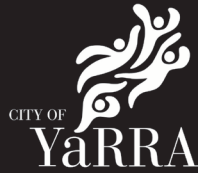


Yarra 2036 Community Vision

July 2021



Your
Yarra / Our
Future



Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra. We pay our respects to Elders from all nations and to their Elders past, present and future.

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Introduction

Yarra Council acknowledges and thanks all members of the community panel for volunteering their time, energy and spirit to work together and produce the Yarra 2036 Community Vision.

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires all Victorian councils to develop and adopt a community vision by 31 October 2021. It must be developed with the community, in accordance with a council's deliberative engagement practice and Community Engagement Policy.

There are many benefits for establishing a community vision, this includes but is not limited to:

- understanding the long-term aspirations of our community
- providing a future lens to guide all planning and decision making for councils and the community
- providing a future focus to guide a council's priorities.

Yarra 2036 Community Vision (Vision) is our first-ever community vision. It sets out the community's hopes, aspirations and priorities for the next 15 years.

The Vision was created by a community panel of fifty-five people representing a diversity of cultures and communities in Yarra. The panel was established in April 2021 and came together in May 2021 to develop the Vision.

Council's commitment

Councillors made the following commitment to the panel:

We commit to receiving this vision and adopting it as you provide it. The aspirations and priorities you identify will inform our strategic planning including, but not limited to, our four-year council plan and long-term financial and asset plans. We will continue to work in partnership with our community to see this Vision achieved.

What the Vision includes

The Yarra 2036 Community Vision includes:

- a Vision Statement describing the future state of Yarra in 2036
- a set of eight Vision Themes representing the key areas of focus
- a set of Future Priorities describing the key aspirations for the future of Yarra, presented by Vision Theme.

Information on how the Vision was developed can be found on page 15.

The following section features Yarra's first Community Vision as created by members of the Yarra Community Panel.

Yarra 2036 Community Vision

Vision Statement

Yarra is a vibrant, safe and inclusive environment. We celebrate and embrace our diversity and connection to each other and the land. Our community is empowered to work together and support one another with respect and trust.

Summary of the Vision Themes

Vision Theme 1: Strong and Vibrant Community

Vision Theme 2: Shared Governance

Vision Theme 3: Community Safety

Vision Theme 4: Environmental Sustainability

Vision Theme 5: Social Equity

Vision Theme 6: Thriving Local Economy

Vision Theme 7: Shared Spaces

Vision Theme 8: Growing Sustainably

Vision Theme 1 - Strong and Vibrant Community

Yarra is a place of accessible opportunities for participation in community life. We share our skills, abilities and knowledge, cultivating a diverse community where everyone can belong.

Future Priorities

- 1.1. Ensure a trusting, safe and welcoming environment to invite active participation of people from all backgrounds with tolerance and acceptance.
- 1.2. Create opportunities for meaningful exchange of our experiences, culture and arts.
- 1.3. Encourage and facilitate community engagement by amplifying lesser-heard voices and addressing gaps.
- 1.4. Celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and country.

Vision Theme 2 - Shared Governance

Our community is informed and empowered to contribute to the shared governance of Yarra. Decision-making is transparent through access, inclusion, consultations and advocacy. We continuously monitor our progress, improve our processes and share our achievements.

Future Priorities

- 2.1. Ensure the Council actively engages with Yarra's diverse community at all stages of the decision-making process in an open, honest way and that aligns with the values and needs of the community.
- 2.2. Actively remove barriers to participation. Support and empower everyone to get involved.
- 2.3. Promote the role of Council more actively so people understand the decision-making process and how they can be involved.

Vision Theme 3 - Community Safety

Our community is safe for all. We have peace of mind at all times of the day and night, alone or with others, at home and in public spaces. Our streets and public spaces are clean, maintained and free from hazards. We educate and advocate for respect, awareness and inclusivity.

Future Priorities

- 3.1. Council empowers community leaders, the community, law enforcement and partners to actively participate in and integrate with community safety initiatives.
- 3.2. Lead the way in trialing, creating and implementing progressive technologies, programs and education to meet the safety needs in public and private spaces, drawing on data to guide decisions.
- 3.3. Council advocates to State and Federal Governments to address social and health issues comprehensively to benefit community safety.
- 3.4. Council actively maintains, educates and implements infrastructure to ensure our streets and public spaces are free of hazards.

Vision Theme 4 - Environmental Sustainability

We are all custodians of the City of Yarra. While our skyline is growing, so are our green spaces. We are smarter in how we manage growth and use our resources and energy. We celebrate, enable and promote a circular economy.

Future Priorities

- 4.1. Work alongside Traditional Owners to set new benchmarks in maintaining and increasing natural amenities and biodiversity across Yarra and also gaining a better understanding.
- 4.2. Lead the way in climate change mitigation and resilience within Yarra and extend our impact through advocacy and innovative partnership.
- 4.3. Promote and facilitate a more efficient and effective waste management strategy that inclusively engages the community through education and awareness.
- 4.4. A transport system that is innovative, efficient, sustainable and accessible.

Vision Theme 5 - Social Equity

Our community advocates for access to equitable services including education, housing, employment and health. Yarra leads the way in transitioning homelessness to secure housing and employment. We respect and acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Yarra. Their voices are involved in council decision making. Their stories and values are visible in the community.

Future Priorities

- 5.1. Ensure a fair and equitable quality of life is possible, regardless of your age, ability, ethnicity, gender or religion.
- 5.2. Ensure that there are equitable opportunities for housing and services provided to all.
- 5.3. Ensure there are platforms for everyone to share their voices and to be heard and supported.

Vision Theme 6 - Thriving Local Economy

Yarra is a thriving hub of accessible, people-centred commercial activity, offering unique goods and services to locals and visitors. Yarra is known as a place where small businesses thrive.

Future Priorities

- 6.1. Create broad economic and employment opportunities by utilising existing physical spaces and facilitating partnerships.
- 6.2. Foster innovative and creative approaches to businesses.
- 6.3. Support young people's businesses (entrepreneurs) to thrive through innovative, creative and practical initiatives, and ensure alignment to community values.
- 6.4. Preserve, celebrate and promote culturally diverse economic activities.

Vision Theme 7 - Shared Spaces

Our shared spaces connect communities, businesses and cultures together. They reflect our community's diverse voices. These spaces are green, encourage nature and are accessible for all.

Future Priorities

- 7.1. All our shared spaces are made physically accessible and welcoming to people of all abilities, linguistic, cultural backgrounds and age groups.
- 7.2. Community meeting spaces, service buildings, and facilities evolve and adapt to reflect changing needs of our diverse community.
- 7.3. Create and innovate solutions to maximise the use of under or unused streets and spaces.
- 7.4. Increase availability and diversify use of open spaces to address existing shortages and respond to population growth.

Vision Theme 8 - Growing Sustainably

Planning and growth prioritises the needs of our community. Growth is managed in a way that has a positive impact on our open spaces and community services. Unique and special aspects of our culture and heritage are protected.

Future Priorities

- 8.1. Advocate for development and planning design that is shaped by and meets our community's future needs.
- 8.2. Keep our heritage visible while we encourage innovative and sustainable growth.
- 8.3. Advocate for the supply of accessible and affordable housing that suits different types of people in all stages of life.
- 8.4. Ensure that as we grow, community services and public spaces are adapted and created so that our unique lifestyle is maintained and continues to improve.

Next steps

The Vision will guide all planning and decision making for Council and the community.

The Vision will guide and inform the development of the next Council Plan which is effective from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2025 and the next ten-year Financial Plan and Asset Plan.

Council will continue to work in partnership with the community, its partners, other government agencies and other stakeholders to see this Vision achieved.

We will report on our progress in achieving the Vision through the Annual Report.

Background to developing the Community Vision

The Community Vision is the product of a two-staged engagement approach, which started with broad community engagement in November 2020.

Setting the scene

While planning for the project, Yarra Council reached out to all areas of the organisation to make sure we considered:

- what the community is already telling us
- what information on future challenges and opportunities could assist informed and meaningful engagement
- how we could make sure all voices in our community were included in the conversation.

Broad community engagement

Wide outreach

From November 2020 to January 2021 we engaged with the wider Yarra community to understand its thoughts, feelings and aspirations for Yarra's future. An extensive promotional campaign helped reach the most diverse corners of our community.

This included in-person events, promotion to households, email, radio and social media campaigns and posters in popular outdoor locations. The support of youth and cultural ambassadors was also invaluable at this stage.

Accurate representation

Our targets were well exceeded, with over 1,300 people considering the question, "What needs to happen to make Yarra the best it can be by 2035?". They also shared their priorities, values, challenges and opportunities under five key themes.

This broad approach meant a reliable cross section of Yarra took part in the conversation, which resulted in excellent representation by suburb, age group, cultural and linguistic background and ability.

A platform to consider different views

This generated a huge amount of rich data that was coded and analysed by an independent research company to maintain transparency. This report helped us identify the issues and opportunities that the broader community agreed on. It provided a solid foundation for our community panel to understand the range of views that exist in Yarra.

Community panel

Selecting the panel participants

Sixty-one participants were selected to take part in the panel process. Forty of those participants were randomly selected by independent company Sortition Foundation through an expression of interest process. This made sure the panel's selection was independent of Council.

This invitation to participate was sent to 8,000 random Yarra households, and generated over 400 expressions of interest. The Sortition Foundation selected by suburb, age group, gender group and dwelling type to ensure an accurate representation of Yarra's actual population. This included private homeowners, private renters, public renters and some business owners.

Twenty more participants were selected through an expression of interest process run by Council. This aimed to reach people at risk of underrepresentation. This included representatives from Yarra's culturally and linguistically diverse community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, people living with a disability and young people aged 15 to 18 years old.

Between recruitment and the first panel session, the total number of panel members reduced to 55 people due to illness or work commitments. This is typical of any recruitment process, and despite the reduction the panel's diversity was maintained.

The panel met four times in person during May 2021 – a total of 13 hours' worth of learning and deliberations. Their conversations were also supported by an online forum where they could access learning materials and ask questions outside the sessions.

The role of the panel

Panel participants were tasked with developing the final vision document that would embody the aspirations and priorities of the wider Yarra community over the next 15 years.

They were supported to consider the views of the broader Yarra community identified in stage two, and the diverse perspectives of other panel participants. They were provided with more information when requested, discussed and deliberated with their fellow panel members to reach a consensus.

This process started with identifying and describing the key areas of focus for Yarra. The panel then drew out the key threads of those focus areas to develop an overarching vision statement. The final step was to draw on this work to identify the future priorities that sit under each focus area or vision theme.

A visual overview - developing the Community Vision



Image courtesy of Capire Consulting Group

Learn more about the project

For more information about the project to develop Yarra's Community Vision, visit yoursayyarra.com.au/future.