PLACES FOR PEOPLE

Melbourne City 1994

The City of Melbourne in cooperation with Jan Gehl

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FOREWORD

*Melbourne, one of the world's 'most liveable' cities, is undergoing fundamental change. Leading up to the year 2001, we will increasingly experience the exciting vision developed by the City of Melbourne and the Government of Victoria in the recently released blueprint for the State, **Creating Prosperity: Victoria's Capital City Policy**.*

Creating Prosperity sets directions to the year 2001 to enrich metropolitan Melbourne by enhancing the capital city's national and international profile, its role and competitiveness. As we move towards the next century, we must maintain the vigorous pace of reform that has become the hallmark of the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne.

Places for people: Melbourne city 1994 addresses two of the eleven key commitments in Creating Prosperity: to use innovative contemporary art and design practice to enhance our urban setting, and provide safe, welcoming and attractive pedestrian access to all central city facilities.

This report is the first of many City of Melbourne initiatives planned with the State Government to achieve the vision laid down in Creating Prosperity. The city will be improved for all Victorians, as well as for interstate and overseas visitors.

Places for People sets benchmarks against which we can measure our progress towards a more liveable and vibrant city. I invite your response to its many innovative and exciting ideas.

R Kevan Gosper AO

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The central Melbourne
study area

INTRODUCTION
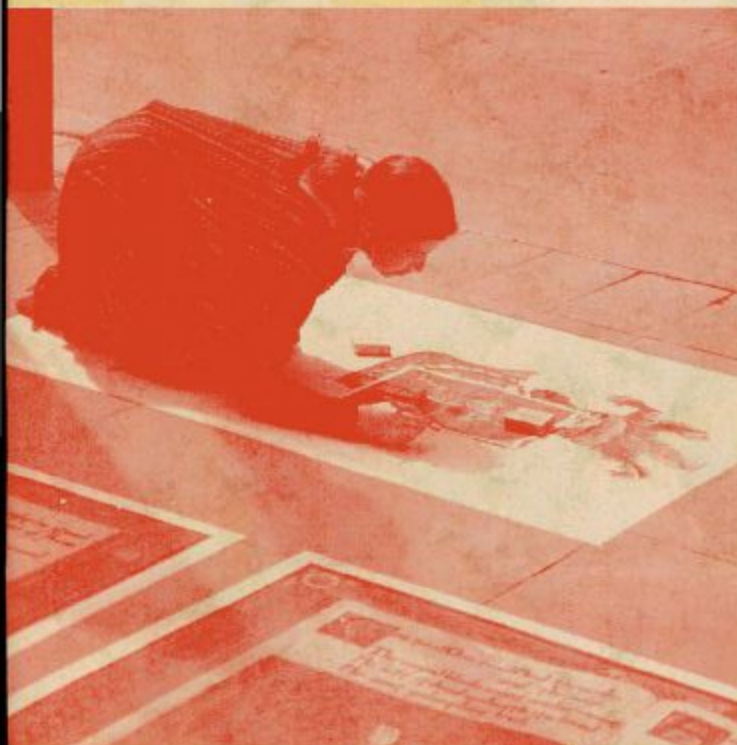
Places for People examines the activities of people in the public spaces of central Melbourne, and the places that support these activities. It provides benchmark data that will make possible the measuring of future changes. Most importantly, it sets targets for the amount and types of activity that the City of Melbourne wants to achieve for the year 2001, and proposes actions to reach these targets.

As the economy becomes more global, cities must compete with each other to attract footloose capital. A liveable city is more likely to capture this capital.

Central Melbourne is competing with retailing and office centres in suburban Melbourne. Melbourne city's share of the metropolitan region's retailing dollar has fallen substantially since the Second World War. The central city does not have the advantage of the regional shopping centres where a single ownership can determine the mix of tenants and maintain high standards of upkeep for all the tenants and circulation spaces. However, central Melbourne has more shops with a greater range of goods and services than any other centre, and has a greater wealth of history and architecture. The public spaces of the city provide the matrix that connects the shops and other land uses to one another, and to a significant extent these spaces create the central city's physical character. To maintain market share against the competing suburban centres, the central city must provide shoppers with a better experience than it does now.

In addition to its role as a major shopping centre, central Melbourne is Victoria's biggest international tourist attraction. The single most visited place is the Queen Victoria Market, with other drawcards being the Arts Centre, Parliament, the Crown Casino, Southgate, and the central city shops. Many of Melbourne's other tourist drawcards are nearby, such as Como, the Zoo, the Botanic Gardens, Cook's Cottage, and the sports arenas. Within Melbourne city, the public spaces themselves are attractions. The greater the enjoyment of tourists in strolling through Melbourne, the greater the number of tourists likely to visit in the future.

The liveability of central Melbourne's public spaces is most important for their most numerous users, the residents of metropolitan Melbourne. These people make central Melbourne a lived-in and evolving place. Without them, it would be reduced to being a tourist theme park.

This is the latest publication by the City of Melbourne on pedestrians in the central city. It follows on from *Streets for people: a pedestrian strategy for the Central Activities District of Melbourne* (1984) and the 1985 *City of Melbourne strategy plan*, and *Melbourne's Pedestrian Heart - The Arcades* (1989).

This report provides an overview of the central city's environment and users as they are in 1994, and proposes ways to encourage more life into its streets and plazas in the future. It is based on a methodology developed by Professor Jan Gehl, a Danish urban designer, and on data from his previous studies of Perth (1993), Stockholm (1990) and Copenhagen (1986).

This report begins with an essay from Professor Gehl assessing Melbourne's strengths and weaknesses as a city for people, and suggesting ideas for its improvement.

This report examines the central city, an area bounded by Spencer Street, Victoria Street, Spring Street, and Flinders Street, with an area south of the river bordered by Queens Bridge, Southbank Boulevard and St Kilda Road. The parklands surrounding this area have been excluded in order to concentrate on the subject of urban street life. Peripheral parkland has also been excluded in similar past studies and in the cities used as comparisons in this report.

To keep this report concise, details of the study methodology are contained in a separate document, available on disk or hard copy from the Urban Design Branch, City of Melbourne.

Melbourne city centre and some comparison cities.

Melbourne
2 300 000 m²
Metropolitan
population
3 200 000

Perth
1 240 000 m²
Metropolitan
population
1 200 000

Adelaide
785 000 m²
Metropolitan
population
1 100 000

Stockholm
1 005 000 m²
Metropolitan
population
1 200 000

Sydney
1 616 000 m²
Metropolitan
population
3 700 000

Copenhagen
1 000 000 m²
Metropolitan
population
1 300 000

CREATING A MORE LIVELY CITY CENTRE FOR MELBOURNE

by **Jan Gehl**, Professor of Urban Design, School of Architecture, Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen.
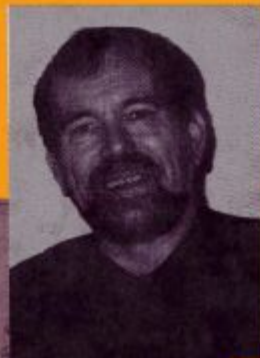
Melbourne is characterised by its regular street pattern, its many street trees, and its trams.

All improvements to the capital city of Victoria must have as their starting point the unique qualities and character of central Melbourne. Melbourne is a grid city, a green city and a tram city. Foremost, Melbourne is a city where the street life has not been diluted too much. I recommend that Melbourne should immediately strengthen and refine these positive characteristics.

In this summary of ways to create a more lively city centre for Melbourne I touch briefly on many topics and suggestions. Their background is generally covered in more detail in the subsequent sections of the report.

Trams have survived in Melbourne, much to the envy of many cities which are now busy reintroducing them. The trams, the underground rail loop and the suburban trains constitute a workable public transport system. This could easily be further developed to bring more people into and around the city centre in a pleasant and efficient manner.

Melbourne is a predominantly green city with many trees. The green character of the streets is one of Melbourne's finest assets and is well worth strengthening further.

Too much traffic is led into and through the central city. Even so, the streets and the street patterns have survived. The damage done by the motor traffic can, with some effort, be rectified.

Some second and third floor skybridges link the interior of blocks and take pedestrians off the streets. These bridges damage the views along the streets and diminish their liveliness. Again, compared to many other cities, the extent of this problem is limited.

Being a river city Melbourne ought to further develop its riverfronts and the links between the city centre and the river. The northern riverfront has especially great potential.

Melbourne has a remarkably fine central city, with great potential for being more liveable, more used and more enjoyed. Considering what other cities have done to their city centres, Melbourne is fortunate to have retained so many liveable qualities. Now vigorous efforts are required to make Melbourne a truly enjoyable and exciting place to walk in.

I suggest four main approaches for adding more life to Melbourne:
- Improving the pedestrian network.
- Making gathering spaces of excellent quality – and making more of them.
- Strengthening street activity by physical changes.
- Encouraging more people to use the city.

Improving the pedestrian network

People love to spend time in a city where walking is enjoyable. For this a city needs an attractive network of routes that take people where they want to go: to the concert hall and the casino, to the shops, to the cafes, to the pubs and clubs. Like the road system, a pedestrian system needs arterial routes and feeders.

The vast swath of shops, eating places and entertainment venues between Swanston Street and Elizabeth Street also continues east of Swanston between Bourke Street and Lonsdale Street. Melbourne already has the north-south pedestrian arterial route in Swanston Street Walk. Bourke Street Mall forms the beginning of the east-west arterial. However, both Swanston Street and Bourke Street Mall have a major problem with the inconvenience and noise caused by trams, especially at street intersections. In addition, Swanston Street is a series of pedestrian spaces interrupted at every intersection by cars. Swanston Street Walk and Bourke Street ought to be further developed in future years as the great walking streets of Melbourne.

Great cities have great streets. What a main street Melbourne will have in Swanston Street Walk when it fully matures! It has the potential charm, vitality and liveability to become one of the world's great streets – the Champs-Elysées of the south. And talking of the Champs-Elysées, in Paris the parking has just been removed and the footpaths widened from twelve to twenty-five metres on either side! So Swanston Street's wide footpaths are not so radical after all.

The streets need to cater for all members of the community.

To ensure that Swanston Street Walk becomes vital, active and elegant throughout its length will require much experimentation, flexibility and fine-tuning. Today the barren look of the tram zones and the service lanes gives the street

Swanston Street Walk during Moomba :a great walking street needing further development

an unfortunate 'underused' look. More activity is urgently required in these spaces – perhaps by using the service lanes out of delivery hours for rows of market stalls.

The overcrowded footpaths of the retail area need urgent attention to make them more inviting for walking.

For a pedestrian network to work well, it needs high quality feeder routes as well as arterial routes. Most of the city's streets are relatively lively, with a good mix of uses and many trees. The traditional system of lanes and arcades in the retail heart works well, without overly diluting the life of the surrounding streets. More sunlight, wider footpaths, more active facades and less noise and fumes would be improvements. What needs particularly urgent attention is the overcrowding on the footpaths, especially in the retail area and the 10 metre wide streets such as Little Bourke Street.

A sense of the 'teeming metropolis' is very difficult to obtain in Melbourne except at lunchtime on Elizabeth and Swanston Streets. The wide streets often look empty, even when the footpaths are well used. The grid of streets disperses pedestrians instead of concentrating them and the lanes and arcades in the retail core provide alternative routes. Melbourne needs more people on the streets rather than in tunnels and skybridges. Concentrating people at ground level encourages street life and reduces the risk of assault.

Melbourne is missing some essential links. The Queen Victoria Market and Southgate are isolated from Melbourne's large, concentrated and vibrant retail heart by areas with almost no shopper interest. The city centre has major attractions and destinations that are hard to find or difficult to walk to, such as the World Trade Centre (currently housing the temporary casino), the Parliament precinct, and the pleasant ring of parks and gardens on the periphery of the city centre. These attractions need to be linked to the centre of the city with high quality pedestrian routes.

The promenade at Southgate has sunshine, a great view, places to sit, eat and drink: it is a 100% location.

Any further attempts to dilute the life in the streets through skybridges and tunnels should be avoided.
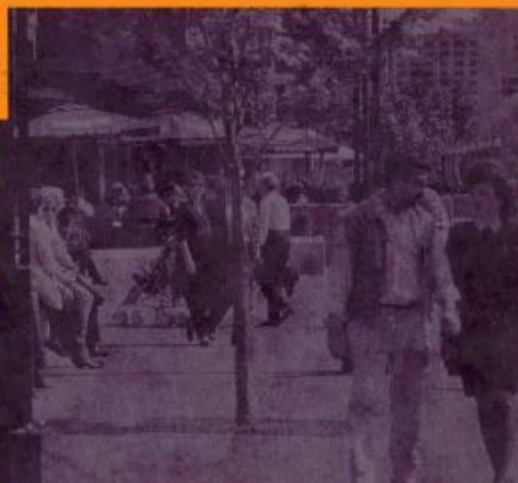
Melbourne's existing City Square is a perfect location for a 100% urban space. Now it needs a simpler design and lively edges.

Make gathering spaces of excellent quality – and make more of them

Any city has lots of people walking in it. A liveable city also contains many people who are standing or sitting. The number of people engaged in these stationary activities is an excellent indicator of city quality, because most people only stop and settle when the conditions offered are truly fine.

The North American urbanist William H. Whyte writes of 100% locations. These are places that have everything right – they are on a major pedestrian route, have good climatic conditions, an interesting view, comfortable places to stand and sit and opportunities nearby to shop, eat and drink. Wherever these conditions occur, people congregate. On the other hand, wherever conditions are poor, people are scarce.

Plazas in a city give a signal to rest, to stop, to do something more than keep on walking. A street says 'Move on', while a plaza says 'You have arrived, you can settle in here'.

Plazas provide the necessary space for activities that need room – festivals, gatherings, outdoor cafes, children's play, and so on. The centre of Melbourne is peculiar in that it has virtually no public outdoor spaces for people to gather in other than the poorly designed City Square.

At the moment the few plazas the city has are not 100% locations – they suffer from a lack of active frontages, from being away from where most of the people are, from poor climatic conditions and often all three. Stationary activities are comparatively low in Melbourne largely for this reason. Melbourne needs more plazas. They do not have to be large, but they do have to be 100% spaces.
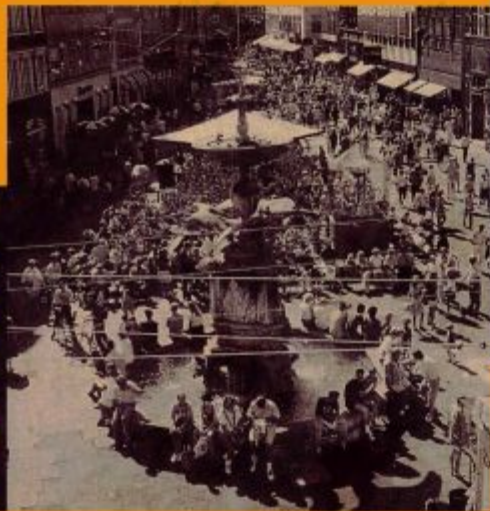
Plazas signal 'Please settle in and enjoy yourself'. These people in Copenhagen have absorbed the message
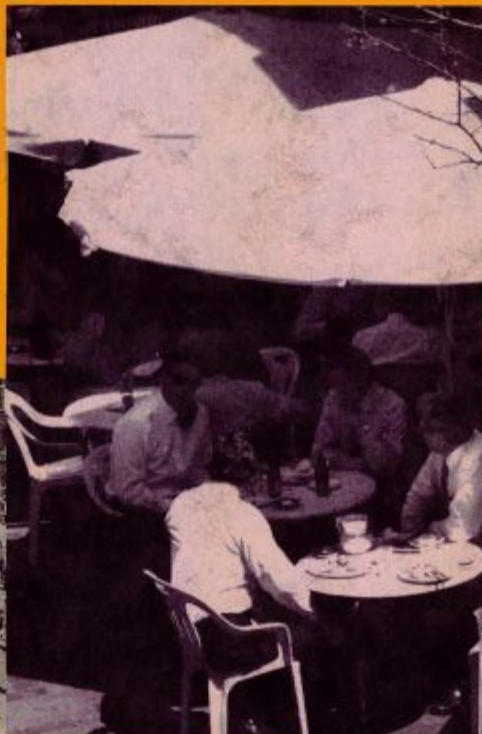
Through traffic in the city centre can be largely eliminated.

Melbourne could use a further two thousand outdoor cafe seats, especially in some top-class locations.

Strengthening street activity by physical changes

Seats are the most important prop in the encouragement of more street life. Two types of seats are available on streets – free public seats and 'user pays' outdoor cafe seats. Both are important. Public seats are plentiful in Melbourne. Some areas need more, like the east end of Bourke Street. The standard seat is a very serviceable but quite basic painted metal model. The city's finest pedestrian spaces could use a model offering greater comfort by having armrests and by being made of wood. Wood is warmer in winter and cooler in summer to sit on than metal.

At present Melbourne has some two thousand outdoor cafe seats. A doubling in number is possible given Melbourne's mild weather and strong restaurant tradition. Imagine walking through the city on a fine lunchtime and choosing from twenty Hardware Streets!
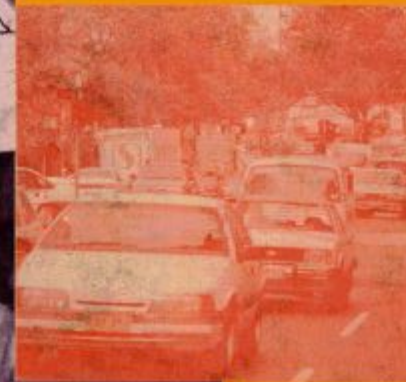
Currently the quality of the furniture in the outdoor cafes is generally poor. The cafes could use much more comfortable and stylish chairs, and provide cushions and blankets for cooler weather. Coloured canvas screens would add colour and reduce wind and noise.

Melbourne has a large but patchy area of highly interactive ground floor frontages extending along the spines of Swanston Street and Bourke Street, with large unconnected 'islands' in the Queen Victoria Market and Southgate. Much of the city has blank, uninviting walls. The areas of good quality frontage must be maintained and expanded.

More and more cities around the world have come to realise the virtues of calming their motor traffic. Central Melbourne has a considerable volume of motor traffic having the city as its destination, and also a heavy volume simply using the city as a through route. The passage through the city's streets of almost 300 000 vehicles a day results in most of the streets being unpleasant to remain in.
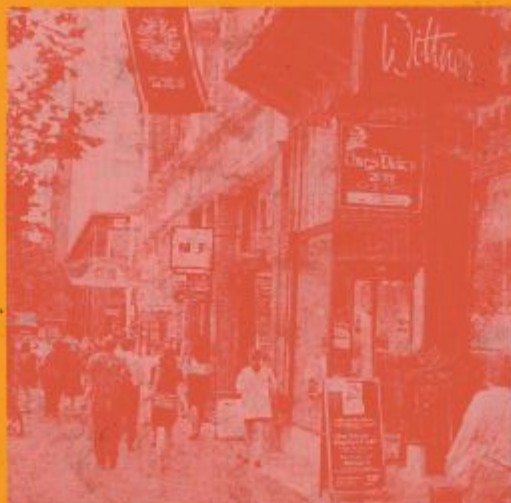
After Swanston Street Walk was pedestrianised the volume of motor traffic in the streets of central Melbourne increased! Measures need to be gradually introduced to completely discourage through traffic Reduced motor traffic enables the widening of footpaths, the installation of medians, the planting of street trees and the enhancement of the ambience and charm of the city centre.

Interesting ground floor frontages are essential for a friendly, inviting city.

People enjoying themselves in the Town Hall plaza, Melbourne.

Except for the parks and Southbank, all public spaces in central Melbourne suffer from loud and frequent motor vehicle noise.
Melbourne's pedestrian spaces need to be quieter to be more liveable. Fewer cars would help, as would cars travelling more slowly.

Quieter trams, and especially quieter tram track intersections, are also important. A long term possibility is to move the tram. Bourke Street would then become a very high amenity pedestrian route, where the volume of people would easily use the entire width of the street.

Melbourne has a central city with many positive qualities still intact. Fortunately the great changes in climatic conditions produced by tall windswept towers have largely been restricted to either end of Collins Street. This has left many other sections of the city with a relatively pleasant human scale where a moderate amount of sunshine still falls at ground level on the major streets.

Melbourne's climate is similar to San Francisco's. If the sun is out and the wind is not too strong, walking and being outdoors is pleasant, even in winter. However, if buildings provide too much shadow or generate too much wind, conditions becomes uncomfortable for staying outside, even on relatively fine days.

By referendum the citizens in San Francisco decided not to accept any further climatic deterioration in their city streets. For the last six years or so a building code has required all new construction in the important streets to take no further sunshine from the opposite sidewalk and generate no further wind. I strongly recommend that Melbourne introduces similar rules.

Encouraging more people to use the city

A city needs citizens to love it, protect it and care for it. People who enjoy themselves in the streets and plazas of Melbourne will tend to love the city and protect it, as will people who live in the neighbourhood. If the locals find their city exciting, chances are visitors will too. Melbourne needs to encourage more people into its public spaces, especially in the afternoon and evenings. A lively, lived-in city is a safe and friendly city.

The city centre houses too few residents. It needs many more, at least 4 000 by 2001. Fortunately, the central city has a good number of university students to add liveliness. The old CUB brewery site at the top end of Swanston Street will help even more when it becomes RMIT student halls. Another few thousand students will certainly add to the city's street life.

Increasing the number of festivals and events in the city and developing the program of free central city entertainment on weekday afternoons and weekends will bring people into the streets. It will also lead to more spur-of-the-moment activities.

In cities worldwide, street markets are vital elements – the booksellers along the Seine River in Paris, the linear markets in Germany's main streets, the cheese markets in Holland, the art and craft market in Paddington, Sydney. Linear markets for vegetables, flowers, art, and antiques bring life and colour to a street.

Four types of street market are worth creating in Melbourne's pedestrian spaces:

- Fruit, vegetable and flowers, to operate on weekends and on the weekdays when the Queen Victoria Market is closed.
- Old books and antiques.
- Good quality arts and crafts.
- Clubs and organisations of all types.

Swanston Street Walk is an excellent location for one or more street markets. The Maker's Market has just begun there, and it is already demonstrating the street's potential. Each street market should have a standard well-designed stall to ensure a pleasing and consistent appearance.

All the ideas I have mentioned would contribute to a livelier, more used and more loved city. Melbourne has great potential for many vibrant streets. Copenhagen trebled its street life in fifteen years. Melbourne can do something similar. All that is needed now is the will to make it happen.
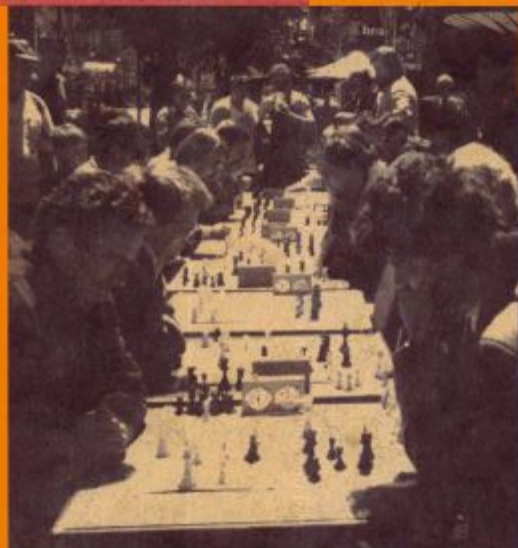
DEFINING A LIVEABLE CITY

A good city is like a good party – people stay for much longer than really necessary, because they are enjoying themselves. Two types of activity occur in public spaces: what people have to do (necessary activity), and what they like to do when the time and place are right (optional activity).

People only indulge in recreational and social activities in public if they are tempted by high quality public spaces. Given favorable surroundings, people stay outside – sitting, talking, looking – at any time of the year, even on winter nights. Once people dress to go outside, attractions keep them there in any season and at any time of day, except during rain. Optional activities are the all-important indicator of city quality. A liveable city will have large numbers of people engaging in these optional activities, in addition to many people doing what they have to do.

Types of activity
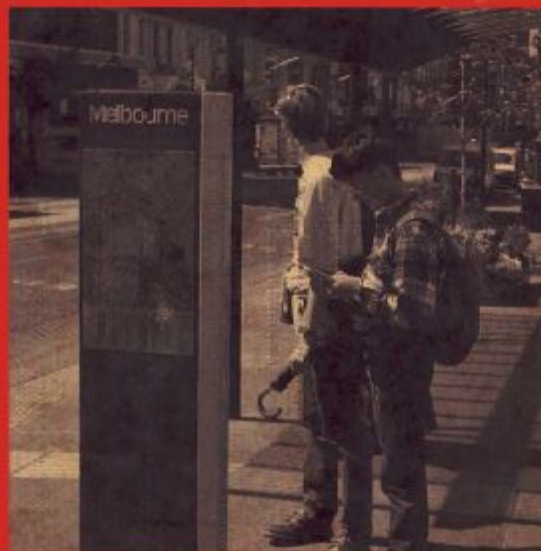
Necessary activities

Some actions must be done such as walking to school, waiting for the tram, shopping and travelling to work. These activities occur despite the conditions in public spaces. People must do them as part of their daily routine.

A liveable city provides pleasant, comfortable and safe conditions for these necessary activities.

Optional activities

A liveable city has high-amenity public places where people stay to do things they like to do – sitting to eat a meal in the sun, watching other people, window shopping or talking with friends.

High quality pedestrian space is essential to create a vibrant city full of people. A liveable city has at least one high-amenity public space less than five minutes walk from every residence and workplace.

Ingredients for a liveable city

1 Ingredients for an enjoyable walking city

- Paths to walk along free of hazards and congestion.

- A choice of sun or shade, depending on the temperature.

- Protection from rain and strong winds.

- Interesting ground-level facades to stroll beside and observe.

- Easy, safe access for people with disabilities.

- An easy-to-understand pedestrian network that people can find their way through.

- Places to promenade and places to rest.

- A pedestrian system that connects important destinations.

- Few intersections where people must wait a long time to give way to vehicles.

- Well-lit places and routes to walk around that are safe both day and night.

2 Ingredients for a city where people enjoy staying outside

- Space for standing, sitting, playing and talking.

- People to watch.

- A choice of sun or shade, depending on temperature.

- Shelter from the rain and strong winds.

- Interesting ground-level facades adjoining spaces where people congregate.

- Residences, workplaces, recreational and social facilities well mixed together.

- Comfortable outdoor spaces to stay in with three types of seats:
  1. Well-placed public seats
  2. Well-placed outdoor cafes
  3. Widespread secondary seating, such as steps and planter box edges.

3 Ingredients for a city with a high level of social and cultural exchange

- Space for street theatre, clowns and jesters, music and small-scale commercial activities.

- Space for people to sit together outside.

- Public spaces free from loud traffic noise or physical threat.

4 Ingredients for a city where people feel safe around the clock

- Ground-level building facades that provide interest through windows, displays and visible indoor activity.

- Other people on the streets.

- A wide variety of land uses mixed together, such as shops, offices, schools and dwellings.

- Many interesting display windows, visible in the daytime and lit up in the evenings.

- Housing to ensure a lively city day and night, not just during working hours

- Schools and universities, for the life and vitality students bring.

- Beautiful and effective lighting.

- A mixture of daytime and night-time functions.

- Clean and cared-for streets.

5 Ingredients for an interesting and attractive city

- Diverse people.

- Beautiful spaces, wonderful views.

- Good visual qualities, from small details to streetscapes and vistas.

- Valuable historic environments retained, respected and interpreted.

3500

1484

809

Melbourne
Perth
Copenhagen

Levels of stationary activity, weekday daytime

Average number of people engaged in stationary activities at any one time between 12.30 p.m. and 4.30 p.m. Monday to Friday

Measuring optional activity is done most easily by counting the people engaged in stationary activity. In Melbourne this number has been rapidly increasing over the last decade. On a typical weekday in November 1993 Melbourne's nine busiest spaces had an average of 1 484 people engaged in stationary activities in the middle of the day, or forty-five people every 1 000 m2. Both Perth and Copenhagen, cities of about one million inhabitants, have relatively higher levels of stationary activity, with Copenhagen significantly higher.

People who make their living engaged in cultural and commercial activities on the street are especially important in encouraging the general public to linger. Examples of cultural activities include chalk

PLACES FOR PEOPLE MELBOURNE CITY 1994

painting, busking, jesting, lobbying, speaking and marching. Examples of commercial activities include waiting on outdoor cafe tables, selling roast chestnuts, selling magazines and raffle tickets, and cleaning the street.

In the November 1993 survey Melbourne had forty-one people engaged in cultural activities during the busiest observation. This is high compared to both Perth and Copenhagen. At the same time Melbourne had forty-eight people engaged in commercial activity. Taking into account population and size of the city centre, Melbourne's level of commercial activity is comparable to Perth's but substantially lower than Copenhagen's (232 people).

41

12

12

Melbourne
Perth
Copenhagen

Peak level of cultural activity, weekday daytime

Number of people engaged in cultural activities during the busiest observation, Monday to Friday

232

48

16

Melbourne
Perth
Copenhagen

Peak level of commercial activity, weekday daytime

Number of people engaged in commercial activities during the busiest observation, Monday to Friday

The potential to increase Melbourne's level of stationary activity is enormous. Over time Melbourne should be able to at least match Copenhagen; however this will not happen by itself. The people managing Melbourne must make deliberate attempts to increase the quality of the public environment and encourage more cultural and commercial activity.

THE PEOPLE

People are the key to an exciting, diverse and safe city to walk in and spend time exploring. This section first presents information on the users and potential users of the city. These people are the 'market' for the city's public spaces; they provide the interest and the animation for its streets and plazas.

Next, information is presented on walking in the city – the numbers of people at nine locations in the city's core, and the patterns of pedestrian use at those points on weekdays and weekends. This indicates where the people are, and therefore the potential for stationary activities. Following that is the all-important information on people engaged in stationary activities.

People gain unexpected pleasure from finding a great entertainer performing for them in the street – for free!

The people who use Melbourne

Tourists are great users of public space. They spend a lot of time on foot, have time to linger when something or somebody of interest catches their eye, and are looking to enjoy themselves and discover the character of the place they are visiting. On an average day Melbourne has 65 000 overseas and interstate tourists in the metropolitan area.

Melbourne's metropolitan population is 3.2 million people. Approximately 140 000 of them visit central Melbourne each day to shop, visit attractions or do business. Many other residents rarely if ever visit central Melbourne. To attract them, central Melbourne must offer different experiences from the suburban centres, and these differences must be promoted. This is beginning to be successfully tackled by Melbourne City Marketing, an independent not-for-profit organisation funded by the City of Melbourne and city retailers.

Excluding Southbank, central Melbourne has 136 000 people working in it. These people create the lunchtime activity peak. Attractive public spaces and lively streets can help tempt these people to stay in the central city after hours, on weekends and on days off. They are already familiar with the city, and through word of mouth are its best possible promoters.

Tourists

65 000

interstate and
international in the
metropolitan area

Visitors

140 000

estimated

Workers

136 000

Southbank
excluded

**Residents**

2 100

Students

30 000

Residents are extremely important to the health of the central city. They help keep the streets alive after working hours, and add to public safety through their casual observation of public spaces and their ongoing concern for cleanliness and the appearance of their neighbourhood. Postcode 3000, the City of Melbourne's campaign to increase the number of residents, has been very successful, with 2100 people now estimated to live in the central city. The number of new dwellings currently proposed, approved or under construction means the city is likely to have another 1200 residents by the year 2001.

Students are good animators of public space, because they tend to have a lot of free time. When public spaces are nearby and attractive, students use them a lot. The biggest users of the State Library forecourt are students from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. RMIT and several other educational institutions add life to the central city by their presence.

Pedestrians in the city

To understand Melbourne's pedestrian life, the City of Melbourne commissioned two surveys of the central city's nine busiest spaces. One survey counted the number of people crossing imaginary lines in nine streets at mid-block locations. The other survey recorded the numbers of stationary people in nine defined areas, such as the Bourke Street Mall, at particular moments. These surveys included pedestrians, cyclists and other people moving under their own power, plus people in wheelchairs and babies. The surveys were taken on Thursday 11 October 1993 and Saturday 27 October 1993. On both days observations occurred between 10 a.m. and midnight, the period when the vast majority of optional activities occur. Both days were warm and sunny, so pedestrian activity was lively.
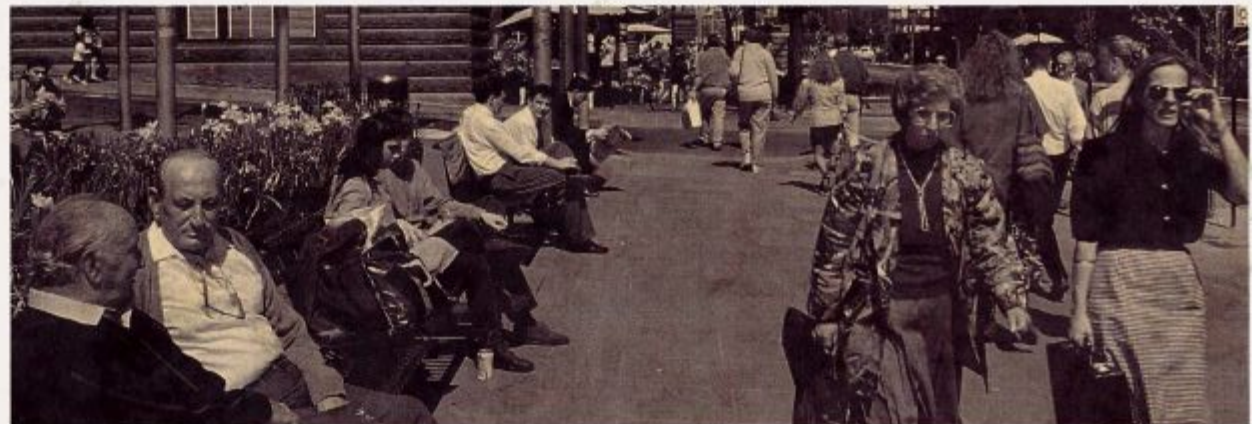
Weekday evening pedestrian numbers

The number of people walking in selected locations in
central Melbourne, 6 p.m. to midnight
Monday to Thursday
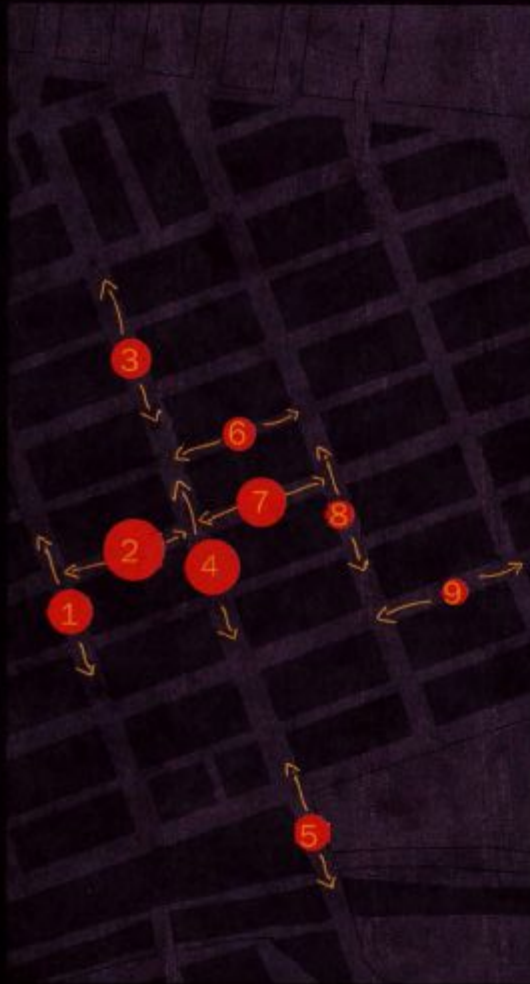
1	Elizabeth Street	29 500
2	Bourke Street Mall	39 000
3	Swanston Street north	12 900
4	Swanston Street south	34 400
5	Princes Bridge	12 600
6	Little Bourke Street	11 900
7	Bourke Street	30 000
8	Russell Street	11 400
9	Collins Street	10 100

1	Elizabeth Street	3 200
2	Bourke Street Mall	4 400
3	Swanston Street north	2 600
4	Swanston Street south	7 300
5	Princes Street	4 300
6	Little Bourke Street	6 200
7	Bourke Street	10 500
8	Russell Street	5 400
9	Collins Street	2 000

The Bourke Street Mall is the heart of
pedestrian activity in Melbourne as well as
the heart of retailing. On a fine weekday
39 000 people pass through it between
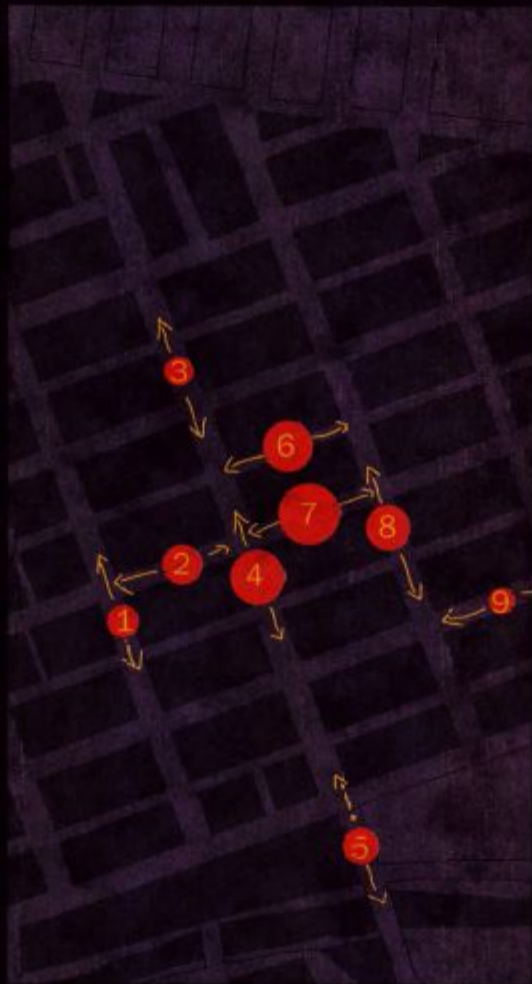10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Consequently it is a
favourite location for busking, car raffles and
demonstrations. It is at the centre of central
Melbourne's street grid, at the centre of the
lane and arcade system, and is the site for
the city's two largest department stores.
Generally, the further from the Mall one goes,
the fewer the pedestrians one sees.
Swanston Street Walk immediately south of
Bourke Street is an exception, with nearly as
many pedestrians as the Mall. The northern
section of Swanston Street Walk is similar in
volume to Little Bourke Street, Russell Street,
Collins Street and Princes Bridge, each with
ten to twenty thousand people. Little Bourke
Street is only a third the width of the major
streets, and for its size is at least as busy
as Bourke Street Mall and Swanston
Street Walk.

Weekday street life diminishes dramatically in
the evening. Elizabeth Street and the Bourke
Street Mall have only one ninth the daytime
volume, because little is open after 6 p.m.
Pedestrian numbers in Bourke Street between
Swanston and Russell Streets fall to one
third their daytime volume. Even so, this
area is the city's busiest place at night due to
its cinemas and cafes. Russell Street and
Little Bourke Street remain the most even in
the distribution of activity throughout the day.

The evening has half the level of the day due to the many restaurants, nightclubs, gaming clubs and cinemas nearby.

Saturdays are busier than weekdays on both Bourke Street between Elizabeth and Russell Streets and on Swanston Street Walk south, both prime retailing streets. Bourke Street Mall has a 60% increase in use to almost 63 000 people. This makes it by far the busiest street in the central city. All the other streets receive less use on Saturdays than on weekdays.

Pedestrians are almost twice as numerous on Saturday evenings as on weekday evenings. The popularity of streets changes little in relation to each other except that more people use the Bourke Street Mall and less use Swanston Street Walk north. The retail heart is still the centre of pedestrian activity. Bourke Street Mall has one third more pedestrians in it than on weekdays. Bourke Street east of Swanston Street also increases in numbers when compared to weekdays. Russell Street has more pedestrians using it in the evening on Saturday than during the day, probably because of people visiting the cinemas.

Saturday daytime pedestrian numbers.

The number of people walking in selected locations in central Melbourne, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday

1 Elizabeth Street **18 880**
2 Bourke Street Mall **62 700**
3 Swanston Street north **8 900**
4 Swanston Street south **36 000**
5 Princes Street **8 400**
6 Little Bourke Street **10 700**
7 Bourke Street **35 400**
8 Russell Street **8 300**
9 Collins Street **3 100**

Saturday evening pedestrian numbers.

The number of people walking in selected locations in central Melbourne, 6 p.m. to midnight Saturday

1 Elizabeth Street **4 300**
2 Bourke Street Mall **15 600**
3 Swanston Street north **2 500**
4 Swanston Street south **15 500**
5 Princes Street **7 900**
6 Little Bourke Street **9 500**
7 Bourke Street **17 400**
8 Russell Street **9 800**
9 Collins Street **5 500**

Stationary activities

General activities

Stationary activities were surveyed in the nine busiest locations in the central city. The survey excluded the morning walk-to-work period as few stationary activities occur then.

On both weekdays and Saturday noon to 2 p.m. is the busiest time for stationary activity due to people using public spaces at lunchtime. In absolute numbers Bourke Street Mall is the busiest space in the central city, with 293 people on a weekday, sitting on public seats being the predominant activity. Swanston Street Walk south of Bourke Street is the second most well-used space, with a good mix of standing, sitting on public seats and sitting in outdoor cafes. At the Queen Victoria Market the large number of commercial and cultural activities, combined with a very high proportion of people standing, suggests a dire shortage of public and cafe seating. Southgate Promenade shows a high proportion of people using outdoor cafe seats.
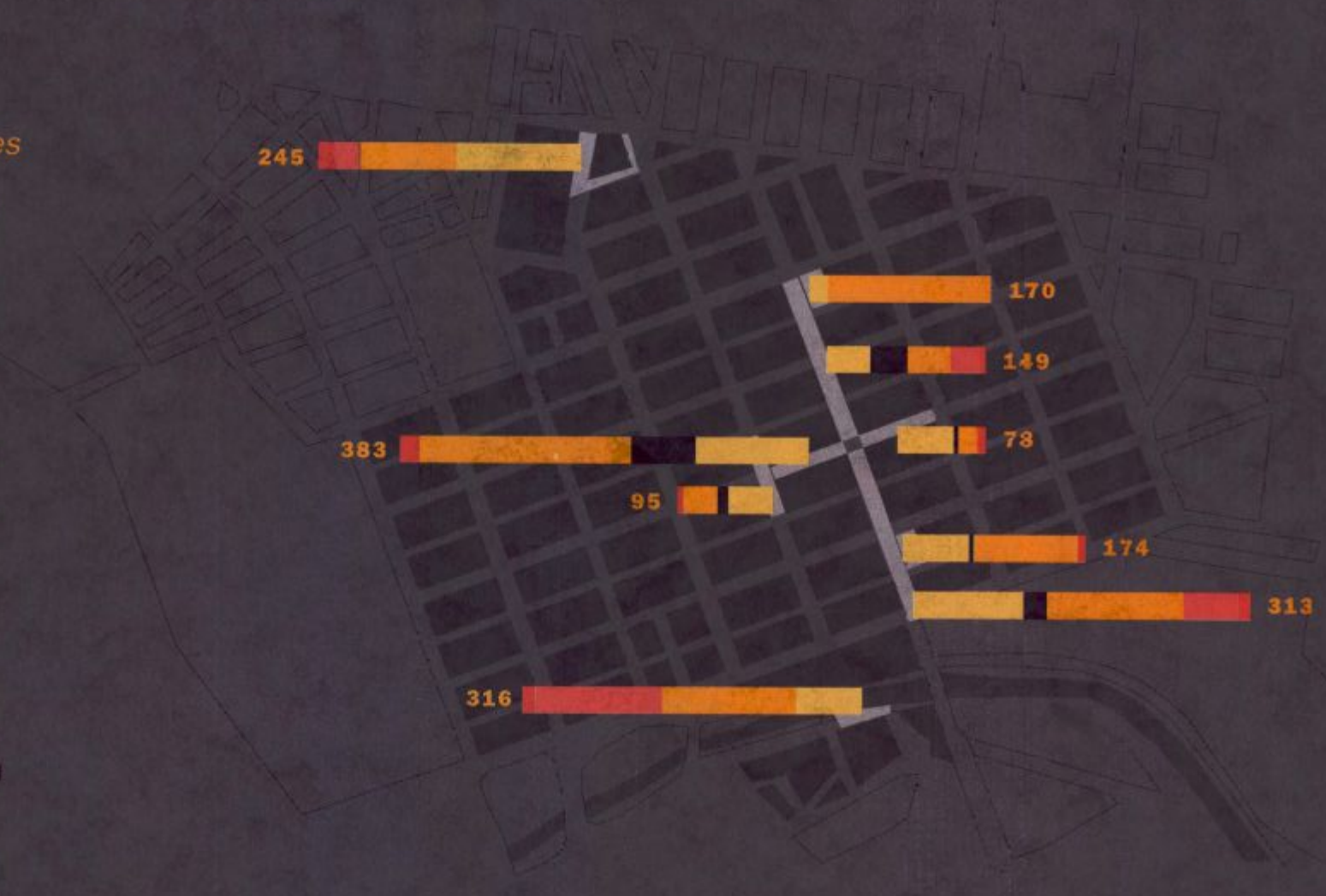
Stationary activities at lunchtime
Average number of people engaged in stationary activities at any one moment from noon to 2 p.m., Monday to Friday in selected locations in central Melbourne.

- Commercial & Cultural
- Cafe Seats
- Public Seats
- Waiting for Tram
- Standing

245 170 149 383 78 95 174 313 316

The number of people engaged in stationary activities in Melbourne is only about 40% of that in Copenhagen, probably because Copenhagen has many more plazas and a greater length of pedestrian streets. These places invite people not only to walk, but to sit, watch and talk.

The number of people staying in central Melbourne's public spaces declines rapidly at the end of the working day. The exception is Southgate Promenade, where the number of people engaged in stationary activities, mostly sitting at outdoor cafes, is substantially larger than the lunchtime peak.

1

49

32

38

26

35

73

467

Cultural and commercial activities

Melbourne's public spaces have high levels of cultural activities. Bourke Street Mall has the greatest number, while the Queen Victoria Market and Southgate Promenade appear to have good scope for increases.

Planned events, according to the number of permits issued for the use of public open spaces, are concentrated during the warmer months, especially before Christmas.

On the basis of metropolitan population, Melbourne's level of cultural activity is higher than Copenhagen's, but the amount of commercial activity is much lower. Melbourne has the potential to at least double its level of commercial activity, and can certainly still increase its cultural activity. Realising this potential will require a larger number of supportive environments.

17.0

4.5

20.5

7.0

6.0

8.0

17.0

13.5

Commercial and cultural activity levels

Average numbers of people engaged in cultural and commercial activities in public spaces at any one time between 12.30 p.m. and 1.30 p.m., Monday to Friday
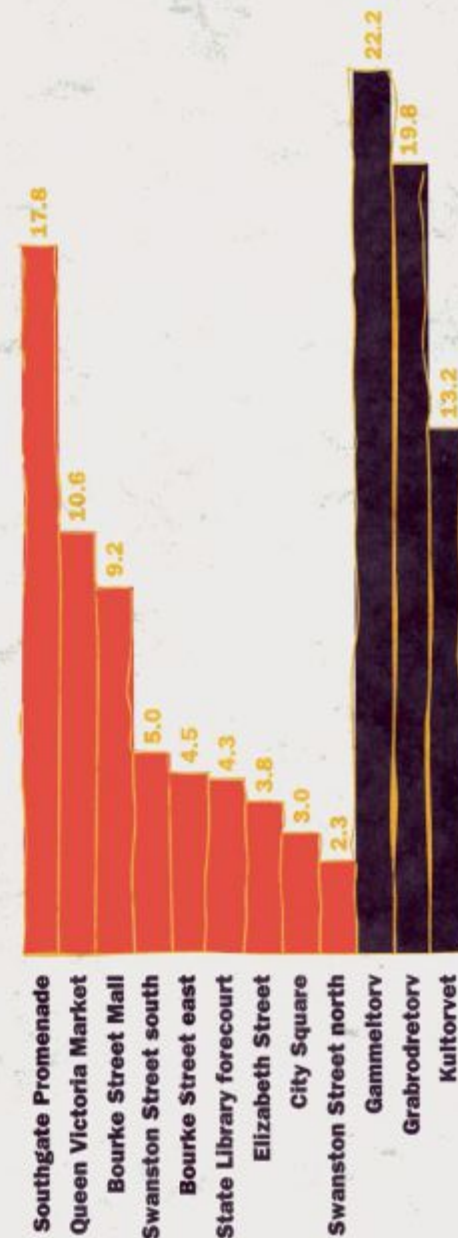
■ **Commercial activity**

■ **Cultural activity**

Intensity of use

Melbourne's three premier pedestrian spaces are Southgate Promenade, the Bourke Street Mall and the southern half of Swanston Street Walk. Southgate Promenade has magnificent views, good sunshine and numerous outlets for food and entertainment. Bourke Street Mall lies in the centre of the city's retailing. Swanston Street Walk, the city's major north-south pedestrian and tram route and a major shopping street, connects the other two spaces.

Copenhagen's three premier spaces are all plazas – Gammeltorv, Grabrodretorv and Kultorvet. Gammeltorv is adjacent to the Strøget (the 'Strolling Street'), Copenhagen's main pedestrian and shopping street. Gammeltorv has recorded an average of twenty-two people engaged in stationary activities per 100m². This was during the busiest period of a fine weather day when no special events were occurring. The other two plazas recorded nineteen and seventeen stationary people per 100m² respectively.

The peak level observed of people engaged in stationary activity at Southgate Promenade was almost eighteen people per 100m², Bourke Street Mall nine, and the busiest part of Swanston Street just five.

Permits issued for events in Melbourne's public spaces in 1993

Bar chart values by month:
- January: 55
- February: 61
- March: 61
- April: 64
- May: 33
- June: 28
- July: 43
- August: 34
- September: 39
- October: 25
- November: 94
- December: 87

Intensity of peak use

Average number of people per 100m² in selected locations engaged in stationary activities during the busiest period

Bar chart values by location:
- Southgate Promenade: 17.8
- Queen Victoria Market: 10.6
- Bourke Street Mall: 9.2
- Swanston Street south: 5.0
- Bourke Street east: 4.5
- State Library forecourt: 4.3
- Elizabeth Street: 3.8
- City Square: 3.0
- Swanston Street north: 2.3
- Gammeltorv: 22.2
- Grabrodretorv: 19.8
- Kultorvet: 13.2

Southgate Promenade

People engaged in stationary activities per 100m²:

17.8

Kultorvet, Copenhagen

People engaged in stationary activities per 100m²:

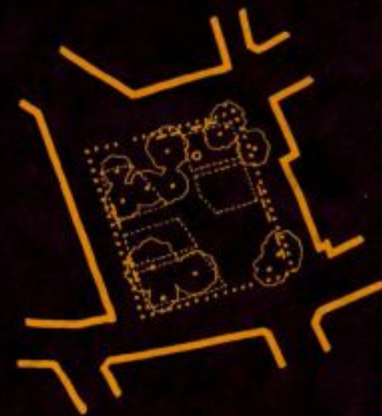**13.2**

Swanston Street between Bourke and Little Collins Streets

People engaged in stationary activities per 100m²:

5.0.

Bourke Street Mall

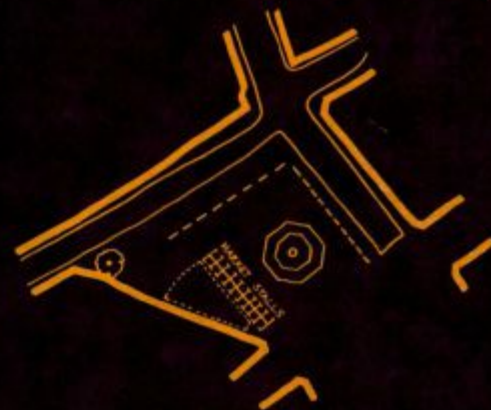People engaged in stationary activities per 100m²:

9.2

Grabrodretorv, Copenhagen

People engaged in stationary activities per 100m²:

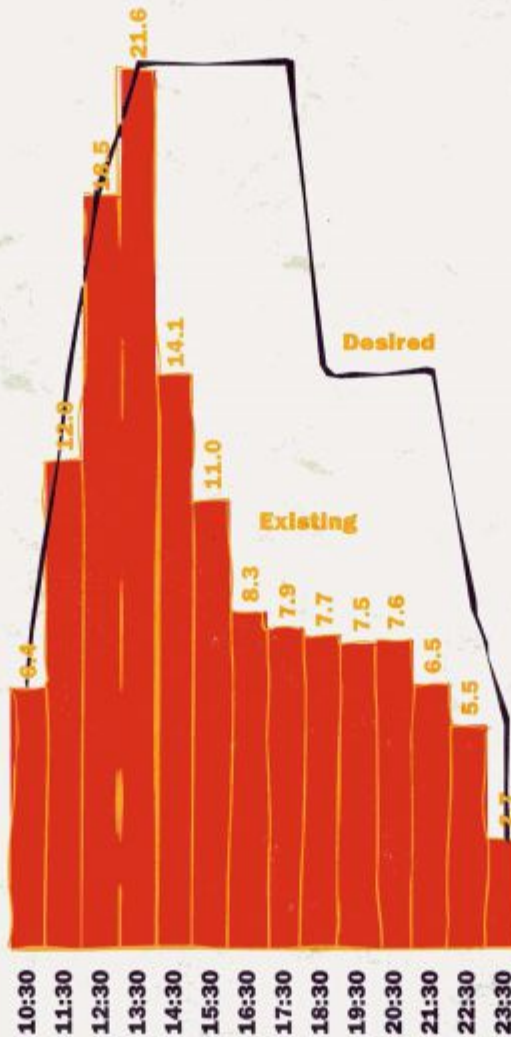**19.8**

Gammeltorv, Copenhagen

People engaged in stationary activities per 100m²:

22.2

Melbourne's most popular spaces are less than two-thirds as well used as Copenhagen's. For Melbourne's spaces to create an impression of vibrancy in those who visit them, they need much greater intensity of use. This can be done by improving the quality of existing spaces and by creating new plazas where there is already high levels of pedestrian movement but little gathering space.

Patterns of use

All of Melbourne's prime public spaces have a consistent pattern of stationary activity during weekdays. About 40% of the use occurs in the short time between about 11.30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Use then falls away rapidly to a third of the peak level at 3.30 p.m. The average level of use between noon and 5 p.m. is only 65% of the lunchtime peak. Use continues at low levels from 3.30 p.m. until about 9 p.m., after which it falls further. Between 6 p.m. and midnight, average use is only 46% of that between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

By contrast, in Stockholm and Copenhagen the level of stationary activities is relatively constant throughout the entire afternoon, and then falls gradually throughout the evening. Stockholm, a city of about one million people, has five times more people engaged in stationary activity at 4 p.m. than Melbourne.

Melbourne's activity pattern has several disadvantages. Firstly, the large daylight 'off-peak' period means that many visitors explore the city when few people are around, and so they miss seeing much activity. Secondly, the low level of afternoon activity becomes even lower in the evening, by which time the city looks almost deserted. Thirdly, the city's investment in public spaces is being underused.

Central Melbourne needs more activity in the afternoons and evenings. This could eventuate through the creation of more pedestrian spaces and by raising the quality of the spaces the city already has. Equally importantly, the city needs to promote the use of its public spaces in the afternoons and evenings. For example this can be done by sponsoring events and through promotion of the city as an afternoon destination. The potential exists to both increase the peak number of people staying in Melbourne's pedestrian spaces and to extend the peak over a much longer period.

The daily pattern of use of Melbourne's public spaces

Total number of people engaged in stationary activities in all locations surveyed, 10 a.m. to midnight, Monday to Friday

Values shown: 6.4, 12.8, 16.5, 21.6, 14.1, 11.0, 8.3, 7.9, 7.7, 7.5, 7.6, 6.5, 5.5, 2.7

Desired
Existing

Times: 10:30, 11:30, 12:30, 13:30, 14:30, 15:30, 16:30, 17:30, 18:30, 19:30, 20:30, 21:30, 22:30, 23:30

THE PLACES

The last section described the patterns of use of the public spaces of central Melbourne. Physical factors influence these patterns of use. Changes occur constantly to buildings and streets, and can have a subtle or dramatic influence.

These changes can make Melbourne either a better or worse place in which to walk or linger. This section discusses the major physical factors in making central Melbourne more liveable: land uses that attract people, public and cafe seating, frontages, noise, sunshine, the amount and quality of public space, and footpath capacity. Maps show the varying effects of these factors over the city area.

Exhibition Buildings and Carlton Gardens ★

Queen Victoria Market ★

State Library and Museum

★ Parliament House

Museum Station

Parliament Station

Flagstaff Gardens ★

Treasury

Flagstaff Station

Fitzroy and Treasury Gardens

Flinders Street Station

Spencer Street Station ★

Rialto Observation Deck

Southgate ★ Arts Centre

Crown Casino ★

Major attractions

Central Melbourne's major attractions include the Queen Victoria Market, the Crown Casino, the Rialto observation deck, the State Library and Museum and the Arts Centre. Immediately adjacent to the city centre are major parklands: the Domain and the Flagstaff, Carlton, Fitzroy and Treasury Gardens. A little further away are the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens, the Melbourne Cricket Ground, the Tennis Centre and the Zoo.

A busy outdoor cafe suggests an enjoyable public space

Retailing opening onto public space

Melbourne's retailing district extends beyond its 'heart', the area between Swanston to Elizabeth Streets. It extends east and west along Bourke Street and Little Bourke Street and to the north and south in a broken manner to the Queen Victoria Market and Southgate.

Historic buildings contribute to the interest of the city centre.

Historic buildings protected under the Melbourne Planning Scheme

Melbourne has an outstanding variety of architecture that demonstrates the city's cultural history as well as fashions and building technology. Many buildings are protected from demolition under the Melbourne Planning Scheme because of their value as physical heritage.

Lunchtime eating and entertainment

● Eateries – restaurants, cafes, bars, and hotels.

★ Entertainment – cinemas, theatres, nightclubs, amusement arcades and gaming halls.

The city's eateries and entertainment venues are clustered around Hardware Street, the Greek precinct in Lonsdale Street, Bourke Hill, Chinatown and Southgate. Nightclubs tend to be grouped in King Street, the theatres in Exhibition Street, and the cinemas near the intersection of Bourke and Russell Streets.

Inner Melbourne has several shopping centres renowned for their variety of restaurants and other night-time activities – Lygon Street in Carlton, Brunswick Street in Fitzroy and Fitzroy Street in St Kilda. Central Melbourne is known for the nightclubs in King Street. However, by far the biggest cluster of places to eat and be entertained is around the top ends of Bourke and Little Bourke Streets.

The major attractions and the clusters of smaller ones would benefit by being connected to each other by an understandable, comfortable and enticing pedestrian network. Melbourne has the beginnings of this network in Swanston Street Walk, the Bourke Street Mall and the shopping arcades. Links are missing to the Queen Victoria Market, the top end of Bourke Street, the Parliament precinct and the attractions south of the Yarra.

Evening eating and entertainment

Eateries – restaurants, cafes, bars, and hotels. ●

Entertainment – cinemas, theatres, nightclubs, amusement arcades, and gaming halls. ★

Outdoor cafes

Well-located outdoor cafes offer customers the joy of being in the city, of looking at people and of being seen, as well as the pleasure of eating and drinking. Consequently the quality of an outdoor cafe cannot be solely judged on the price and quality of its food. Location, ambience and views are equally important factors. A well-patronised outdoor cafe conveys a clear signal that the public space it is within is a pleasant one in which to spend time. Likewise, a city with pedestrian streets and plazas full of outdoor cafes gives an impression of being vibrant and liveable.

Melbourne's city centre has a total of 114 outdoor cafes, eighty-five in publicly owned space and twenty-nine in privately owned areas adjacent to footpaths.

Ncte: Cafes in arcades ard food courts are not shown.

Outdoor cafes in central Melbourne, 1993

Outdoor cafes on public land •

Outdoor cafes adjoining public land ◆

2970

1938

1110

Melbourne Perth Copenhagen

Outdoor cafe seating capacity in central Melbourne 1993.

Central Melbourne offers a total of 1 938 cafe seats, of which 1 079 are in public spaces and 859 on adjacent land. This is a vast increase since the early 1980s, when there were virtually none. Copenhagen and Stockholm, both on the northern fringe of Europe and with much colder climates, have respectively ninety-nine cafes with 2 970 seats, and ninety-six cafes with 3 420 seats. With Melbourne's many days of fine weather and much larger population, its outdoor cafe scene has the potential to be much larger than either Copenhagen's or Stockholm's.

Public seating

People consider many factors every time they decide where to sit in a public space. These factors include the comfort of the seat, the clearance from pedestrians and vehicles, the view, sunshine, wind and noise. The view, especially towards activity, other people and the ever-changing urban scene, is of prime importance in the frequency and duration of a seat's use.

Melbourne's city centre provides a public seating capacity of 3 493 places. Of these, 2 468 seats are public seats on public land. In addition, 1 025 seats are available to the public on privately owned land adjacent and visible from public space.

3493

1276

1390

Melbourne
Perth
Copenhagen

Seats available in public space

11

11

7

Melbourne
Perth
Copenhagen

**Average number of seats per 1 000 m².**

Private ■

A 1993 survey plotted the location and quality of all public seats in central Melbourne. Seats are appropriately distributed, with a greater density of seats provided in the retail core. However, some areas are still short of seats. Taking into account city size, the provision of public seats in Melbourne is at a level comparable to that in Copenhagen.

The standard public seat is of moderate quality, being clean and sturdy, but hot in summer and cold in winter. Well-patronised areas like Swanston Street Walk could use a more comfortable model. The seat quality in private plazas was generally very poor. As in other cities, a strong correlation exists between high-quality seats and high use.

Any good city offers a variety of informal seats, such as stairs, ledges, and plant boxes, as well as purpose built seats. The younger and less formal city visitors tend to prefer these informal seats. These 'secondary seats' provide a valuable supplement to formal seating.

Younger city visitors tend to prefer informal seats, such as the steps at Flinders Street Station.
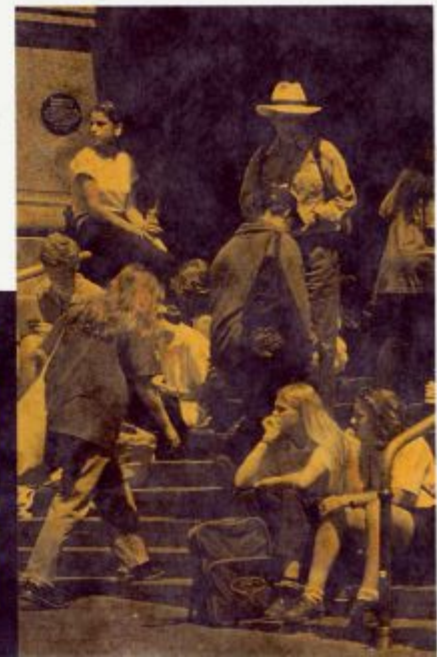
Ground floor frontages

The amount of stimulus offered to passing pedestrians by buildings is an important factor influencing peoples' liking of a street. The attention of pedestrians is focused on the part of the building at eye level, and consequently the ground floor frontage is much more important than the higher levels of a building facade in the creation of lively streets and plazas.

Highly stimulating street frontages have a large number of buildings with many entries within a short distance. Frequent doors and windows allow for easy views and access between the street and the inside of the building, so that the activities on the inside and the outside can enrich each other. A wide range of uses, such as a thorough mix of shops, residences and workplaces, creates the most stimulating frontages. Lighting shining onto the streets from night uses contributes a feeling of security as well as genuine safety.

Because they are exciting to walk past and rich in detail, stimulating facades provide good reasons to stroll around the city enjoying the age-old pastime of window shopping. On the other hand, blank walls and empty buildings underline the futility of visiting the city outside working hours.

Melbourne has excellent ground floor frontages in its retail heart, but serious problems in many other areas, especially in the western and northern ends of the city.

A quality frontages

- More than fifteen premises every 100 metres

- More than twenty-five doors and windows every 100 metres

- A large range of functions

- No blind facades and few passive ones

- Much depth and relief in the building surface

- High quality materials and refined details
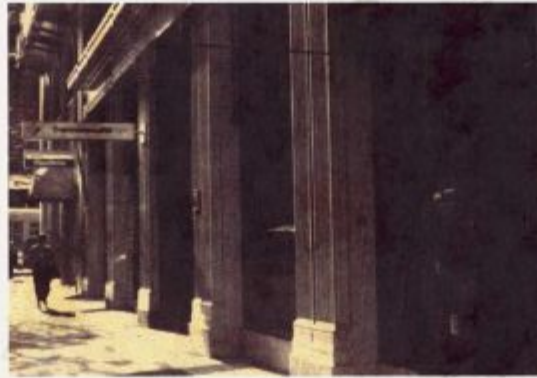
B quality frontages

- Ten to fourteen premises every 100 metres

- More than fifteen doors and windows every 100 metres

- A moderate range of functions

- A few blind or passive facades

- Some depth and modelling in the building surface

- Good quality materials and refined details
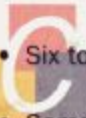
C quality frontages

- Six to ten premises every 100 metres
- Some range of functions
- Less than half blind or passive facades
- Very little depth and modelling in the building surface
- Standard materials and few details

D quality frontages

- Three to five premises every 100 metres
- Little or no range of functions
- Predominantly blind or passive facades
- Flat building surfaces
- Few or no details
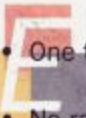
E quality frontages

- One to two premises every 100 metres
- No range of functions
- Predominantly blind or passive facades
- Flat building surfaces
- No details and nothing to look at
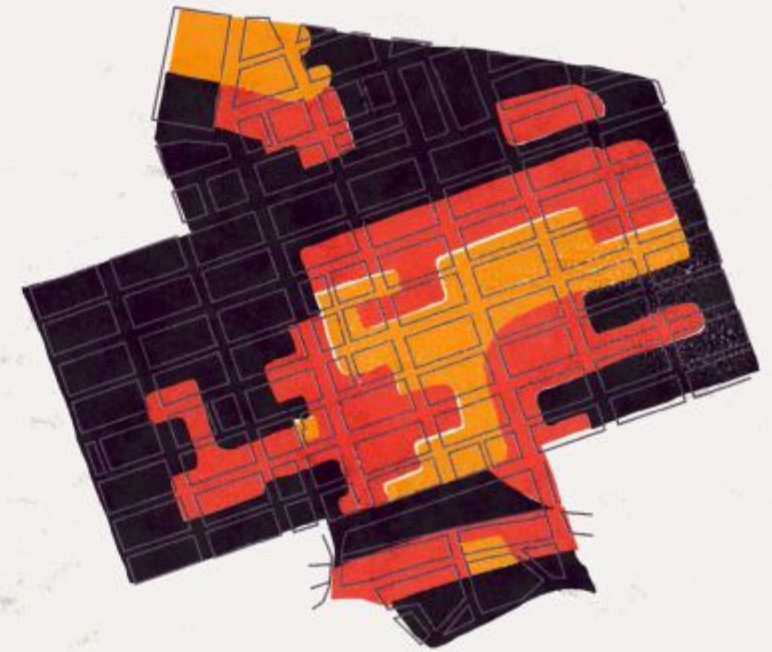
Ground floor frontage quality

A generalised evaluation in central Melbourne

Frontages that sustain a healthy street life ■

(A and B quality)

Frontages where a street life can survive ■

(C and D quality)

Frontages that kill street life ■

(E quality)

Noise and fumes

The motor vehicle dominates almost every street in central Melbourne. The noise, fumes, and danger to life and limb from moving vehicles have rendered most of the city's outdoor spaces unfriendly to pedestrians and especially to social activity. The majority of the city's thirty metre wide streets have more than 25 000 vehicles per day travelling along them. In addition to the detrimental effects of moving vehicles, parked cars add visual blight. Streets with high numbers of motor vehicles, especially stopping and starting traffic, are almost always so noisy that conversation is strained and unpleasant.

Trams trundle through Swanston Street and the Bourke Street Mall, the city's main pedestrian spaces. The noise from the trams is not objectionable except when rumbling over intersections with other tram tracks, and the general rattling of the W class trams. This 'intersection' noise is what causes the problems in the Bourke Street Mall and the busiest parts of Swanston Street. In these 'pedestrian havens' people are always audibly reminded of being within the hustle and bustle of the 'big smoke'. No one can really relax and unwind.

Southbank Promenade provides one comfortable space largely free of traffic noise for people to calm themselves and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere. Melbourne needs spaces like this on the north side of the river, at least one within five minutes walk of every building in the central city.

Motor vehicle volumes

0 - 1 499 vehicles per day
1 500 - 4 999 vehicles per day
5 000 - 9 999 vehicles per day
10 000 - 24 999 vehicles per day
25 000 - 55 000 vehicles per day

Southbank Promenade: central Melbourne's quietest public space.

PLACES FOR PEOPLE: MELBOURNE CITY 1994

Sunshine and shade

Hoddle, Melbourne's first surveyor, set out Melbourne's streets in a regular grid roughly aligned to the Yarra River, a little under 30° west of north. This has created east-west streets that are shady on the north side all

The microclimatic effects of Melbourne's street grid pattern.

day while sunny on the south. Sunshine falls on the west side of the north-south streets until approximately 1 p.m., after which the sun falls on the east side.

The north edge of the city has excellent levels of sunshine in the streets, due to its low buildings, especially around the Queen Victoria Market. Unfortunately in the south-eastern and south-western ends of the city the public spaces are shaded by high buildings most of the day. Collins Street and the southern part of Queen Street are particularly shady. To make

matters worse, blustery winds associated with the high buildings also afflict these shady streets.

Moderate sun levels exist in the retail area due to the predominance of low buildings. Restrictions on building heights have maintained moderate sun levels in this area over the last few decades. However, tall buildings are reducing the amenity of the retail area. Melbourne Central is the first high-rise tower between Swanston and Elizabeth Streets. The Rialto casts a shadow that sweeps over the outdoor cafes at Southbank on summer afternoons, driving people away. If Melbourne wants to remain liveable in its most popular streets, it must maintain at least moderate levels of sun in the streets and plazas of the retail area. If the eastern and western ends of Melbourne city are to be liveable, no more sun can afford to be lost.

Sunshine in the streets.

Sunny ■
Noon sun visible all year on the southern footpath.

Moderate Sun ■
Noon sun visible for more than six months of the year on the southern footpath.

Shady ■
Noon sun visible for less than six months of the year on the southern footpath.

Sunshine in the streets – a summary.

Pedestrian spaces in selected city centres.

Melbourne

Sydney

Perth

Stockholm

Copenhagen

Adelaide

Length of pedestrian spaces per 100 000m²

Adelaide	67
Melbourne	74
Perth	94
Sydney	103
Stockholm	168
Copenhagen	312

Area of pedestrian space in m²

Adelaide	1503
Melbourne	1639
Perth	1565
Sydney	3451
Stockholm	3600
Copenhagen	6755

All cities to same scale.
All cities shown with north to top of page.
Only publicly owned space shown.

The amount of pedestrian space

Melbourne's main central city pedestrian spaces are recent creations: the City Square (late 1970s), Bourke Street Mall (early 1980s), Southbank Promenade and Swanston Street Walk (1992). The extensive network of largely pedestrian lanes and arcades in Melbourne's retail heart augments these newly created pedestrian streets and plazas. With almost all links being at ground level, the system is pleasant, easy to use and easy to understand. Melbourne's arcades now have a total length of over 3.7 kilometres. Although Melbourne's lanes and arcades offer good quality pedestrian circulation routes, few places are available in which to sit or perform. Most arcades close after business hours.

Melbourne's pedestrian plazas, streets and arcades do not yet allow people to walk in comfort to most of the city's attractions, and fail to provide enough 'living rooms' off the circulation corridors. Southgate and the Crown Casino are isolated, as is the Queen Victoria Market.
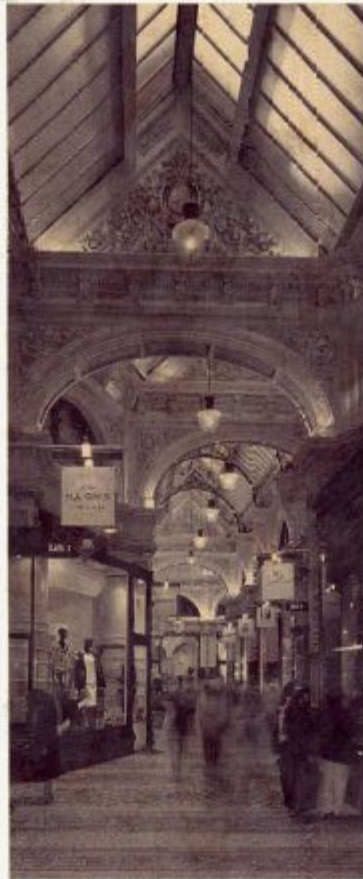
Melbourne's several kilometres of arcades include several of great charm and atmosphere, such as The Block.

The City Square is on the quiet side of Swanston Street, while the retail area is almost devoid of plazas. Pedestrians in the Mall and in the Walk cannot relax completely, due to the noise and danger from trams.

The quality of pedestrian spaces

A liveable city is composed of liveable spaces. The quality of a space is as important as having sufficient area in the right location, and this is where design comes into play. A highly liveable urban space has the following ingredients:

- The choice of sun or shade
- Strong winds reduced or eliminated
- Little or no mechanical noise
- Sounds of people enjoying themselves
- A view of people and stimulating physical surrounds
- Boundaries with access and views through to many other activities
- Many people walking past or through the space
- Comfortable seats and interesting ornaments
- No threats to physical or psychological well-being.

The lanes and arcades of central Melbourne's retailing area.

Lanes —
Arcades —

PLACE	PEDESTRIAN AREA IN M²	QUALITY						RATING
		Sunshine and wind	Noise and pollution	View	Liveliness of the edges	Furniture	Safety	
		5 points max.	5 points max.	5 points max.	5 points max.	5 points max.	5 points max.	30 points max.
Southbank	2770	4	5	5	4	3	5	26
Hardware St at lunchtime	1400	4	4	2	3	4	4	21
State Library Forecourt	4580	5	3	4	1	3	4	18
Bourke Street Mall	6300	3	2	4	4	3	2	18
Swanston Street Walk	13 860	3	2	4	3	3	2	17
Town Hall Plaza	390	3	3	3	2	3	3	17
Post Office Plaza	245	4	2	3	2	1	3	15
City Square	6230	3	2	3	0	2	3	13
Chinatown Plaza	380	1	4	1	0	3	2	11
Spencer Square	880	1	2	1	3	2	2	11
Average								15

Evaluation of the quality of pedestrian spaces in central Melbourne.

The table above rates Melbourne's pedestrian spaces according to the above ingredients. Southgate Promenade achieves the highest rating due to its excellent views, good sunshine, distance from motor traffic, and lively edges. In contrast, Chinatown Plaza has the lowest rating. Surrounded by high walls that block the sun, the plaza only has views to a building site and the seats are uncomfortable bluestone benches. Few people pass by and even fewer use the space.

Footpath capacity

Pedestrians, like car drivers, tend to avoid areas of congestion and move to areas of freer-flowing traffic. Just as more roads bring more cars, better walking conditions bring more pedestrians. Many factors influence whether a trip is made, what route is used and whether it is by foot or another mode. Factors that influence people choosing to walk include the interest in the ground level facades that are passed, the number of other pedestrians, the smoothness of the walking surface, the gradient, weather conditions and distance. Another significant factor is if the footpath is regularly crowded.
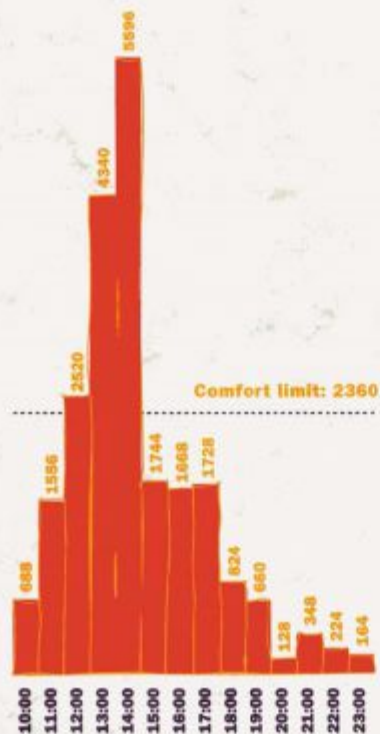
Most people enjoy being with other people on a busy footpath, but they don't enjoy having to dodge and weave or being knocked.

Of seventeen sites surveyed in 1993 eight were over-capacity for part of the day on weekdays and six on Saturdays. The graphs on the right demonstrate the most extreme examples of crowding found by the survey. Crowding in the narrower streets like Little Bourke Street is likely in many places to be worse than these examples.

The west footpath of Swanston Street Walk was widened as recently as 1992. Interestingly, crowding still occurs in the middle of the day on weekdays and Saturdays. Once the capacity limit is exceeded, all the

users of the footpath suffer, not just the few over the limit. For example, if a footpath has a capacity of 3 000 people per hour, and is used by 3 100 people in an hour, all 3 100 people experience the crowding.

To provide conditions where pedestrians can walk with dignity and comfort most of the time, a program of footpath widening needs to be undertaken urgently. The priorities for widening should be determined by regular and comprehensive surveys of pedestrian use.
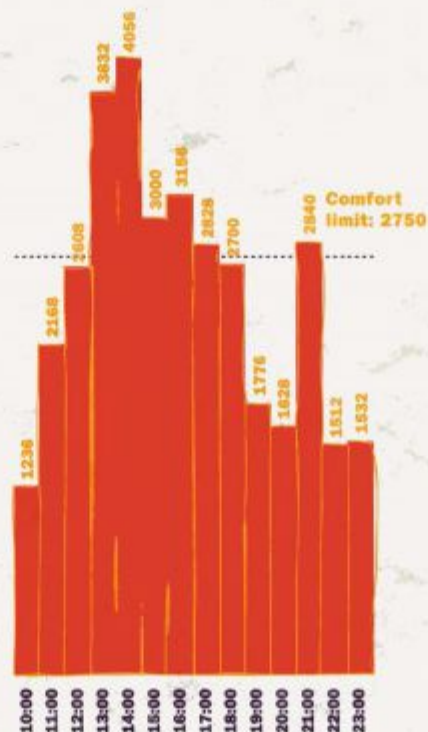
Elizabeth Street

Bar chart. Comfort limit: 2360. Hourly values (10:00–23:00): 688, 1556, 2520, 4340, 5596, 1744, 1668, 1728, 624, 660, 128, 348, 224, 164.

Bourke to Little Bourke Streets Weekday, east footpath.

22 188 pedestrians during the survey period.

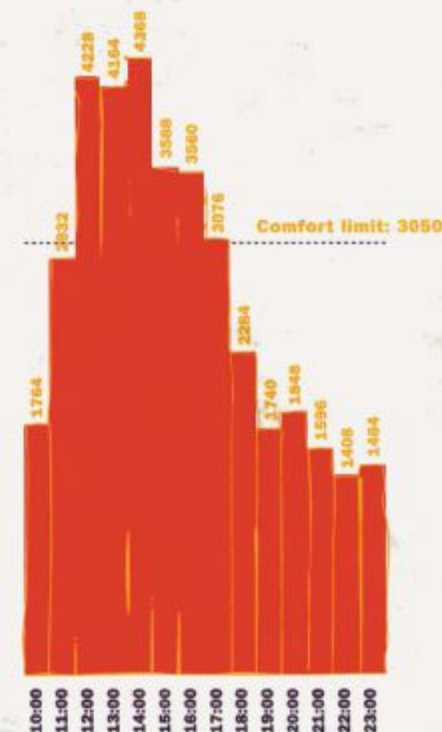12 456 pedestrians experience crowding.

56% crowding.

Bourke Street Mall

Bar chart. Comfort limit: 2750. Hourly values (10:00–23:00): 1236, 2168, 2608, 3832, 4056, 3000, 3196, 2828, 2700, 1776, 1628, 2840, 1512, 1532.

Swanston to Russell Streets. Saturday, north footpath

34 952 pedestrians during the survey period.

19 712 pedestrians experience crowding.

56% crowding.

Swanston Street

Bar chart. Comfort limit: 3050. Hourly values (10:00–23:00): 1764, 2832, 4228, 4164, 4368, 3568, 3560, 3076, 2284, 1740, 1848, 1596, 1408, 1484.

Bourke to Little Bourke Streets. Saturday, west footpath.

38 040 pedestrians during the survey period.

19 424 pedestrians experience crowding.

51% crowding.

PLACES FOR PEOPLE: MELBOURNE CITY 1994

Formula used to determine the pedestrian capacity of footpaths:
Pedestrian capacity per minute = The unobstructed footpath width in millimetres divided by 100.
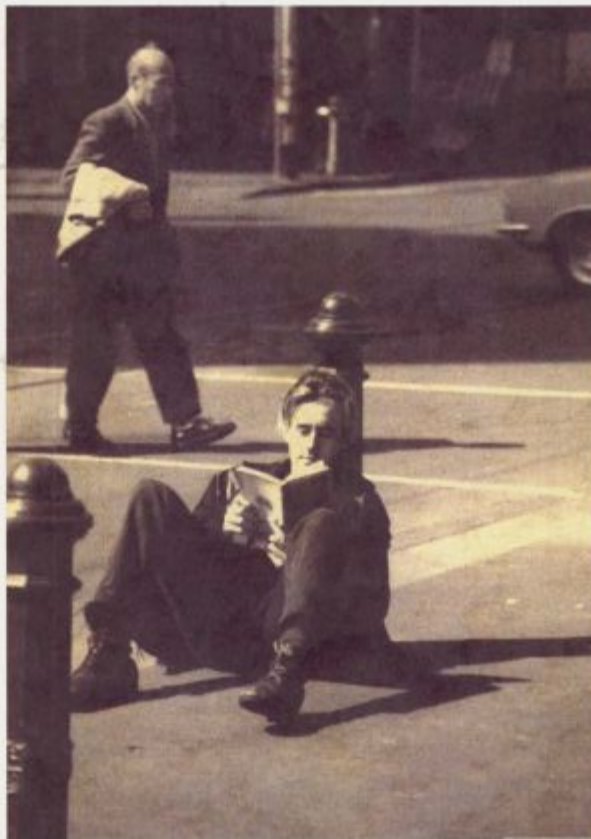
ADDING MORE LIFE

Targets for the year 2001

So far this report has presented information on the patterns of use of central Melbourne's public spaces and the physical factors influencing this use. This final section establishes targets for increased use and proposes ways to help achieve them.

The City of Melbourne devotes considerable funds for the improvement and maintenance of its pedestrian spaces. In the next seven years it intends to invest many millions of dollars to upgrade these spaces. The benchmark figures given in this study, and further surveys, will enable the City to guide those investments to projects with the greatest value.

The ultimate test of the value of the City of Melbourne spending its rates revenue on public spaces is if more people use the spaces for optional activities like dining and entertainment. The table, to the right, *Targets for the year 2001*, presents four key indicators that measure the city's busiest pedestrian spaces during their peak periods. The targets are achievable if numbers increase about 4% each year until 2001.

The key indicators measure the peak of stationary activities, but a liveable city must have vibrant public spaces in the evenings and weekends as well as during working hours. The secondary indicators measure the 'off-peak' activity.

The City of Melbourne aims to have increased numbers of people engaged in stationary activities in Melbourne's public spaces.

Changing the environmental factors that support stationary activity is the means of achieving this aim. Targets for these are presented in the table. Environmental factors are not the only influences on the use of public space, but they are the ones the City of Melbourne can affect the most.

In some cases the targets will largely be achieved by continuing existing programs, for example with both public and outdoor cafe seats. Some targets require the targeting of capital works funds to the projects where they will be of most use, for example in creating more pedestrian space and relieving crowding on footpaths. To reduce noise and fumes, detailed proposals need to be in place well before the opening of the Southern and Western Bypasses. To retain existing levels of light and sunshine sunshine in the streets, a partnership is required with the Department of Planning and Development to create and implement policies.

More pedestrian space means a more relaxed city

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Targets for the year 2001

In most cases the targets for 2001 are approximately 25% greater than the 1994 figures. Except for Planned events, all indicators measure the nine public spaces used in the 1993 survey.

Key indicators of stationary activity	Measure	Period	1994	2001
Amount of activity	Total number of people	Peak use	2642	3300
Intensity of activity	People per 1000m²	Peak use	61	75
Cultural activity	Total number of people	Peak use	79	100
Commercial activity	Total number of people	Peak use	86	110

Secondary indicators	Measure	Period	1994	2001
Popularity of pedestrian space	Time to replace stationary pedestrians with moving ped's	Peak of stationary activity	3.5 minutes	4.5 minutes
Afternoon use pattern	Ratio of peak use to average use	Weekdays 12 - 17 hours	100:60	100:75
Weekday use pattern	Ratio day use to evening use	Weekdays 10 - 24 hours	100:44	100:55
Weekly use pattern	Ratio Saturday to weekday use	10:00 - 24:00 hours	100:83	100:100
Planned events in public space	Number of bookings	One year	624	780

Environmental factors	Measure		1994	2001
Places for eating and entertainment	Total number of establishments		580	640
Outdoor cafe seats	Total seat capacity		1938	2400
Public seats	Total seat capacity		3493	4000
Interactive ground floor facades	Amount of highly interactive facades		Unknown	125% of 1995 figure
Noise and fumes	Number of motor vehicles per day entering area		297 000	235 000
Sunshine in 30m streets	To be determined		Unknown	100% of 1995 figure
Pedestrian space	Area in m²		37 700	44 000
Pedestrian streets	Length in metres		1 800	2200
Pedestrian space quality	Average rating		15/30	18/30
Crowding on footpaths	Number of pedestrians experiencing crowding		Unknown	80% of 1995 figure

Proposals to add life to central Melbourne

Implementing the proposals below will help to meet the targets. All targets are addressed by at least one proposal. Many of the proposals help to achieve more than one target. For clarity the proposals are grouped according to Professor Gehl's categories:

- Improving the pedestrian network

- Making gathering spaces of excellent quality

- Strengthening street activity by physical changes

- Encouraging more people to use the city

Improving the pedestrian network

- Provide greater priority for pedestrians at the street intersections along Swanston Street Walk. Future possibilities include removing the stop lights at the 10 metre wide streets (like Little Bourke Street) and continuing the footpaths across the intersections.

- Extend pedestrian priority from the Bourke Street Mall to Spring Street and Queen Street.

- Work with stakeholders to create a 'vehicle-free zone in the ten metre wide streets in the retail heart during lunchtime so pedestrians can enjoy these spaces without the noise and fumes of cars. Where necessary maintain access to car parks.

- Identify the footpaths that exceed their capacity for more than two hours per day. Widen them, starting with the most congested.

- Ban any further pedestrian tunnels or skybridges.

- Develop strategies to fill in the *missing links*, those parts of the city between major attractions where high quality pedestrian routes are missing:

  - Between the World Trade Centre and the retail area.

  - Between the Queen Victoria Market and the retail area.

  - Between Southgate and the parks to the east.

  - Between the permanent casino and the King Street nightclub strip.

Making gathering spaces of excellent quality – and making more of them

- Maintain and improve Melbourne's existing plazas. Improve the existing City Square with a simpler design and lively edges. A fine civic plaza at this important location is a must.

- Make Queen Street a plaza immediately where it cuts through Melbourne's most visited tourist attraction, the Queen Victoria Market, with vehicle access for traders only. This could be Melbourne's most lively and interesting public space on market days.

- Create small plazas and pocket parks within five minutes walk of every building in the central city. By June 1995 identify preferred locations, possible and preferred funding options, and design criteria. Two areas that urgently need plazas are:

  - The area around the east end of Bourke Street and Little Bourke Street.

  - The entire area west of Queen Street and south of Latrobe Street.

In both cases, plazas could be created adjoining Bourke Street or very close to it, to reinforce the role of Bourke Street as the city's east-west pedestrian spine.

Strengthening street activity by physical changes

- Reduce through traffic in the city centre. The alternative routes provided by the proposed Western and Southern Bypasses make this easy to achieve. This one-off opportunity should not be lost.

- To achieve a better environment for pedestrians, reduce on-street parking sites while making off street ones more accessible. Retain service zones. Better use can always be found for scarce public space than car parking, which after all is possible in buildings. Use the kerbside space for trees, grass and outdoor cafes. Convert centre-of-road parking into medians, which are more attractive and much safer.

- Review the parking limitation policy to impose tighter control on the provision of off-street parking and police these controls more. Encourage long-stay spaces to be converted to short-stay ones.

- Reduce noise in public spaces by reducing car traffic and by quietening the trams, especially in pedestrian streets.

- Introduce regulations that require all new development to maintain existing sunshine and wind conditions on footpaths in the major streets.

- Encourage a 'cafe culture' by a policy advocating more and better placed outdoor cafes, and the creation of more 100% sites.

- Introduce controls requiring highly interactive ground floor frontages in all new development in the retail, eating and entertainment areas. No more blank walls or mean frontages! Require moderately interactive frontages elsewhere.

Suggested areas of highly interactive ground floor frontages

Proposed areas of mandatory highly interactive frontages ■
Possible extension areas needing further investigation. ■

- Over time, link the major pedestrian attractions with the existing retail area by extending the areas where highly interactive frontages are required.

Encouraging more people to use the city

- Increase the number of residents in the central city to at least 4 000 by 2001 - a modest but meaningful increase.

- Preserve or further increase the present high number of students in the city. Student colleges in the city may further increase the number of residents.

- Increase the number of festivals and events in the city. Further develop and promote the program of free central city entertainment on weekday afternoons and on weekends.

- Actively create or attract some markets into the city's public spaces. A food market should operate mainly when the Queen Victoria Market doesn't. Markets should have standardised stalls of good design quality. Swanston Street Walk is an excellent location for one or more markets.

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