold heritage and could be placed near Mt Holled – add gold spheres as public art like in Beechworth Museum. Benefit – winter bloom, education and an attraction.
- Current native grasslands could honour local aborigines – depicted by statues in the grasslands and interpretation signage to explain history and significance.

Submission 16: Local resident

Requests that 5-10ha of the park be set aside to establish an area like Moreland’s Ceres, including:

- Responsible management committee, perhaps a partnership with BREAZE; community vegetable gardens; models of sustainable architecture and renewable energy; community free range chickens and point of sale eggs; bicycle repair and recycle/exchange area.

Merits of this idea include the fostering of community building, production of truly local food that is sustainably produced, allows sharing of expertise and renewable energy initiatives.

Submission 17: Grampians Disability Advocacy

Suggests development of an inclusive, all abilities playground in Victoria Park.

Submission 18: Local business (Regent Cinema)

Would like to see an outdoor cinema considered for Victoria Park, either:

- A dedicated drive-in theatre; or
- A well-manicured open space area for a “Moonlight Cinema” temporary bump-in bump-out scenario similar to the Melbourne Botanical Gardens.

Submission 19: Council staff on behalf of a local resident

Issue regarding the condition of roads in Victoria Park:

- Particularly Pine Avenue
- Request for upgraded road facilities and potentially road safety treatment at intersections such as Quercus/Poplar/Cedar

Submission 20: Community Postings on the Ballarat Courier website

A range of suggestions were posted on the Ballarat Courier website for the ‘revamp’ of Victoria Park:

- General maintenance, including mowing grass / removing syringes / basic cleaning / revegetation / pathways / fix the roads, etc.
- Drainage throughout the park to maximise winter access, particularly in the south.
- Roads/Lighting: replace all roads and add street lighting and parking / fix intersection at Latrobe and Brazenor Streets / fix congestion at Gillies Street / speed humps to discourage people using park as a short cut and to slow down the speed of cars / more lighting for people who walk at night to be safer.
- Security: a comment about providing just another place for people to destroy.
- Community Input: suggesting an online survey and hard copy for park users and residents / request people to design a park on a template / Use 25% of available land for a hospital and medical precinct and parking helipad / keep the existing playing fields and enhance the remaining ones / have tree planting like the original Arbour Day / be bold and visionary!
- Studies: develop a study like the one done for DeSoza Park in Buninyong that investigated the park and everything around it.
- No Private Development: Victoria Park is a treasure and needs protecting from private developers.
- Sporting Facilities: New cricket pitches / sports and aquatic centre / ice skating, ice hockey centre / replace ugly buildings with decent multi-purpose sporting facilities to attract larger events to the park / still waiting for the tennis courts proposed for Russell Street years ago.
- Velodrome/cycling: resurrect the old velodrome / cycling criterion circuit / improve the roads for cycling.
- Racing cars: using Albert Park as a model, drop in a race car track.
- Family Friendly: With growing population, make the park more family friendly; reduce the criminal and hooning behaviour at night.
- BBQ Areas: Upgrade to be more family friendly and pleasant, including lights and shelter.
- Exhibition Centre: like the one in Bendigo.
- Markets: community market, trash and treasure market, farmers’ market, craft type market.

- Transport access: Victoria Park is a hidden gem, some improved transport (e.g. trams) would be helpful.
- Open space / saleyards: Put buildings on the saleyards and leave the valuable public open space / leave the northern end of the park alone with great tree lined boulevards and parklands for sport.

Submission 21: Representative of Ballarat Environment Network

Victoria Park is NOT the place for a lake weed dump. Concerns about the legality and inappropriateness of dumping the lake weed on the edge of Victoria Park. Suggests some other locations for this purpose.

Submission 22: Developer

Redevelop some areas of Victoria Park to improve amenity and safety, but also address future population growth and existing deficiencies in community and sporting facilities. A major redevelopment of the south-west corner for outdoor sport (artificial turf) is possible. Also: a dedicated 4-5m wide bike path in asphalt, providing maximum activation and surveillance of the park / an additional skate park to service the proposed population growth / a multi-use indoor sports 6-court stadium on the saleyards site to keep buildings off Victoria Park / limit access to through traffic.

Submission 23: Wendouree Archery Club

A summary of the club's recent activity to update earlier data gathered:

- Club is still keen to relocate to Victoria Park – it is the best fit for the club's needs
- Current membership is 38
- Come'n'try sessions attract 15-26 people each Saturday
- Club has been running tournaments and has two more planned this year
- Club cannot improve its current facilities or increase its storage to meet requirements