

Draft Asset Plan 2022-2032 Submissions Overview

#	Date Received	How Received	Submission Category	Submission	Officer Response
1.1	6/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Asset Management at Yarra	Approach is fair and represented in the model, however a key missing component in the diagram and in practice is cooperation and sharing with other councils and comparison in performance to other "like councils". Although it does mention that asset management is within local council framework it does not introduce shared approaches and thus skills and costs.	Council's Asset Management team is exploring opportunities to share knowledge and resources with neighbouring councils.
1.2	6/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Our Assets	<p>" The collection of condition data can be expensive, so it is important that the right amount of data is collected. We do this by ensuring responsibilities for data collection are allocated and that the collection is scheduled and stored in our enterprise asset management IT systems."</p> <p>Although there may be individual assets needing data collection, however the function of data collections and storage should be a centralised approach and there seems no mention of this so a reader believes that Yarra has its own separate workforce all duplicated across multiple councils which sounds like a terribly shortsighted view.</p> <p>The method of explaining the strategies is however quite logical.</p>	Refer response to submission 1.1.
1.3	6/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Financial Information	As noted above no evidence of thought going into strategic cost management other than a callout of leasing rather than owning.	Asset management provides a framework for minimising the lifecycle asset costs, whilst also providing data for consideration in strategic cost management considerations as part of ongoing service planning.
1.4	6/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Priorities and Challenges	Stormwater challenges would seem to be significant however noting they have been in place since start of century it is disappointing in that we have known about climate change for decades and yet no thought on working with other councils to share expertise and skills is mentioned, simply that Yarra needs to employ more skills in this area. This seems to be just building empires rather than innovative work solutions to problems that many councils must be experiencing.	Council has an existing program of sharing stormwater asset knowledge, skills and resources including jointly funded projects with partner organisations such as other councils and water authorities.

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1.5	6/05/22	Your Say Yarra	General Feedback	In my reading of the plan which is fine in many aspects of identifying challenges and priorities there seems to be no innovative considerations of ongoing financial challenges. It may be that Yarra just expects that rates can be raised however the danger is that if Yarra has not considered and started to implement ongoing cost management then we will hit a brick wall and be forced to reduced council in one big hit rather than starting to achieve ongoing efficiencies perhaps via sharing of functions with other councils from now into the next 10-20 yrs.	The submission is noted; refer also to the response to submission 1.3.
2.1	8/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Asset Management at Yarra	Unclear where this plan fits within the asset management framework or what its relationship is to several other asset management plans identified in this section.	Changes made to Table 1 of proposed Asset Plan to describe the relationship of the Asset Plan to the other documents in the framework.
2.2	8/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Our Assets	This section could benefit from better data visualisations to communicate a narrative or present (or substantiate) options.	The submission is noted and will be considered in the development of future iterations of the Asset Plan.
2.3	8/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Financial Information	This section seems pretty pointless from a planning perspective, if "further analysis" is needed to determine appropriate funding levels, and scenario/option/gap analysis has yet to be undertaken. While this is slated for inclusion in "future iterations" of the plan (when will these be published?), its absence makes the current draft plan seem premature and incomplete.	The submission is noted. Under the Local Government Act 2020, Council is required to adopt its first Asset Plan by 30 June 2022 and thereafter adopt a new Asset Plan by 31 October in the year following a Council general election.
2.4	8/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Priorities and Challenges	Priorities are largely high-level and do not seem to address the challenges identified immediately underneath. The challenges section contains a variety of suggestions and possibilities - eg. reduce service levels - but it is unclear which of these council is intending to pursue.	The submission is noted and has been referred for consideration in Council's service and budget planning activities.
2.5	8/05/22	Your Say Yarra	General Feedback	Unsure what the purpose of consultation is, given the draft plan seems incomplete and lacks a clearly articulated plan or set of options. One of its stated purposes is "facilitating more informed community engagement", yet I imagine most of the community would find this document inaccessible or have difficulty understanding what they are to provide feedback on. To this end, engagement needs to be better planned and scoped, or else risks being another tick the box exercise.	The submission is noted and will be considered in the community engagement approach for future iterations of the Asset Plan.

#	Date Received	How Received	Submission Category	Submission	Officer Response
3.1	10/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Our Assets	<p>Not enough public open space. I would re-evaluate the cost of replacing foot bridges, it looks too low. Your cost of footpaths is too low. Sack the person who completed the evaluation, you are not going to get the footpaths replaced in an urban environment for the cost you have. 260 ha of open space = 260 x 10,000 = 2,600,000m² @ \$400/m² = \$1 Billion dollars, so clearly not including the cost of the land. Yarra's parks and playgrounds are of low quality, even Melton has better playgrounds and Melton is the worst suburb in Melbourne. Make assets for ratepayers, not anyone else, don't allow the State government to cost shift looking after those of society that do not look after themselves, (druggies and welfare recipients) Footpath pavement, what no inspection completed in 10 years, with no pavement rated lower than good, you should go for a walk down Davison Street on the West side between 2 and 66. You should also go for a walk through Abbotsford you will find pavements below the good rating. What's the criteria for a kerb, being good, if it is a kerb holding water and not draining, you nailed Davison Street West side and East side at Coles Trc. Laneway assessment is the closes so far. Good to see you have no idea about the drainage in Yarra and most of it would be approaching 100 years old, stop the excuses and complete a review. I can ell you City of Melbourne knows much more about the condition of their drainage and if Yarra was smart, they would do what Com does and get the big developers to complete a CCTV of the local drains when they do a development, Not that is effects me as I don't have stormwater drains that service my house, Yarra was to cheap to install a pipe when they re did the lane 5 years ago, they had the perfect opportunity.</p>	<p>Footnote 2 added to Table 4 of proposed Asset Plan to explain the asset valuation methodology required for Victorian councils.</p> <p>In accordance with guidance from Local Government Victoria, the Asset Plan is intended to focus on physical infrastructure assets. The valuation of land is excluded from the infrastructure asset valuations, although the total value of all land under Council control (valued in line with Accounting Standards) is noted in section 4.1, Figure 5.</p> <p>Footpath condition is assessed along with other transport assets on a four to five year cycle; additionally, defect inspections of all footpaths occur on a more frequent basis in line with Council's Road Management Plan.</p> <p>Council requires developers to undertake CCTV of affected stormwater assets prior to development commencing and after the completion of the development, which provides data to better understand the condition of the existing drainage network.</p>
3.2	10/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Financial Information	<p>Stop wasting money on bike lanes. Stop wasting money on removing parking bays. I would like to see more money spent on upgrading counsel assets, in double the renewal rate from 107% to 114%, do this by reducing useless services like the health clinics, money for druggies.</p>	<p>The submission is noted; the Asset Plan as proposed is intended to be consistent with the adopted plans and strategies of Council.</p>

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3.3	10/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Priorities and Challenges	<p>Yarra can not control climate change and the effect over the next 50 years is going to be minimal with maybe 1'c and a little more storms. Don't make it a challenge when it's not.</p> <p>Ageing assets is only a problem if you are not planning to replace them as they become inoperative, just plan to replace at the appropriate rate.</p> <p>Future demand, it's simple make it user pays, as big developments happen (that we don't want) make them pay for the upgrade of the council infrastructure, being roads, footpaths, drains, public open space.</p> <p>Increased cost due to labour , it's called inflation, it happens, plan for it. Rates go up by the rate cap, which is in line with inflation, so don't make it a big deal (who wrote this paper ?, do they have any economic or infrastructure management or building experience ?)</p>	<p>The Asset Plan as proposed is intended to be consistent with the adopted plans and strategies of Council including the Climate Emergency Plan.</p> <p>Table 13 'Development' challenge description amended to note that Council has implemented Development Contributions Plan levies to assist with managing the financial impact of this challenge.</p> <p>Table 13 'Economic' challenge description amended to clarify that the challenge is real cost increases in excess of the Fair Go Rates System rate cap.</p>
3.4	10/05/22	Your Say Yarra	General Feedback	<p>This plan is not going to generate any meaningful feedback their is no detail to allow a proper analysis.</p> <p>Where is the appendix, listing the asset and the assessment on the asset, ?</p> <p>Where is the forecast impact for the so called challenges like climate change ?</p> <p>How did the costing get developed, they appear to be simply wrong ?</p> <p>How did the analysis of asset condition happen, again with no footpaths under good, it is wrong.</p> <p>What is Yarra going to do about the expansion of open space which is a priority, Yarra have collected more than \$10M in open space fees from within 800m of my house over the past 10 years, yet no new open space, how can you say it is a priority when you are not purchasing new land for open space despite the massive over development over the past 10 years.</p> <p>Simply this review was a waste of time as Yarra (probably by design) did not give the information needed in the documents to complete a meaningful review.</p> <p>I'm a Building and Construction professional with degrees in Civil Eng and Business admin, who is also the son of a refugee (fathers side) and part Aboriginal (mothers side). Yarra you need to do much better, If one of my team members gave me a paper like this, I would not even accept it as a summary document as it tells you nothing that you need to know.</p>	<p>The proposed Asset Plan is intended to be a summary document and has been authored in line with the guidance from Local Government Victoria for the content of Asset Plans.</p> <p>In relation to new land for open space, refer also to response to submission 4.1.</p>

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4.1	10/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Priorities and Challenges	Over the period of this budget, there will be a significant population increase in Nichols ward. To prepare for this, Abbotsford needs more open parks and garden space in its own right. This also includes, taking the decisive step required for the future purchase of land on Yarra City Council side of the river. In addition there is the need for the purchase and development of new strategic parcels of land for families and children's recreation purposes in Richmond, Abbotsford and Collingwood.	Council's policies for the acquisition of land for open space and expenditure of Public Open Space contributions are outside the scope of the Asset Plan, although the Asset Plan and Long Term Financial Plan include financial provisions for the acquisition of land for new public open space.
5.1	20/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Asset Management at Yarra	Here are my principles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider circular economy principles in your asset management plan - Reuse materials, wherever possible - Use recycled content - Explore low carbon asphalt for roads - Design assets for repair rather than replacement, where possible - Support community initiatives such as repair cafe, libraries, equipment to hire before investing in more new council assets - Invest in assets that can have a second life ie donated on to community group, borrowed by community 	Council is currently developing a Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan. Policy principle 5 of the proposed Asset Management Policy has been amended to include the objective of minimising environmental impact as well as cost over the asset lifecycle, and the same change also applied to section 3.1.1 of the proposed Asset Plan.
5.2	20/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Our Assets	More public access to infrastructure and open space would be advantageous to the community. Sharing council spaces (covered and open) for community events, festivals and markets Offer borrowed garden beds for a period of time Using empty space for pop up gardens ie Lourdes carpark in St Heliers Street, Abbotsford	The submission is noted; Council's Events and Urban Agriculture teams actively look for opportunities to leverage existing Council properties.
5.3	20/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Financial Information	Adopt a repair before replace principle Assess community assets before purchase or investment in new council assets Invest in community assets and initiatives - eg mobile wash up trailer for public events	The submission is noted and a repair before replace principle is consistent with the amended policy principle 5 (refer response to submission 5.1).
5.4	20/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Priorities and Challenges	Prioritize recommendations that address climate change issues Support community initiatives Don't cap open space with impenetrable concrete and fixed furniture - leave open space uncluttered and available for community.	The submission is noted and the Asset Plan as proposed is intended to be consistent with the adopted plans and strategies of Council including the Climate Emergency Plan. The comments regarding open space have been referred to the Open Space Planning and Design team for consideration.

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6.1	20/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Asset Management at Yarra	There's no mention of the management of Yarra's most valuable asset class, which is car parking assets, both on and off-street.	<p>The physical assets used for car-parking (on- and off-street) are included within the Transport asset class.</p> <p>A paragraph has been added to section 2.2 to note the interdependency of Asset Management with service planning activities.</p>
6.2	20/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Our Assets	Again there's no mention of car parking assets. The asset value of the land devoted to car parking is into the billions, plus there are parking machines and signs etc.	In accordance with guidance from Local Government Victoria, the Asset Plan is intended to focus on physical infrastructure assets. The valuation of land is excluded from the infrastructure asset valuations.
6.3	20/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Financial Information	We urgently need an asset value and performance review of parking assets, that's more important than anything currently in the draft asset plan. The income foregone by not charging appropriate fees for use of these assets is in effect the City of Yarra's largest use of resources. I have never heard any good explanation of why rates in Yarra are kept so high for everyone, in order that council can afford to give huge subsidies only to those residents who drive, in the form of free and under-priced parking. To have a proper debate on these issues we need to be informed about the financial facts: asset values, potential income under market rates, actual income, costs.	<p>The submission is noted and has been referred for consideration in Council's on-going service planning activities.</p> <p>The Asset Plan is intended to be consistent with the existing Council service delivery model and the adopted strategies of Council.</p>
6.4	20/05/22	Your Say Yarra	Priorities and Challenges	The first two transport priorities: "Ensure that cycling networks are prioritised in future asset planning programmes" and "Implement the Transport Plan without having a long-term impact on revenue" sound good, but we know that not much will happen until the parking issue is addressed. Roughly half of residents get a massive subsidy worth thousands of dollars in near-free parking, and they naturally fight tooth and nail to protect this free unmerited handout against good policies that would use some of that land for better uses such as improved footpaths, bike lanes and green spaces. The fair pricing of parklets should be a model for fair pricing of public land for parking. That will reduce demand and make it easier to free up space for better uses.	Refer to response to submission 6.3.

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7.1	20/05/22	Email	Asset Management at Yarra	Submitter outlines that there may be confusion around the Asset Management Policy being a policy or a strategy. Also unclear if the Asset Plan is supposed to be strategic	Changes made to Table 1 of proposed Asset Plan to describe the relationship of the Asset Plan to the other documents in the framework, remove the Planning Level column from the table and include some additional context into Figure 3.
7.2	20/05/22	Email	Asset Management at Yarra	Submitter requests that Yarra provide a publicly available asset list which include up to 50 years of planning.	Detailed asset planning is currently performed over a minimum ten-year horizon (longer for some key assets) and presented in summary form over a 10-year horizon in the proposed Asset Plan, in accordance with the Local Government Victoria Guidance for the content of Asset Plans.
7.3	20/05/22	Email	Financial Information	Submitter requests that Yarra plan for 50 years of lifecycle forecasts.	Currently, Council does not have the capability, resources or systems in place to plan for 50 years of lifecycle forecasts. The proposed Asset Management Policy (and reflected in the proposed Asset Plan) includes a principle for the continuous improvement of Council's asset management capability; we expect Council's ability to efficiently forecast longer periods will increase over time with development of Council's capability including appropriate supporting technology.
7.4	20/05/22	Email	Our Assets	Submitter requests that Parking assets are included in Asset Plan and that a detailed assessment is carried out on the value of parking assets.	Refer to responses to submissions 6.1 and 6.3.
7.5	20/05/22	Email	Our Assets	Submitter concerned that footpath condition information does not reflect the current condition and that Yarra needs to include function and capacity in its scoring of footpath assets.	The asset condition profile is captured at point in time; footpath condition assessments included in the proposed Asset Plan were performed in 2018, and an updated assessment is due for completion later in 2022.
7.6	20/05/22	Email	General Feedback	Submitter requests that Yarra invest in <i>Low Traffic Neighbourhoods</i> in order to reduce the costs associated with managing Transport assets.	The submission has been referred to the Strategic Transport team for consideration, and the likely reduced rate of asset degradation and associated cost savings under the suggested alternative service model is noted.

RESPONSE TO DRAFT ASSET MANAGEMENT POLICY 2022/26 AND DRAFT ASSET PLAN 2022/32



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Foreword

Streets Alive Yarra is a non-profit, volunteer, resident and ratepayer action group with a vision for more trees, wider footpaths and vibrant businesses in thriving neighbourhoods. We see our streets being used by people from all ages, irrespective of whether they walk, roll on a wheelchair, cycle, use public transport or drive. Residents and shoppers should be able to move safely, comfortably, and conveniently around Yarra; and park near shops.



Image credit: OCULUS Landscape Architecture and Urban Design

Streets Alive Yarra was founded in 2017 and now has over 2,800 followers on Facebook. A network of local champions develops concepts and proposals for how to improve their local street or precinct. Streets Alive Yarra is also a member of the Victoria Walks Walkability Action Group network.

Further information is available at: streets-alive-yarra.org/about.

Coherence

The draft Asset Management Policy 2022-2026 and the draft Asset Plan 2022-2032 lack coherence. For example, it's not clear whether the Asset Management Policy 2022-2026 is intended to be a policy (as per its title) or a strategy (refer to Table 1):

Planning Level	Documents	Purpose and Contents
Strategic	Asset Management Policy	Outlines the guiding principles for Asset Management and the high-level responsibilities and accountabilities for Asset Management within the organisation
Tactical	Strategic Asset Management Plan	Links the organisational objectives to the asset management objectives and details the actions and practices required to meet those objectives
Operational	Asset Management Plans	Identifies how we intend to manage our assets within the allocated funding envelope to meet the needs of the community while managing risk.

Table 1 from draft Asset Plan 2022-2032

Similarly, it's not clear whether the draft Asset Plan 2022-2032 is intended be strategic (quote 'a key strategic planning document') or tactical (refer to Table 1 above). It may be better to have three separate documents:

- Asset Management Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Asset Management Plan (as required by the Local Government Act)

Asset Management Policy

We support the purpose, scope, and principles. We support the principle that 'asset planning will have a planning horizon of at least ten years and longer where needed'. Specifically, we suggest the policy should clearly state that council will maintain a publicly viewable Asset List within the Asset Management Plan, covering the next 50 years, including a detailed list of each asset with data on:

- the identify of each asset, i.e. each building, street or park is a separately listed asset
- the estimated lifetime of that asset, i.e. typical number of years between renewals; e.g. buildings need a new roof every XX years, high-traffic streets need re-sheeting every YY years, low-traffic streets need re-sheeting every ZZ years
- date the asset was last renewed, e.g. when was the roof last replaced, or the oval re-turfed
- dates for planned renewals, e.g. for buildings: roof, cladding, paint, HVAC, kitchen

We acknowledge that such a list may contain hundreds of items.

Asset Management Plan

The draft Asset Plan 2022-2032 claims to:

- describe how council will *manage assets throughout their lifecycle*,
- provide information on *asset performance* and the *costs of managing assets*
- contribute to *financial management*

Again, the Asset Management Plan should include an Asset List with 50 columns to show the planned expenditure on that asset each year for the next 50 years, showing that:

- council is cognisant of the 'big picture'
- council is able to make minor adjustments to planned renewal dates to smooth out 'lumps' in the required capital works budget for each year
- residents and ratepayers can easily look up when their street is planned to be re-sheeted

In addition to maintaining a publicly viewable list, each row in the list should include data on:

- how council intends to derive income to pay for renewals of that asset, e.g. from rates or from user fees; and
- the target recovery rate for that asset, e.g. ranging from 0% for public green open space to perhaps 100% for a council golf course.

Value of assets

The draft Asset Plan 2022-2032 claims that *Asset Management is the systematic activity of an organisation to realise value from assets*.

Yet, the document fails to include how council realises value from its approximately 47,000 on-street car parking spaces, located on public land. Approximately 3/4 of these parking bays are offered to users at no charge, which is the opposite of realising value.

The Asset Plan should include a detailed assessment of the value of parking assets, including a summary of the costs of managing the assets (surface maintenance, drainage, line markings, signs, and meters) and the potential revenue if the assets were priced at market rates. Clearly, council can determine to offer access to parking services at prices that are lower than market rates; the key point is that stakeholders should be aware of the revenue foregone by that decision.

Condition of assets

We agree that *it is important for us to understand the current condition of our assets*. We don't believe that all our footpath pavements are in 'very good' or 'good' condition. Many footpaths are too narrow, too bumpy, or too sloping (owing to vehicle crossovers) to be considered as either 'very good' or 'good', i.e. useable by a person in a wheelchair.

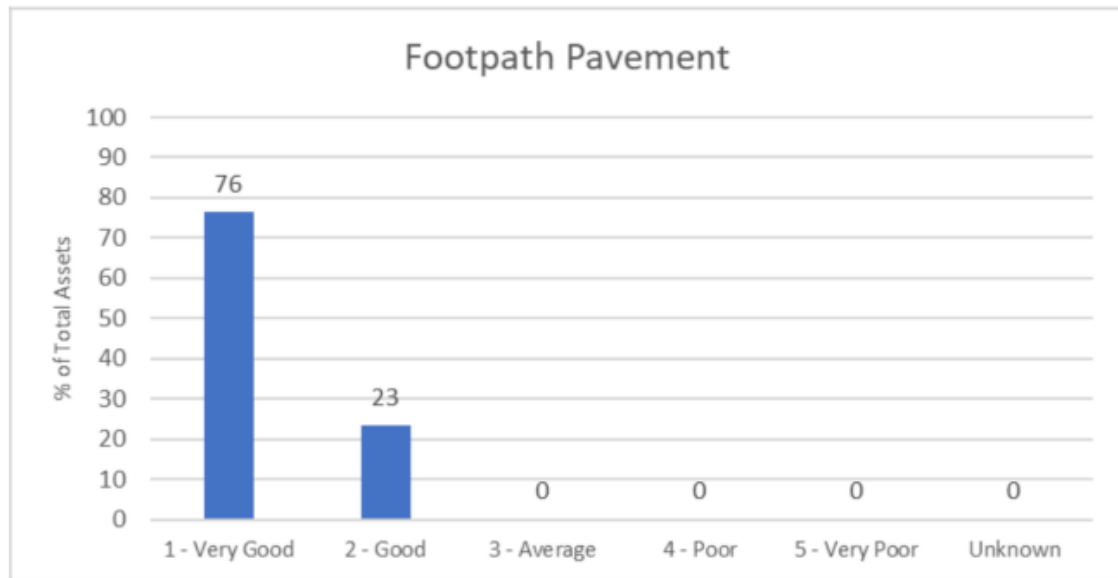


Figure 9 – Transport: Footpath pavement condition summary

Cost of managing assets

Re-sheeting roads costs a significant portion of the council budget. Roads that are subject to high traffic volumes or speeds degrade faster than those subject to low traffic volumes or speeds. The Asset Plan should clearly state that asset management costs can be decreased by reducing the volume and speed of traffic on council-controlled streets. This can be achieved by investing in Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, i.e. treatments such as modal filters that act to keep through traffic on declared arterials that are maintained by the state government.

Concluding remarks

Streets Alive Yarra would be delighted to provide further detail or explanation of the themes raised in this document.

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