

Policy Analysis

Alignment of a new open space contribution rate to the Community Vision and Council Plan

1. A new POSC rate would enable and assist in the implementation of the adopted *Open Space Strategy 2020*.
2. The *Open Space Strategy 2020* is a key document linked to the seven priority areas of the Council Plan – this is outlined in the attached table to this report.

Council Plan Objective	How the Strategy will meet the objective
<p>A healthy Yarra</p> <p>1.1 <i>Maintain and enhance Yarra's open space network to meet the diverse range of community uses.</i></p> <p>1.1.1 <i>Increase the amount and quality of green open space through the strategic acquisition of land, the conversion of urban land to open space and/or the creation of pocket parks in high density areas.</i></p> <p>1.1.2 <i>Develop an open space strategy to ensure Yarra's public open space is managed as a functional network that encourages shared use and active living.</i></p> <p>1.1.3 <i>Undertake community education to promote understanding and greater acceptance of multiple use infrastructure including open space.</i></p>	<p>Upgrade existing open spaces to encourage the community outdoors to exercise and socialise in them.</p> <p>Provide additional public open space so that everyone lives and works within a safe and easy walk to open space.</p> <p>Encourage greening of open space so open space contributes to urban cooling.</p> <p>Protect and improve habitat and biodiversity values of open space including along the waterway corridors and across the network where appropriate.</p>
<p>An inclusive Yarra</p> <p>2.1 <i>Build resilience by providing opportunities and places for people to meet, be involved in and connect with their community</i></p>	<p>Open space is for everyone in Yarra's diverse community, including all ages, abilities and cultures.</p> <p>Open space is accessible to everyone and requires no membership of an organisation or payment to use it.</p> <p>Everyone lives and works within a safe and easy walk of open space.</p>

Council Plan Objective	How the Strategy will meet the objective
<p>A sustainable Yarra</p> <p><i>3.1 Investigate strategies and initiatives to better manage the long term effects of climate change.</i></p> <p><i>3.5 Promote responsible water usage and practices.</i></p> <p><i>3.7 Investigate strategies and initiatives to improve biodiversity.</i></p>	<p>Encourage use of sustainable materials in open space.</p> <p>Maximise urban greening.</p> <p>Protect and improve habitat and biodiversity values of open space including along the waterway corridors and across the network where appropriate.</p>
<p>A liveable Yarra</p> <p><i>4.3 Plan, promote and provide built form and open space that is accessible to all ages and abilities.</i></p>	<p>Identify the need for and areas where new open space is required in response to the <i>Yarra Housing Strategy 2018</i> and the <i>Yarra Spatial Economic and Employment Strategy 2018</i>.</p> <p>The design guidelines require the inclusion of sustainable water re-use and urban greening including additional large canopy trees to promote the role of open space in mitigating urban heat island effect.</p>
<p>A prosperous Yarra</p> <p><i>5.2 Strengthen and monitor land use change and economic growth including new and emerging economic clusters.</i></p> <p><i>5.4 Develop Innovative Smart City solutions in collaboration with government, industry and community that use technology to embrace a connected, informed and sustainable future.</i></p>	<p>Open space is able to attract employees and visitors to Yarra, increasing visitation and economic activities.</p> <p>The actions in the proposed Strategy are costed and form the basis of the open space contribution rate that is included in the Strategy.</p> <p>Growth projections will be monitored over the life of the Strategy. Recommendations may shift as required depending on changes in projected growth.</p> <p>The Strategy provides certainty for Council, the community and developers regarding the location and type of new open space that is required over the 10 year timeframe of the Strategy.</p> <p>Smart City solutions (use of technology) will be considered and applied to the development of new open space and linear trails where applicable.</p>

Council Plan Objective	How the Strategy will meet the objective
<p>A connected Yarra</p> <p><i>6.5 Develop and promote pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that encourages alternate modes of transport, improves safety and connectedness.</i></p>	<p>Strengthen the linear connections and sustainable transport options to open space sites.</p> <p>Shared trails are safe and able to be used by a range of community members.</p> <p>Open space sites will be easy to walk to through a safe and amenable street network.</p> <p>Provide bike parking facilities at key open space sites.</p> <p>Enhance the biodiversity corridors in Yarra.</p>
<p>A leading Yarra</p> <p><i>7.4 Ensure Council services are efficient, well-planned, accessible, and meet community needs.</i></p> <p><i>7.5 Provide the community with meaningful and genuine opportunities to contribute and participate in Council planning and decision making processes with a focus on young people, hard to reach and traditionally underrepresented communities.</i></p> <p><i>7.8 Continue a 'customer centric' approach to all service planning and delivery.</i></p> <p><i>7.9 Advocate for the best interests of our community.</i></p>	<p>The proposed Strategy is based on community engagement feedback and best practice provision of open space and facilities in established areas and high density precincts.</p> <p>The community will be engaged on a project basis during the implementation of the Strategy and their responses and experiences will form the base of future planning and design work.</p> <p>Community satisfaction standards will be measured through the <i>Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey</i>.</p>

Sustainability implications

3. A new POSC rate would support the implementation of the adopted *Open Space Strategy (2020)*.
4. Further, many Council strategies will achieve their sustainability actions through an expanded open space network. This includes:
 - (a) developing biodiversity corridors;
 - (b) creating opportunities for sustainable water management; for example, through passive irrigation or storm water harvesting; and
 - (c) reducing the urban heat island effect by creating more permeable surfaces in parks which also provides the opportunity to plant larger canopy trees that cannot always be achieved through the streetscape network.

Climate Emergency Implications

5. The new POSC rate would support implementation of the *Open Space Strategy (2020)* and also allow mitigation measures to be built into Yarra's infrastructure and provide long term positive environmental impacts.

Community and social implications

6. Open space provides an opportunity for the diverse population of Yarra to socialise in a free, safe and welcoming environment. It also provides varied opportunities for

childhood development and growth, as being outdoors is an important part of early years learning.

7. Measures to manage perceptions of safety and equity across the open space network needs to be managed through the ongoing implementation of the Strategy and also aligned to the directions of many other relevant Council strategies.
8. There a number of key Council strategies and policies that are important companion documents for the enhancement, safety and recreation in open space areas for the community and the environment - for instance, the Urban Forest Strategy, Climate Action Plan, draft Nature Strategy, strategies under preparation by Council's recreation team and related community wellbeing related strategies.
9. These collective strategies and policies are considered by the organisation when considering various matters including the planning, improvement and provision of new open spaces in the municipality.

Economic development implications

10. A new POSC rate sought for the Yarra Planning Scheme would apply to both residential development and commercial development that are subdivided.
11. It is noted that an increase in the contribution rate would be an additional cost on development.
12. Importantly, the additional open space rate would enable Council to provide for the further open space demands due to both the additional population and also worker population in the municipality.
13. The Planning Panel has recognised the need for an increased contribution rate in order to meet the additional community needs resulting from development that is occurring in the municipality.

Human rights and gender equality implications

14. The upgrade and improvement of the open space network through the application of a new POSC rate would support to the Yarra community and enhance their quality of life and liveability of the City.