

Urban Positive Ecology: Building a Greener City

It's time to shift the conversation around green issues. Enough with the empty rhetoric—let's talk solutions. Let's re-engage with people by embracing *urban positive ecology* and *nature-based placemaking*.

Urban positive ecology takes a holistic approach to urban planning, integrating natural systems into city environments to create healthier, more sustainable spaces. As cities like Port Phillip continue to grow, balancing urbanisation with environmental sustainability is more crucial than ever. Positive ecology focuses on restoring and enhancing ecosystems within cities, benefiting both people and nature. I want Port Phillip to be a leader in this movement.

Urban positive ecology isn't just about preserving nature—it's about **actively restoring and integrating it**, creating cities that support sustainability, resilience, and well-being. This vision transforms cities from being environmental burdens to becoming contributors to ecological health. In Port Phillip, we can achieve this by making the most of our city's unique assets, such as the Eco Centre, which is already a pearl in our community.

Why Green the City?

- To improve liveability by mitigating summer heat
- To create outdoor spaces that foster community interaction
- To enhance the well-being of residents through daily connections with nature
- To ensure Port Phillip leads the way in a greener future where people and the planet thrive

We don't want to wait 20 years to see change—we want action now. **Tactical urbanism** can rapidly transform urban areas by using modular greening solutions that are cost-effective and cause minimal disruption. This approach, already popular in Europe and the U.S., emphasises **bottom-up, community-driven change** over top-down bureaucracy.

We want a **hands-on approach** that involves residents in every step of the process—collecting input, designing spaces, and ensuring these areas are tailored to the community's needs.

A greener city starts with **incorporating nature into urban design**. Parks, community gardens, green rooftops, and urban forests improve air quality, reduce heat island effects, and provide habitats for wildlife. These green spaces act as vital “lungs” for the city, filtering pollutants and enhancing the quality of life for residents.

Urban greenery also plays a critical role in tackling climate change. **Green infrastructure** like rain gardens and permeable pavements can manage stormwater runoff, reducing the risk of flooding. Cities such as Copenhagen have integrated green corridors that double as recreational spaces, increasing resilience while boosting liveability.

Biodiversity is another key focus. By planting native species and creating wildlife corridors, we can support local flora and fauna, creating ecosystems that are more resilient to environmental changes. This also deepens the connection between residents and nature, fostering a sense of environmental stewardship.

Community involvement is at the heart of urban positive ecology. Initiatives like tree planting, urban farming, and community gardens—like Veg Out—strengthen social bonds and empower residents to grow their own food, reduce their carbon footprint, and contribute to a greener ecosystem.

We want to implement change now. But we are also realistic with what the council can and cannot afford. Election promises can quickly go astray due to a lack of budget. Nature based placemaking is about retrofitting a layer of green on top of the existing greyscap. As such it is far more cost effective, quickly installed and far less disruptive to local businesses compared with traditional urbanism.

In conclusion, urban positive ecology offers a pathway to a greener, more sustainable city. By rethinking how we design and manage Port Phillip, we can create spaces that promote environmental health, enhance biodiversity, and improve the well-being of residents. Through collaboration and innovation, Port Phillip can lead the way in building a vibrant, greener future.

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