

The Future Melbourne Wiki is coming...

In March, the Future Melbourne project will move into its next phase, 'Negotiating the Results'. In this phase, the draft plan will be developed online in a collaborative environment using wiki technology (similar to Wikipedia).

So what exactly is a wiki?

In English, "wiki" is an abbreviation of the Hawaiian word "wiki wiki", meaning "fast".

A wiki uses internet-based software that lets participants easily create, edit, and link web pages. A defining wiki characteristic is the ease with which pages can be created and updated.

Wiki technology has been described as "The simplest online database that could possibly work".

Around the world, wikis are fast becoming a popular tool for organisations to easily collaborate and develop new ideas. To the best of our knowledge, this will be the first time that any Local Council in Australia has used a Wiki to develop a Strategic Plan. If successful, wiki technology may be expanded into other areas within the City of Melbourne.

Why use a Wiki?

- A wiki enables documents to be created using a web browser. A simple built-in editor similar to Microsoft Word allows the drafting and editing of content.
- A wiki will enable the City of Melbourne to draw on the power of collaboration and to engage with a wide range of people, including our project Partners, Stakeholders, and the general public. Anybody is able to view the wiki through their web browser and make comments or suggestions on the plan. *The Future Melbourne Wiki will be distinct from other sites like Wikipedia, in that outside the public consultation period (24 May – 24 June), only designated City of Melbourne staff and selected Stakeholders and Partners will be able to edit pages.*
- Once finalised, the Future Melbourne Wiki will remain online as the main point of access for those wishing to view the Plan. It is anticipated that only a limited number of hard copy versions will be published for administrative purposes and to be distributed to our community libraries and centres, for those without access to the internet. This also fits with the City of Melbourne's ongoing commitment to reduce the amount of paper used by the organisation!
- Developing Future Melbourne in an online wiki will mean the plan can be easily updated and reviewed on a regular basis without the need for reprints. The Future Melbourne Plan can therefore be considered less a static document and more a dynamic collaborative environment, which can respond to change as required.

For a description of what the Future Melbourne Wiki will look like please turn over.

What will it look like?

The Future Melbourne Wiki will appear very similar to many other web pages.

The screenshot shows the Future Melbourne Wiki homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'about future melbourne', 'contact us', and a search box. Below this is a 'Log In' section with a menu containing 'Home', '[+] The Plan', 'Recent site changes', and '[+] Webs'. The main content area is titled 'Welcome to Future Melbourne' and 'A plan for the future of Melbourne'. It includes introductory text about the project, an invitation to contribute, and a link to 'View 2020 Plan'. A 'Background' section follows, detailing the project's goals and partners. On the right side, there is a 'Recent news' section with several updates. A prominent feature is a poll titled 'Are you satisfied with Melbourne's public transport?' with a pie chart showing the following results: 25% 'Don't care / don't use', 12% 'Yes', 12% 'Future', and 51% 'No'. The poll is powered by 'bilitics' and includes a 'Submit Votes' button and a 'View Results' link.

With one very important difference...

Each page can be easily edited and re-drafted.

The screenshot shows the 'WebHome (edit)' page in a web browser. At the top, there is a title 'WebHome (edit)' and an 'Edit help' link. Below this is a rich text editor toolbar with various formatting options. The main content area contains the same text as the homepage screenshot, but with a 'Recent news' section on the right that is partially obscured by a scroll bar. At the bottom of the page, there is a signature field with the text 'Your signature to copy/paste: -- Main.DaleBowerman - 28 Feb 2008'. Below the signature field are buttons for 'Save', 'Quiet save', 'Save and Continue', and 'Cancel'. There is also a checkbox for 'Force new revision' and a 'help' link. At the very bottom, there is a footer with 'Access keys: S = Save, Q = Quiet save, K = Save and Continue, P = Preview, C = Cancel'.

When can I have a look?

The Future Melbourne Team will be in contact during March to let you know exactly when and how you can get involved!