

MERRI CREEK MANAGEMENT STUDY

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BY

ERNST & WHINNEY SERVICES

JUNE 1988

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

- "For much of its length, ... the Merri Creek and adjoining land is a testament to the insensitive management practices inflicted upon the corridor during this and the last century" (Specialist Consultant, Victorian College of Agriculture and Horticulture).
- This Report's recommendations on a new approach to management of the Merri Creek Parklands are designed to achieve a more sensitive and cost-effective approach to creek management, using limited resources on an efficient, effective and equitable basis.

Benefits of New Approach

- Significant financial incentive for all contributing bodies by providing a coordinated, shared-cost approach to creek parkland management.
- Enhancement of the quality of important public open space in an area of metropolitan Melbourne which has significant deficiencies in passive open space.
- Provision of specialist, additional skills in both planning and creek maintenance and development activities.

Key Components of New Approach

- Formation of a new coordinating body, the Merri Creek Management Committee Inc. with membership drawn from the Community, Local Councils, the MMBW and the State Government.
- Appointment of a full-time Manager to oversee the implementation of creek planning controls, a creek development plan and training courses for Parks and Gardens personnel.
- Formation of a dedicated Works Crew to deliver high quality, specialised parkland development services in the Merri Creek Parklands.
- Funding for the new management arrangements to be shared between the Victorian Government/MMBW and local councils, on a proposed 50:50 basis, to be of the order of \$320,000 - \$350,000 in the first year .

Conclusions

- These recommendations have been developed in close consultation with the Merri Creek Co-ordinating Committee, relevant community groups, local councils and the MMBW. They are based on realistic and equitable organisational, technical and funding commitments from relevant parties. Properly implemented, they will provide a sound working model for watercourse management.

1. THE NEED FOR A NEW MANAGEMENT APPROACH FOR THE MERRI CREEK PARKLANDS

1.1 Introduction

The Specialist Consultant from the Victorian College of Horticulture and Agriculture in his report on the Merri Creek stated that :

"For much of its length ... the Merri Creek and adjoining land is a testament to the insensitive management practices inflicted upon the corridor during this and the last century'.(Baseline Report, Appendix B, p. B-1).

He goes on to indicate the reasons for this and notes that :

"The end result of these processes is the almost total elimination of the original flora. Quite apart from ecological considerations, this must be regarded as a great loss both on aesthetic grounds and from a cost perspective, as it represents the replacement of a visually pleasing, very low cost community with an unattractive, potentially high cost one, which is an effective obstacle to most recreational uses." (p. B-2).

In addition, the Merri Creek Parklands represent one of the few areas of open space in the inner northern and western areas of metropolitan Melbourne. Brunswick, Coburg, Broadmeadows, Collingwood, Fitzroy, Preston and Northcote all rank relatively poorly with respect to provision of passive open space, especially in those areas adjacent to the Merri Creek Valley, while Whittlesea has little landscaped passive open space.

1.2 The Policy Framework

The Victorian Government, the MMBW and member councils of the MCCC have all adopted clear policies of particular relevance to the Merri Creek.

Victorian Government

In the State's "Conservation Strategy for Victoria", 1987, stated policies include :

- Prepare management plans and introduce controls to protect significant parkland from inappropriate incremental or large scale developments or changes in use incompatible with its parkland character .
- Prepare a Metropolitan Open Space Strategy designed to :
 - Expand and enhance the quality of urban open space, with an emphasis on equitable distribution, use and accessibility.
 - Develop a linear open space network in the greater metropolitan area. This will increase the amount of continuous parkland for recreation, existing parks, the foreshore, redundant rail and road reservations, SEC corridors, pipetracks and disused aqueducts and other suitable public land.
 - Identify key areas for land purchase, development, improvement, further planning and design, and increase public awareness of Melbourne's open space opportunities."

The State Government Conservation Policy is reinforced by "The Government's Metropolitan Policy", 1987, which focuses on Port Phillip Bay and urban waterways for metropolitan environmental improvements. This policy document includes the statement that :

"Particular emphasis will be given to increasing and upgrading open space in the west and north to overcome present deficiencies in these areas."

MMBW

The Corporate objectives of the MMBW Division of Parks & Waterways recognise the multi use of urban waterways, including acknowledgment of their recreational and conservation value.

The MMBW has also indicated its support for the development of urban open space by levying a special Metropolitan Improvement Rate on all households and businesses in Melbourne, as a means of funding parkland acquisition, development and maintenance. However, almost none of the MIR funds have been spent in the inner and middle suburbs.

In addition, the MMBW has recently established the Local Government Assistance Scheme, designed to permit "The Board to play an increased role in assisting Councils in the development of their Own local open space and parks." The stated priorities of the Scheme are :

- To assist Councils in the provision of open space particularly in those areas where high concentrations of people lack adequate access to local open space and parkland.
- To encourage Councils in the development and improvement of linear park systems, including major and minor waterways of metropolitan Melbourne.
- Potential high levels of public use of the subject land.

Local Councils

Member councils of the MCCC have adopted the MCCC Creek Management Policy, which is to:

- Retain and enhance the environmental, aesthetic and recreational values of the Merri Creek Valley, and its tributaries.
- Create a regional park along the Merri Creek Valley, including:
 - A unified approach to management of the creek corridor .
 - Specific budget and staff for the park.
 - An appropriate management authority.

1.3 Problems with Existing Management Arrangements

- Lack of formal co-operation in regional management of the Merri Creek

The Merri Creek Coordinating Committee acts as a useful information exchange between Councillors, council officers, the MMBW and the community. However it has no formal management responsibilities, and does not provide a formal mechanism for achieving Coordinated regional planning, development and maintenance of the Merri Creek Parklands.

- Lack of Resources - Organisational

The MCCC is an almost totally voluntary organisation, and the current workloads and responsibilities of volunteer members are unlikely to be sustainable. Volunteers, mainly through the MCCC, have provided significant organisational, professional planning, horticultural advice and training and public education input into Creek management, and successfully attracted State and Commonwealth funding for projects in the Merri Creek Parklands. However, the MCCC recognises its limitations and strongly supports a better resourced, formal management arrangement.

- Lack of Resources - Financial

Historically, there has been generally little commitment to on-going funding for maintenance and development of the Merri Creek Parklands, by the major stakeholders along the Creek. This has frequently resulted in haphazard, poor-quality and uncertain development, and the rapid deterioration of many capital works, notably tree plantings, that have taken place along the Creek.

- Lack of Adequate Technical Expertise

The specialist consultant from the Victorian College of Horticulture and Agriculture stated that :

- The major and certainly the most intractable technical problem in the Merri Creek corridor is that of vegetation management".

This problem is seen to be generally caused by an inadequate level of technical resources devoted to management of the Merri Creek Parklands, and/or a lack of appropriate expertise in both MMBW and Councils, as applied to management of the Parklands.

- Lack of Overlay Planning Controls and a Forward Plan

There are no planning controls or forward plan for the Merri Creek Parklands. These controls are vital in order to avoid any further degradation of the Merri Creek area, and promote its further improvement. A Forward Development Plan is vital in order to ensure clear, coordinated guidelines for future development.

1.4 Meeting Policy Objectives

It is clear that existing management arrangements within the Merri Creek Parklands are inappropriate for the achievement of the specific policy objectives of the Victorian Government, the MMBW and local councils.

The recommendations contained in this report are not a case of "change for the sake of change'. The recommendations are designed to Overcome identified shortcomings in current management arrangements, in order to meet stated Victorian Government, MMBW and Local Councils' policy objectives.

2. RECOMMENDED APPROACH

2.1 'Critical Success Factors' to Management of the Creek

Clear Objectives, Strategies and Responsibilities

No management framework for any organisation can succeed without an understanding of its objectives, delineation of strategies to achieve those objectives, and a clear outline of its responsibilities and the resources available to it.

In Section 2.2, clear objectives for future management of the Merri Creek Parklands, are set out, together with preliminary strategies, responsibilities and resource requirements to achieve these objectives.

Realistic Resource Commitment Provided on an Equitable Basis

Proper organisational and technical management of the Merri Creek Parklands will require a realistic commitment of resources by the Victorian Government, the MMBW and local councils. This realistic commitment however will only be forthcoming if the contributors are confident that resources will be used in an efficient and effective manner in terms of management objectives, and that contributors provide resources on a fair and equitable basis.

Improved Quality and Quantity of Technical Input

The assessment by the Victorian College of Agriculture and Horticulture of technical management of the Merri Creek Parklands highlighted major problems in the approach to land management and associated techniques adopted by most management bodies within the Parklands. The assessment notes that better direction and application of resources should in fact result in lower creek maintenance costs in the medium and long term.

Monitoring and Review of Performance

All organisations require mechanisms to ensure on-going monitoring of activities and regular review of performance: in terms of set targets and objectives. Section 3.5 outlines appropriate guidelines for achieving this in the recommended new management arrangements.

Continued Community Participation and Interest

Extensive voluntary input by local community groups along the Merri Creek corridor has been an important driving force for much of the development already achieved. Although these groups recognise the limitations of their potential given their resource constraints, they remain a vital and valuable source of continuing input into management of the Merri Creek Parklands.

A Genuine Commitment to Succeed by all Stakeholders

No management arrangement or level of resource input will be adequate to achieve any set of objectives without a genuine commitment to achieve common objectives by all stakeholders. For management of the Merri Creek Parklands, this genuine commitment will be reflected in :

- a real effort by all parties to achieve regional, coordinated management of the Creek Parklands
- active interest and participation in Creek Parkland management matters
- free flow of information between the various parties
- recognition of the constraints of each individual party
- ability to Compromise where this is clearly in the broader community interests
- effective financial and administrative support

2.2 Recommended Management Approach

Mission and Objectives

The overall aim, or Mission, of the new Merri Creek management arrangement should be:

"Environmentally-sensitive development and maintenance of the Merri Creek Parklands as a major community asset with significant recreational and conservation value".

Objectives

Creek Parkland Management - To ensure the environmentally sensitive maintenance and development of the Merri Creek Parklands, taking full and proper account of recreational, conservation, and indigenous vegetation values.

Land-Use - To seek to develop the Merri Creek Parklands as a linear park with an emphasis on consolidation and expansion of adjacent lands, and limiting inappropriate intrusions into, and uses of, the Parklands.

Resource Management - To seek efficient and effective maintenance and development of the Merri Creek in optimising the use and value of scarce resources.

Regional Approach- To conduct management of the Merri Creek Parklands on a coordinated, regional basis between the various key stakeholders - Councils, MMBW, Community groups and other landowners - with an emphasis on Co-operation, information exchange and resource sharing.

Community Participation - To enhance management of the Merri Creek Parklands by continued direct community participation, and to encourage community interest in, and use of, the Merri Creek Parklands.

Management Structure

It is recommended that the Merri Creek Management Committee Incorporated (MCMC) be established to act as the new coordinating management body for the Merri Creek Parklands. Membership of the MCMC will be drawn from:

- Councils
- The Community
- MMBW
- State Government

Operational details of the new management structure are provided in Section 3.2.

Responsibilities

In agreement with Councils, the MMBW and the State Government, its specific responsibilities will include:

- The development and monitoring of planning controls for the Merri Creek Parklands.
- Development and monitoring of a Merri Creek Development Plan.
- Oversee the direction of a dedicated works crew.
- Arrange education and training activities in order to improve and update land management and horticultural practices along the Merri Creek.
- Promote greater community awareness of, and interest, the Merri Creek Parklands as a valuable community resource.
- Seek additional funding from external sources for development and maintenance of the Merri Creek Parklands.

Community Representation

The current activities and responsibilities of the Merri Creek Co-ordinating Committee will be absorbed and replaced by the MCMC and the Friends of the Merri Group.

The Friends of the Merri Group will be established to act as the new umbrella organisation for interested community groups and members of the public, to focus on community representation and lobbying activities. Community representatives on the MCMC will be nominated by the Friends of the Merri Group.

Management Personnel

A full-time Manager will be appointed to oversee, develop and implement the policies and strategies of the MCMC. Specific responsibilities of the Manager will cover:

- Formal planning activities and responsibilities, especially in relation to the planning controls and development plan.
- Overseeing the direction of a dedicated works crew.
- Promoting co-ordination in maintenance and development activities along the Merri Creek.
- Arranging education and training activities.
- Identifying and pursuing further sources of funding e.g. corporate sponsorship for development and recurrent expenditure purposes.
- Promoting greater community awareness and use of the Merri Creek as valuable community resources.
- Maintaining close liaison with the Friends of the Merri Group.

Dedicated Works Crew

A dedicated works crew will be formed to provide specialist, additional skills to maintain and develop the Merri Creek. The importance and potential benefits of such a crew to future development and maintenance of the Merri Creek have already been highlighted through the highly successful work of the Northern Waterways Group.

Particular benefits of the dedicated works crew include :

Provide on-going, professional maintenance and development, to build upon the achievements of the many CEP Projects that have taken place along the Merri Creek.

Supplement the MMBW and Councils in major works and large-scale projects within the Merri Creek Parklands.

Ensure the proper maintenance of existing community investments within the Merri Creek Parklands, such as recently-planted trees, and important landscape projects.

Location

The MCMC and its Manager should be located within existing Council offices, by preference either Northcote or Preston.

An appropriate site of the dedicated works crew would be the Winifred Street, Northcote site where the Northern Waterways Group has been located, and which is owned by the MMBW.

2.3 Benefits of the Recommended Approach

TABLE 1

BENEFITS AND BENEFICIARIES OF THE RECOMMENDED APPROACH

<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Beneficiaries</u>			
	Communi ity	Vic. Govt.	MMBW	Local Councils
<u>Environmental</u>	X	X	X	X
1. Improved public open space in a region of relative severe deficiency.	X	X	X	X
2. Enhanced environment for passive recreational purposes.	X	X	X	X
3. Potential to reassert the original ecological value of the Parklands.	X	X	X	X
<u>Financial</u>				
4. More efficient use of taxpayers and ratepayers funds.	X	X	X	X
5. Provides significant financial incentives to all contributing parties in adopting a shared-cost approach to management of the Parklands.		X	X	X
6. Opportunity to efficiently and effectively allocate MIF funds to contributing areas yet to receive the benefits of such funds.	X		X	
<u>Management</u>				
7. Co-ordination by public sector bodies of maintenance and development activities within the Merri Creek Parklands.		X	X	X
8. Application of specialised, and more cost-effective horticultural techniques and practices.	X	X	X	X
9. Maintains and encourages close community input and interaction with developments in the Merri Creek Parklands.	X	X	X	X
10. Up-dates and develops vegetation management skills of practices and Parks and Garden staff	X	X	X	X
<u>Policy</u>				
11. Means of meeting stated specific policy objectives.		X	X	X
12. Provides a working model for urban waterway	X	X	X	X

management.				
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3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 What Will Be The Responsibilities Of The New Body?

The principal responsibilities of the MCMC Inc. will be:

- Development of planning controls for the Merri Creek Parklands, and monitoring and assessment of development proposals.
- Development of a formal concept/development plan for the Merri Creek Parklands, to include identification of, and recommendations on:
 - general priority developments;
 - use of local areas;
 - types of indigenous vegetation;
 - guidelines to environmentally sensitive and resource effective approaches to creek maintenance and development
 - means of ensuring agreement and adherence to the Plan review and monitoring mechanisms
 - acquisition of further parklands
- To direct and monitor a dedicated works crew for the Merri Creek, which will undertake specialised parkland development and maintenance works within the Merri Creek Parklands.
- Promote further cooperation and coordination between the MMBW and councils with respect to creek maintenance and development activities.
- To arrange and coordinate training and management improvement programmes for council parks and garden staff, with specific reference to the Merri Creek Parklands.
- To seek further funding from external sources for the continued maintenance and development of the Merri Creek Parklands.
- To foster and encourage community use of, and interest in, the Merri Creek Parklands.

3.2 How Will It Operate?

To ensure a clear understanding of the authority, accountability and responsibilities of the MCMC, guidelines for its successful operation are set out below.

Membership and Representation

The Merri Creek Management Committee should be formed as an incorporated body, with membership drawn from :

MMBW

State Government

The Community

Councils, notably the municipalities of :

- Broadmeadows
- Brunswick
- Coburg
- Collingwood
- Fitzroy
- Northcote
- Preston
- Whitlesea

Members would in turn elect their own representatives to act as Directors on the MCMC Board of Management. The number of Directors from members will be :

Member Councils - 1 Director each	8
MMBW	1
Community- as nominated by The Friends of the Merri Group	6
State Government	1

At the first meeting of the Board of Management, an Executive Director will be nominated to act as Chairperson of meetings of the Board, and to whom the MCMC Manager will be responsible for day to day policy issues and guidance.

Policy Development and Planning

- Member Councils and the MMBW will look to the MCMC as a major body for policy development with respect to the Merri Creek Parklands.
- Member Councils and the MMBW will look to the MCMC as the prime source of reference with respect to development proposals within the Merri Creek Parkland.
- MMBW and member councils will pass relevant development proposals and planning applications to the MCMC for review, and after the implementation of planning controls, agreement.

These arrangements will build upon and strengthen existing arrangements with the MCCC.

Works Program

- The works program for the dedicated works crew will be developed in close cooperation with member councils and the MMBW, and the funding requirements will be clearly spelt out. By preference, a 3 year rolling works program should be developed to provide a guide for funding, and this program will be reviewed annually by members.

Training

- Training and management improvement programs for Parks and Gardens staff will be planned and developed using a specialist advisory committee of Parks and Gardens supervisors, in co-operation with the MCMC Manager and Horticultural Supervisor of the works crew.

Co-ordination

- Co-ordination between member councils and the MMBW will be achieved via the MCMC Manager and Horticultural Supervisor developing and maintaining close working relationships with relevant Council personnel, and nominated MMBW personnel responsible for works along the Merri Creek.

Monitoring of Performance

- The MCMC should provide a regular, say six monthly report on its activities to all its members and funding bodies, including specific reference to appropriate performance indicators. These might include:
 - Progress in development of planning controls
 - Work carried out by the dedicated works crew - planned versus actual
 - Number of training courses delivered to parks and garden personnel, and number of participants
 - Degree of success in attracting further outside funding for projects and activities along the Merri Creek
 - Monitoring the number of recreational users of Merri Creek passive open space - this should be arranged using the resources of Council Recreational Officers.

Review

- The overall operations of the MCMC should be subject to a major review at the end of 3 years operations, to both assess past performance, and re-assess future objectives, strategies, responsibilities and funding requirements.

3.3 Who Should Fund it, and How Much?

Total annual funding requirements for the proposed management arrangements will be of the order of:

- MCMC, including Manager \$80,000- \$100,000
- Dedicated works crew \$250,000

Appropriate funding sources for the proposed management arrangements include:

- The Victorian Government, through one or more of relevant departments/ ministries.
- The MMBW, through MIF revenue and/or the Local Government Assistance Scheme.
- Locals Councils, through a reallocation of existing resources and use of rate revenue previously allocated to now defunct CEP projects.

The recommended funding arrangements have been developed using the principles of :

- Linking levels of contributions to expected benefits.
- Recognition of the capacity to pay of individual parties.
- Achieving an equitable distribution of costs.

On this basis, the recommended guidelines for funding arrangements are:

- The Victorian Government and/or MMBW to fund 50 per cent of all direct costs, including management costs of the MCMC and the dedicated works crew.
- Local councils to contribute to the management costs of the MCMC on an agreed basis, reflecting both likely benefits from the MCMC management activities and the capacity to pay for individual municipalities.

- Local councils to contribute to the operational costs of the dedicated works crew on a strictly funds-for-work done basis, .giill allowance for the Victorian Government/MMBW contribution. Note 2, page 21 provides details of the type of work that could be conducted by the Dedicated Works Crew within each participating municipality.

A major review of funding arrangements should be conducted at the end of 3 years, to coincide with the review of overall performance of the recommended management arrangements. Funding for the works program element should be provided on a 3 year rolling basis to maxi mise efficient and effective use of funds, and the development of realistic work programs.

Table 2 below sets out the recommended funding arrangements for the first year .

TABLE 2

RECOMMENDED FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS - FIRST YEAR ONLY

- MCMC Inc. - Total Annual Cost = \$100,000 (see Note 1 for details)
- Dedicated Works Crew - Total Annual Cost = \$250,000 (see Note 2 for details)

	MCMC \$	Works Crew \$	Total \$
Victorian Government/MMBW Contribution	50,000	125,000	175,000
Council Contributions **			
Broadmeadows	8,000	26,050	34,050
Brunswick	7,000	13,000	20,000
Coburg	7,000	10,400	17,400
Collingwood	4,000	13,000	17,000
Fitzroy	4,000	5,250	9,250
Northcote	8,000	31,250	39,250
Preston	8,000	26,050	34,050
Whittlesea	4,000	*	4,000
TOTAL	100,000	250,000	350,000

NB: Contributions would be indexed to changes in the C.P.I.

* Assumes the Works Crew will undertake no activities in Whittlesea.

** Council contributions to the MCMC would only alter on an annual basis, according to changes in the CPI. Council contributions to the Works Crew would alter on an annual basis according to the amount of work carried out by the Crew in individual municipalities.

NOTE I: MERRI CREEK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE INC. - COSTINGS

Merri Creek Management Committee Board:	2,500
- Miscellaneous, say	
Office Costs:	49,000
- Manager \$37.5Kx1.3 (on-costs)	
- Secretary (2/3 time) \$18Kx1.3 (oncosts)x.66	16,000
- Computer - PC	2,500
- Rent, Power, Electricity	3,000
- Other costs - stationery, postage	3,500
Vehicle expenses	6,000
- Leasing etc	
- Running costs	2,500
Training and Education (self-funding)	
Contingency allowance (5%) say	5,000
Basic annual funding required	90,000
Plus establishment costs (first year only)	3,000
- Legal	
- Office furniture and equipment, allow	5,000
First year basic Funding Requirements, say	<hr/> 100,000
<u>Plus</u>	
Dedicated Works Crew	250,000
Full funding requirement (first year)	<hr/> \$350,000 <hr/>

The overall cash costs can be reduced where some expenses such as secretarial support, rent, electricity, computer services and perhaps vehicle expenses are provided on an "in-kind" basis by participating Councils.

NOTE 2: DEDICATED WORKS CREW & COSTINGS

The following is a draft program of works for a 12 month period. The program has been prepared to show how a works crew could be used in a maintenance and development role along the Merri Creek and how costs might be distributed.

No discussion of the individual project has been undertaken with Councils, MMBW or the Merri Creek Coordinating Committee and no agreement should be presumed.

The works crew is based upon:

- 1 Horticultural Supervisor
- 2 Foreman
- 4 Crew

Total Cost \$250,000

Total Working time 48 weeks

Cost/Week to 'hire' crew \$5,210

Costs have included allowance for:

- All staff related overheads (workcare, leave loading etc)
- Hire/lease of vehicles, equipment, shelter and storage
- Materials and plants
- Minor plant hire

It is assumed that major earthworks would be funded by others.

Broadmeadows (\$52.100)

**Working
Weeks**

Moomba Park Beautification and Development

8

Established as a joint venture with the City of Preston to revegetate areas along the Merri Creek between Mahoneys Road and B. T . Connor Reserve, Reservoir. To date, 10,000 plants have been successfully established as part of the Bicentennial Project. Work includes further planting of 10,000 plants with associated weed control.

Landscaping/Reduced Costs

2

Development of landscaped street closures at Barry Road, Campbellfield and Emma Street, Fawkner to restrict vehicle access, reduce rubbish dumping and associated costs, and enhance the entrance to the Merri Creek Parklands.

Preston (\$52.100)

B. T. Connor Reserve Beautification and Development

8

In conjunction with work at Moomba Park, Broadmeadows, further development of revegetation commenced as part of Bicentennial Project. Work includes establishment of 10,000 indigenous plants, site preparation and weed control.

Parkland Rehabilitation

2

Rehabilitation of significant remnant vegetation on the Bartrop Street rock escarpment overlooking the Merri Creek. Includes weed control and establishment of indigenous plants.

Coburg (\$20,800)	Working Weeks
<u>Landscaping and Parkland Development</u>	2
Landscaping and provision of public access to areas below the Lake Reserve wall. Includes establishment of indigenous vegetation.	
<u>Reduced Maintenance Costs</u>	2
Control of existing weeds and revegetation with indigenous species at the Bell Street/Elizabeth Street Escarpment to achieve a low maintenance regime.	
Northcote (\$62,500)	
<u>Merri Park Stage 1</u>	4
Continued development and maintenance of plantings successfully established as a Bicentennial project.	
<u>Merri Park Stage 2</u>	8
Following completion of MMBW earthworks, planting of indigenous species to complement revegetation of Stage 1.	
Brunswick (\$26,000)	
<u>Local Park Development</u>	5
Development of a local park and significant point of access to the Merri Path and Parklands, at Ida Street.	

Fitzroy (\$10,500)	Working Weeks
<u>Reduced Maintenance Costs</u> Weed control and continued development of areas established as Bicentennial projects at Rushall/St. Georges Road, to achieve a low maintenance regime.	2
Collingwood (\$26,000)	
<u>Asset Preservation/Reduced Maintenance Costs</u> Rehabilitation of previous CEP plantings at Hall Reserve, Clifton Hill and establishment of a low maintenance regime along the Merri Path.	2
<u>Parkland Development</u> Weed control and continued development of plantings established as part of The Bicentennial Project at Queens Parade, Clifton Hill.	3

3.4 An Implementation Schedule

The following table outlines an implementation schedule for the new proposed management arrangements, setting out activities and responsibilities.

General Implementation Schedule

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>	<u>TIMING</u>
1. Agreement-in-Principle to new management arrangements, including initial funding allocations.	Vic Govt/MMBW Local Councils/ MCCC/MCBC	August 1988
2. Incorporation of MCMC Incorporated with membership guidelines	MCBC	August 1988
3. Establishment of Friends of the Merri Group (FMG)	MCCC	August 1988
4. Election of representatives to MCMC Inc.	MMBW/FMG State Govt./ Local Councils	September 1988
5. Develop selection criteria for MCMC Manager and place advertisements	MCMC Board	September 1988
6. Appointment of Manager	MCMC Board	October 1988
7. Advertise for Horticultural Supervisor	MCMC Manager MCMC Board	October 1988
8. Appointment of Horticultural Supervisor	MCMC Manager MCMC Board	November 1988
9. Formalisation of MCMC Objectives, Strategies, responsibilities and funding arrangements.	MCMC Board MCMC Manager	November 1988

10. Establish operational and financial reporting guidelines, including adopting of first year financial budget	MCMC Manager MCMC Board	November 1988
11. Establish Working Group to develop a 3 year Works Program for a dedicated works crew.	MCMC Manager Horticultural Supervisor MCMC Board Co-opted parties as required	November 1988
12. Advertise and appoint Works Crew.	Horticultural Supervisor	December 1988
13. Establish a special Advisory Committee on Planning Controls, comprising planners from member Councils, MMBW and Community representatives.	MCMC Manager/ MPE/MMBW	December 1988
14. Establish special Advisory Committee on training and education courses for Council Parks and Gardens personnel.	MCMC Manager	February 1988
15. Begin Works Program	Horticultural Supervisor	Jan-Feb 1988

MCMC - Merri Creek Management Committee Inc.

MPE - Ministry for Planning and Environment

MCBC - Merri Creek Bicentenary Committee

FMG - Friends of Merri Group

APPENDIX A - STUDY BACKGROUND

Ernst and Whinney Services, in association with the Victorian College of Agriculture and Horticulture, were appointed in January 1988 to conduct a Management Study of the Merri Creek. The first principal aim of the study was:

"To investigate existing management policies and practices along the Merri Creek Valley. with the purpose of providing an analytical framework for evaluation of future options for effective and efficient management of the creek".

The results of these investigations have been set out in the initial Baseline Report, which provides a comprehensive overview of organisational and technical management policies and practice along the Merri Creek Valley. The Baseline Report also examines future management options in detail for the Creek.

This Final Report meets the second principal aim of the study which was to develop:

"...firm recommendations on future management structure. policies and practices and inter-relationships which are acceptable to all authorities with responsibilities along the Creek Valley, including projected funding".

The study was overseen by a Steering-Committee comprising:

Mr. Graeme Preston	City of Preston
Mr. Tom Young	City of Broadmeadows
Mr. Rob Hauser	City of Coburg
Mr. David Taylor Mr. Bruce McGregor Cr. Ray O'Halloran	Merri Creek Coordinating Committee
Mr. Geoff Mabbett	Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works

The Consultants would like to thank the Study Steering Committee for their assistance during the study. We would also like to acknowledge the considerable interest and assistance displayed by the various Councillors, Council Officers, MMBW Officers and Community Groups with whom discussions were held.

APPENDIX B

LIST OF ORGANISATIONS INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED

- The Merri Creek Coordinating Committee

Special Projects Sub-Committee

Member Community Groups

- Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW)

Geoff Mabbett, Coordinator, Merri Creek Bicentennial Committee; Anne Whittenbury, (former Manager) Parks and Waterways;

John Senior/Peter McKay, Engineers, Yarra and Northern Drainage, Drainage Division;

David Elliott/Gordon Davies, Operations Engineers, Sewerage and Drainage, Northern Division;

Jeanette Norman, Coordinator, Plenty River Management Committee.

Councils

- Broadmeadows :

Joe Mallia, Councillor

Tom Young, Design Engineer;

Don Woods, Works Engineer;

Kevin Cleary, Parks and Garden Superintendent.

- Brunswick :

Simon Pryor, Councillor;

Bela Bard-Brucker, Executive Engineer;

Bob Wilson, Parks and Gardens Superintendent.

- Collingwood :

Roger Eade, Councillor;

John McCarthy/David Mulholland, Engineers;

Joe Burnett, Parks and Garden Superintendent.

- Coburg :
Kelvin Thomson, Councillor;
Rob Hauser, Dep. City Engineer;
John Parham, Statutory Planner;
Norm Share, Parks and Gardens Superintendent.
- Fitzroy :
John Anderson, Dep. City Engineer;
Ian Lawrence, Dept. Parks and Gardens Superintendent.
- Northcote :
David Redfearn, Councillor;
Ian Cairns, Dep. City Engineers;
Tony Blackmore, Parks and Gardens Superintendent.
- Preston :
Ray O'Halloran, Councillor;
Graeme Preston/Doug Hannon, City/Dep. City Engineer; Ian Mansergh, Parks and Gardens Superintendent.
- Whittlesea :
Peter Hopper/Jim Harrison, City/Dep. City Engineers.
- Other Parties
Victorian Department of Sports and Recreation, Bob Russell;
Ministry for Planning and Environment, Colin Leigh, Peter Townsend;
Yarra Bend Trust, Terry Lanham;
Darebin Creek Management Committee, Ed Thexton;
Bundoora Park Committee of Management, Ron Ashworth, Coordinator;
Northern Waterways Project, Pat Shaw, Coordinator - Merri Creek Crew.
Fawkner Progress Association