

Response Summary: Yarra LGBTIQ+ Strategy Stakeholder Consultations *

Comment	Council Response
Strategy	
Comments regarding the order of the Strategy (ie actions buried in the back).	Noted. The Strategy has been revised so that the actions sit as close to the front as possible.
Review and incorporate action plan ideas as appropriate from the list below, which includes ideas from the recently released “Rainbow Resource for Victorian Councils” by the Victorian Local Governance Association. Please see https://www.vlga.org.au/resources/vlga-rainbow-resource-victorian-councils . While the draft action plan is overarching, the FRA suggest more detailed implementation actions with a greater community focus need to be added.	The action plan was developed in consultation with the community; Council was involved in the development of the Rainbow Resource and has already implemented many of the actions in the resource.
While the Pride Centre is opening in St Kilda later this year, Yarra does not need one specific space to elevate the LGBTIQ+ communities, organisations, businesses and residents that live and work here. And should work toward continuously highlighting and elevating LGBTIQ+ resources, business and artists across Yarra.	Noted. There are a number of actions around promoting sectors of the LGBTIQ+ community, including 'promoting key days and events...', 'promoting LGBTIQ+ services and businesses...', 'develop a dedicated LGBTIQ+ webpage for the LGBTIQ+ community, providing information...' and 'promote an online resource listing LGBTIQ+ friendly services, businesses and networks'. There are also a number of relevant actions slated for the second year of the Strategy.
That the Strategy is creative in its priorities, not based on jargon, rather a document that talks to the community that it’s intended for - so they understand it, own it and benefit from it.	Noted.
The inclusion of an action plan aligned to each priority/theme to ensure trust and positive sentiment within the community that demonstrates Council’s authenticity and commitment.	The Strategy includes a Year One Action Plan which is aligned to each priority; these will also be developed for subsequent years.
Endorsement from Ro Allen, Commission for Gender and Sexuality and LGBTIQ+ advocate and supporting message in foreword to garner potential Victorian Government support and funding.	The inaugural Yarra LGBTIQ+ Strategy will be endorsed by Council's new Mayor, however Officers will make sure to engage with the Commissioner for LGBTIQ+ Communities.
Use of plain and accessible language to ensure the Strategy reaches each LGBTIQ+ person from all social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.	Noted – the Strategy will be promoted using plain and accessible language, and the Strategy can also be translated upon request.

Appoint LGBTIQ+ Liaison Officer to assist in implementation of the Strategy and lead stakeholder conversations to ensure buy-in and value-add. Funding options available through Victorian Government Equality Branch.	The Senior Advisor, Diversity & Inclusion will be responsible for implementing the Strategy. Officers will investigate option for funding the strategy from year 2 onwards.
The Strategy takes into consideration coronavirus [COVID-19] to ensure the effective implementation of the strategy and its ultimate success in a changed environment where social cohesion will be more important than ever.	Noted. Council is taking into consideration the impact that Covid 19 is having on the LGBTIQ+ community, including the need to allocate more time to building relationships and supporting the LGBTIQ+ community in general.
Annual evaluation of the Strategy to ensure accountability and continued support from community.	Officers will report back to Council on Strategy outcomes to ensure accountability and continued community support
The work done so far is great but as the strategy and its action plan are devised to span four-years actions need to be added that cater more toward the mid and longer-term needs of the Victorian LGBTIQ+ community. Yarra is a key hub within Victoria for the LGBTIQ+ community with a diverse range of services and businesses. The draft Yarra actions are internally focussed (and hence the plan for public/external consultation). The internal focus is acknowledged in the strategy (p.6) given the Yarra QnA working group established in 2015 appears to have been aligned to bolster council capacity (which is valuable in itself).	Actions plans will be developed yearly - Council needs the ability to be responsive. The Strategy will be revised at the end of its term. It was always intended that the first year of the Strategy would have a greater internal focus and this would gradually shift outwards.
Acknowledge the poorer health status of members of the LGBTIQ+ community compared to the general population.	This has been acknowledged - see 'Our Commitment to our LGBTIQ+ Community'.
Compare the actions with the current and future work planned within key City Councils.	A desktop review of other local government LGBTIQ+ strategies was completed prior to the development of the draft Strategy.
Port Phillip has an excellent outward Statement of Commitment which Yarra should develop and incorporate into its strategy section. See http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/default/Statement_of_Commitment_to_our_LGBTIQ_updated(1).pdf	Yarra's recently endorsed inaugural Social Justice Charter contains a Statement of Commitment to all Yarra's diverse communities.
Ensuring Yarra's employment practices are inclusive. Does The City of Yarra employ trans people?	Yarra prides itself on being an inclusive employer, and Council employs a number of gender diverse people. Council's goal is to be an employer of choice that promotes an inclusive and diverse workplace culture where everyone can be their true selves. This goal is made explicit in Council's Diversity & Inclusion Statement.
Think this is council has gone big. Think we should start with basic things for our community. Community support. Get support community for	This Strategy is about supporting the LGBTIQ+ community more broadly. Council also has specific strategies for young people, leisure & recreation,

young members coming out and get mental health support for LGBTIQ? Social. Get them a night at the gym or sports activity for people to gather? Job and place to live. Do a media campaign about what it's like to live in Yarra job and housing? Connect them, with project or volunteers like Fareshare.	housing & homelessness and volunteering which also support Yarra's LGBTIQ+ community.
Key Priorities	
Supporting, participating and connecting is very important. Particularly for your trans community. Do you have data on trans people in the City of Yarra?	The only data we have is census data, and the newly released data from the Victorian Population Health Survey. Council has committed to looking at how it can gather data to further support its LGBTIQ+ community – see action 2.2.1 Ensure Council has data required to respond appropriately to Yarra's LGBTIQ+ community.
Strategic Goals	
I would like to know more around the support of spaces and events in Yarra and a roadmap to where it's heading.	This will be further developed in conjunction with the new Advisory Group in Year 2 – Officers are happy have a chat with you about how this might look.
Action Plan Arts & Culture	
Develop and implement complimentary events specifically in Yarra that are unique to its suburbs during Midsumma and Pride.	Council often funds activities that are part of the Midsumma program through our grants programs. We support PRIDE events through partnerships with other organisations through the Community Arts funding. Currently we are working with Midsumma on the decriminalisation celebration event/s for 2021.
Support and promote at least two Yarra annual events in conjunction with stakeholders independent of Midsumma and Pride.	Council supports and promotes many LGBTIQ+ projects as part of the Arts and Culture Annual and Small Project Grant program. Discussions of supporting events in partnership with other organisations can be had with the Community Arts Officer.
Develop an arts festival (short film, painting, sculptor etc) and award to acknowledge LGBTIQ+ resident's profile and talents, emerging and known, and utilise Yarra facilities and spaces for exposure and exhibitions.	City of Yarra could provide support or partnership rather than driving a festival of this kind.
Partnering with the state on festival and event support as well as how to Save the Yarra Castro and facilitate further safe spaces for the long term.	This is has been raised by numerous business owners within Yarra and the action plan has been adjusted accordingly.

<p>Consider what ongoing role could play to support LGBTIQ+ art programs (with an initial focus on Midsumma Festival venues within Yarra).</p>	<p>City of Yarra receives a high volume of applicants to the Arts and Culture funding program who identify as LGBTIQ+ or deliver programs to the LGBTIQ+ community (e.g. LGBTI elders dance club, Artful Dodgers, Fast Fashun to name a few).</p> <p>Midsumma venues the Melba Speigeltent and Hares and Hyenas have received funding for projects as part of the festival and have been connected to other departments of Council to market their events e.g. Yarra Youth Services, Aged Care and Disability and Family and Children Services.</p>
<p>Strategic Goal 1.1 should include a specific action “To use the arts to show support for and celebrate the LGBTIQ community and to engage the broader community” with the following implementation tasks: (a) Develop specific funding for LGBTIQ arts and artists under Yarra City Arts’ grants programs and its Room to Create artist residencies program; (b) Develop a commitment to include LGBTIQ arts and artists within the City of Yarra’s Exhibition Program; (c) Identify, exhibit and expand LGBTIQ arts and the work of LGBTIQ artists within the City of Yarra’s Arts and Heritage Collection; and (d) Develop a commitment to include LGBTIQ arts and artists within the City of Yarra’s criteria/brief for public art commissions and acquisitions, and specific opportunities for public art commissions and acquisitions that recognise and celebrate LGBTIQ diversity.</p>	<p>Strategic goal 1.1 is already being achieved to a large extent with representation of LGBTIQ artists across program areas. City of Yarra receives a high volume of applicants to the Arts and Culture funding program who identify as LGBTIQ+ or deliver programs to the LGBTIQ+ community (e.g. All the Queens Men, Artful Dodgers, Fast Fashun, Popomoco to name a few).</p> <p>Specific funding could be discussed if more funds were available.</p>
<p>Please make efforts to support local music venues which are a key source of community for LGBTIQ+ people.</p>	<p>The Leaps and Bounds Music Festival and Changes Festival supports the Yarra live music scene by providing grants to venues to present events over 10 days in July. This has included many LGBTIQ+ identifying artists and events including Thursgay, LGBTI Elders Dance Club, Hares and Hyenas and individual artists.</p>
<p>Designate space for small podcast/online studio with equipment and make available to potential Yarra multimedia artists to not only develop their skills but the development and visibility within Yarra.</p>	<p>Yarra Youth Services runs an Artist In Residence program which can accommodate multimedia artists; interested people can apply through the annual Expression of Interest process.</p>
<p>Communications</p>	
<p>Tap into new media professionals e.g. podcasts, print media and regular video stories across all social channel. Provide funding for a Yarra resident</p>	<p>This is something that could potentially be funded through Council’s community grants program.</p>

to provide content for monthly content that would build upon 'Yarra Day on Radio'.	
Adopt JOY 94.9 as a media partner to explore mutually beneficial opportunities to bring the Strategy to life and promote the City of Yarra as a place of choice for the LGBTIQ+ community and businesses.	Given the first year of the Strategy will be delivered within existing budgets, Council is unable to sponsor JOY 94.9 at this time.
Design and develop "Yarra Day" to promote strategy and actions – this should include an outside broadcast with JOY 94.9.	Noted. This has been included under action 2.1.1 Continue to provide strategic leadership in relation to LGBTIQ+ issues.
The implementation task under Action 2.2.2, "provide updates to staff on changes to inclusive language as needed" should be replaced with "develop a resource to guide staff in the use of inclusive language on forms, surveys and communications material, including translation and interpreter services and ensuring material is presented in a culturally sensitive and inclusive way"	It is important to be able to provide information to staff as needed, given that language and understanding changes so quickly in the LGBTIQ+ space. Council is already in the process of developing a guide on inclusive language, and has a guide on using interpreter and translation services.
Very little information in Yarra News. As a gay person (and ratepayer) Yarra News doesn't have much publicity about LGBTQ's as the ethnic and indigenous community receives over a twelve month period.	This will be looked at under action 1.1.2 Ensure Council communications reflect our diverse community.
The website-related actions are a particularly good idea - providing useful, practical resources for LGBTIQ+ locals and significantly increasing community awareness of LGBTIQ+ existence and issues (providing the resources are kept up to date).	Noted (and thanks!).
Engagement	
Consult and possibly promote Yarra LGBTIQ+ young families playgroups (post COVID-19)	Rainbow Families Victoria contributed to the development of this Strategy. Additionally, Council runs a Rainbow Families Playgroup for queer families and their children at Bargoonga Nganjin in Fitzroy North. Officers will continue to consult with these groups.
Comments regarding the need for broad consultation	The draft Strategy was developed in an inclusive, intersectional and intergenerational consultation with key external (and internal) stakeholders. Representation was sought from the wider LGBTIQ+ community, and a number of key advocates, services, organisations, and businesses. These same stakeholders had the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft once it was completed.

Contact the LGBTIQ Reference Group (https://www.police.vic.gov.au/LGBTIQ-liaison-officers) in the Priority Communities Division of the Victorian Police to discuss what (if anything) is best done to engage police stationed within Yarra on the Council's LGBTIQ+ plans.	Noted. Council will be engaging with Victoria Police on the LGBTIQ+ Strategy.
There are tons of organisations with similar followers like 94.9Joy Radio, Globe Melbourne, Other festivals and even the chill out festival. Plus our council has Johnson street festival and Victoria Street Lunar Festival. The city would be better off to work with existing organisers and include the council program and it might be cheaper and get better results.	Noted. Council will be taking the time to develop relationships with LGBTIQ+ organisations to see how we can best support each other and subsequent events.
Utilize the existing Yarra LGBTIQ+ active aging Bent Twigs elders group to input to Yarra's strategy.	The Bent Twig Alliance were involved development of the Strategy and contributed to actions.
Inclusive Services & Facilities	
Comments regarding Rainbow Tick accreditation.	Officers will investigate Rainbow Tick accreditation. It is outside Council's remit to work with external organisations to achieve Rainbow Tick accreditation - this would be a decision for individual services to make.
Action 1.1.2 should include an implementation task to "Display rainbow families posters and promote rainbow families resources at family and children's facilities, including maternal and child health centres, kindergartens, childcare centres and libraries"	Under action 3.2.2 Promote safe and inclusive services, groups and venues within Yarra, Council will investigate models for a suitable inclusion audit for Council facilities and services. This will look at ways in which we can promote Councils inclusivity, including to diverse families.
Promote inclusiveness by encouraging businesses to display rainbow in Windows	This has been under discussion, however an audit would need to be undertaken to ensure that businesses not run by the LGBTIQ+ community are truly inclusive.
Moreland list local LGBTIQ+ community services on their website https://moreland.vic.gov.au/community-health/moreland-youth/get-help-with/gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgender-intersex-and-queer/ . Moreland has LGBTIQ library resources highlighted, lists events and connect services and businesses to residents at https://moreland.vic.gov.au/community-health/advocacy-services/LGBTIQ/	See action 3.1.3 – promote safe and inclusive services, groups and venues within Yarra.
Intersectionality	

Comments stating that intersectionality needs to be a consideration.	Under Action 2.2.4, Council has committed to explore links with Council Advisory Groups, including the Yarra Multicultural Advisory Group, Disability Advisory Committee, Active Ageing Advisory Committee, and Yana Ngargna Advisory Group, to look at further understanding and responding to intersectionality within Yarra. Council will also be looking at how to engage with the LGBTIQ+ community on Yarra's housing estates.
Supporting and celebrating LGTBIQ seniors is very important.	Council will continue to support older LGBTIQ+ people under the guidance of the Bent Twig Alliance
Leisure	
Investigate what LBGTIQ+ sporting associations Yarra could partner with to bolster community involvement.	Council's physical activity plan is currently under development and a key focus of the plan will be to investigate and facilitate working groups that address activity levels of underrepresented community groups (one of which is the LGBTIQ+ community). Additionally, LGBTIQ+ sporting groups are supported through Council's grants program
Strategic Goal 3.1 should include a specific action on sport with an implementation task to “develop a targeted engagement, social and pathway program aimed at increasing sports participation rates amongst the LGBTIQ community”	Council’s Sport Development Officer is currently reviewing a number of sports related policies which address the need for inclusive sporting club environments, and aims to incentivise those clubs that provide meaningful opportunities for underrepresented community groups. Due to the high operational demands on the Recreation Unit, this work although prioritised is subject to available resources, therefore timelines are fluid (noting this work is fairly progressed).
Libraries	
Designate space in library for LGQTQI+ image collection digital/non digital images and archives that are created by emerging LGBTIQ+ artists.	The Library service subscribes to the Gale Archives of Sexuality and Gender for the collection and curation of artefacts for the LGBTIQ+ community. The Library service maintains a digital image repository of historical images and artefacts pertaining to the history of City of Yarra and will accept submissions from emerging LGBTIQ+ artists if provenance can be proven.
Utilise this same space as an information centre for gay businesses and services, with small meeting space for planned gatherings that acts as a hub for Yarras’ LGBTIQ+ strategy.	The Library service is happy to provide meeting spaces and to help facilitate gatherings/events that support this strategy.

<p>Ensure LGBTIQ+ books and library resources are highly visible and promoted.</p>	<p>The Library service has a dedicated category on its eBook platform cloudLibrary which showcases LGBTIQ+ literature, and welcomes suggestions on how to further promote LGBTIQ+ resources.</p>
<p>Consider drag story reading time for Yarra children and families. See https://pridecentre.org.au/events/drag-queen-storytime/</p>	<p>The Library service intends to continue working with the LGBTIQ+ community to deliver inclusive programs and host additional Rainbow Storytimes. Earlier this year, we engaged Dolly Diamond to read this year's chosen title for National Simultaneous Storytime, and in recent years worked with local drag queen Karen From Finance on a queer history bus tour. In recognition of IDAHOBIT, we delivered a special storytime (delivered online via Facebook and Vimeo) that featured a story about a boy playing dress-ups ('Julian is a Mermaid') and intend to continue reading diverse and inclusive stories for all.</p>
<p>Action 1.1.2 should include an implementation task to “Acquire a library collection that reflects our diverse community, including LGBTIQ people and families”</p>	<p>The Library service strives to develop collections that reflect our community, including LGBTIQ+ people and their families, CALD communities and also welcomes suggestions for purchase. We are committed to improving the visibility of our collections and will undertake a review of our catalogue search terms and subject headings to increase discoverability.</p>
<p>Procurement</p>	
<p>Strategic Goal 2.2 should include a specific action to end discrimination against LGBTIQ people in council-funded products and services with an implementation task to “update the Yarra City Council Procurement Policy to mandate that Council officers seek products, services and providers that do not discriminate against LGBTIQ people in employment and goods and services provision”</p>	<p>Council’s Procurement Policy 2020 states that Yarra draws pride and strength from our diverse community and recognises that our procurement practices can have substantial benefit to reducing barriers faced by some people and help to address inequality in our community. This includes people who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex or queer (amongst others). Promoting equality through procurement can improve competition, value for money, the quality of public services, satisfaction among users, and positive community relations. It should be a consideration in every procurement project and reflect corporate commitment to diversity and equal opportunities wherever possible.</p> <p>Council's Procurement Policy is being updated in 2021 and Officers will continue to work in this space to ensure that LGBTIQ+ people – and other marginalised groups – are not discriminated against.</p>

Representation	
Voices of LGBTQIA+ people should not be "included" in the development of policies etc that affect us. LGBTQIA+ council staff voices should be prioritised, centred and entrusted with decision making and vetoing power. -it is not enough to recognise and celebrate the LGBTQIA+ and raise awareness of LGBTQIA+ issues - there needs to be an explicit commitment to ending violence, abuse and discrimination against the LGBTQIA+ community and providing safe and accessible places for LGBTQIA+ peoples to get mental health help and support.	Action 2.2.3 'Include the voice of LGBTQIA+ people...' is about ensuring an intersectional approach to broader policy development, for example, Council's Multicultural Partnerships Plan. LGBTQIA+ voices will always be central to LGBTQIA+ strategies and policies. Council has a number of LGBTQIA+ staff working in this space, and in addition to this, an LGBTQIA+ Working Group. Council will also be looking at appropriate models for an LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee, comprising external stakeholders.
Comments regarding the establishment of an LGBTQIA+ Reference Group.	See Action 2.2.5 Investigate establishing of an LGBTQIA+ Reference Group comprising external stakeholders including businesses, organisations and community members. The Reference Group will be intersectional and intergenerational, representing people from all stages of life.
Resourcing	
Consider a defined annual funding pool to underpin collaborative support with community organisations and State Government to bolster the action list developed within the strategy. Implementation costs appear undefined and hence the actions proposed may be uncertain.	All initial actions will be completed within existing budgets. Further funding will be sought for year 2 onwards. Additionally, a larger number of LGBTQIA+ groups and services are supported through Council's Community Grants Program.
What sort of costs does this project have? Why wasn't the community consulted first on whether they even wanted this plan? Looks to me like decisions have already been made, and anyone not supporting it will not be listened to anyway.	The first year of the Strategy will be delivered within existing budgets. The Strategy was developed through extensive consultation with the LGBTQIA+ community, who are very supportive of the initiative.
The implementation task under Action 3.2.1 "provide new LGBTQIA+ groups with information on Council's community grants program" should be replaced with "provide LGBTQIA+ groups with information on Council's community grants program"	Noted - Action Plan has been updated.
Visibility	
Enhancing LGBTQIA+ visibility in Yarra (just loving the rainbow footpaths established on Smith St and Gertrude St).	See strategic goal 1.1 Recognise and celebrate Yarra's LGBTQIA+ community – we will be looking at further strategies to enhance visibility
Bi Visibility Day should be added to the list of key dates and events under Action 1.1.1	Noted - this has been included.

* Yarra's LGBTIQ+ Strategy aims to support the LGBTIQ+ community more broadly. It does not reflect all the incredible work Yarra City Council does in this space. Yarra's whole of Council approach to LGBTIQ+ inclusion is reflected in, and intersects with a number of policies and strategies including Gender Equity Action Plan 2019-2021, People Strategy 2017-2020, Strategic Advocacy Framework 2018-2021, Family Violence Organisational Statement, 0-25 Years Plan 2018-2022, Library Strategic Plan 2017-2020, Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2024, Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy 2018 – 2024, Council Plan 2017-2021, and the Yarra Social Justice Charter.