Ordinary Meeting of Council Agenda

to be held on Tuesday 12 November 2019 at 7.00pm Richmond Town Hall

Arrangements to ensure our meetings are accessible to the public

Council meetings are held at either the Richmond Town Hall or the Fitzroy Town Hall. The following arrangements are in place to ensure they are accessible to the public:

- Entrance ramps and lifts (off Moor Street at Fitzroy, entry foyer at Richmond).
- Interpreting assistance is available by arrangement *(tel. 9205 5110).*
- Auslan interpreting is available by arrangement *(tel. 9205 5110).*
- A hearing loop is available at Richmond only and the receiver accessory is available by arrangement *(tel. 9205 5110).*
- Proposed resolutions are displayed on large screen.
- An electronic sound system amplifies Councillors' debate.
- Disability accessible toilet facilities are available at each venue.

Recording and Publication of Meetings

An audio recording is made of all public Council Meetings and then published on Council's website. By participating in proceedings (including during Public Question Time or in making a submission regarding an item before Council), you agree to this publication. You should be aware that any private information volunteered by you during your participation in a meeting is subject to recording and publication.

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Order of business

1. **Statement of recognition of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Land**
2. **Attendance, apologies and requests for leave of absence**
3. **Declarations of conflict of interest (Councillors and staff)**
4. **Confidential business reports**
5. **Confirmation of minutes**
6. **Petitions and joint letters**
7. **Public question time**
8. **Delegates' reports**
9. **General business**
10. **Questions without notice**
11. **Council business reports**
12. **Notices of motion**
13. **Urgent business**

1. Statement of Recognition of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Land

"Welcome to the City of Yarra."

"Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung as the Traditional Owners of this country, pays tribute to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra and gives respect to the Elders past and present."

2. Attendance, apologies and requests for leave of absence

Anticipated attendees:

Councillors

- Cr Danae Bosler (Mayor)
- Cr Misha Coleman (Deputy Mayor)
- Cr Mi-Lin Chen Yi Mei
- Cr Jackie Fristacky
- Cr Stephen Jolly
- Cr Daniel Nguyen
- Cr Bridgid O'Brien
- Cr Amanda Stone

Council officers

- Vijaya Vaidyanath (Chief Executive Officer)
- Ivan Gilbert (Group Manager Chief Executive's Office)
- Lucas Gosling (Director Community Wellbeing)
- Gracie Karabinis (Group Manager People, Culture and Community)
- Chris Leivers (Director City Works and Assets)
- Diarmuid McAlary (Director Corporate, Business and Finance)
- Bruce Phillips (Director Planning and Place Making)
- Mel Nikou (Governance Officer)

Leave of absence

- Cr James Searle

3. Declarations of conflict of interest (Councillors and staff)

4. Confidential business reports

Nil

5. Confirmation of minutes

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Tuesday 22 October 2019 be confirmed.

6. Petitions and joint letters

7. Public question time

Yarra City Council welcomes questions from members of the community.

Public question time procedure

Ideally, questions should be submitted to Council in writing by midday on the day of the meeting via the form available on our website. Submitting your question in advance helps us to provide a more comprehensive answer. Questions that have been submitted in advance will be answered first.

Public question time is an opportunity to ask questions about issues for which you have not been able to gain a satisfactory response on a matter. As such, public question time is not:

- a time to make statements or engage in debate with Councillors;
- a forum to be used in relation to planning application matters which are required to be submitted and considered as part of the formal planning submission;
- a forum for initially raising operational matters, which should be directed to the administration in the first instance.

If you wish to raise matters in relation to an item on this meeting agenda, Council will consider submissions on these items in conjunction with and prior to debate on that agenda item.

When you are invited by the Mayor to ask your question, please come forward, take a seat at the microphone, state your name clearly for the record and:

- direct your question to the Mayor;
- refrain from making statements or engaging in debate
- not raise operational matters which have not previously been raised with the Council administration;
- not ask questions about matter listed on the agenda for the current meeting.
- refrain from repeating questions that have been previously asked; and
- if asking a question on behalf of a group, explain the nature of the group and how you are able to speak on their behalf.

Once you have asked your question, please remain silent unless called upon by the Mayor to make further comment or to clarify any aspects.

8. Delegate’s reports

9. General business

10. Questions without notice

11. Council business reports

Item		Page	Rec. Page	Report Presenter
11.1	Penalty Amount for Parking Infringements in Schedule 6 of Road Safety Regulations	7	9	Stewart Martin – Manager Compliance and Parking Services
11.2	Q1 2019 Forecast and Q1 Budget Review	10	13	Ange Marshall – Chief Financial Officer
11.3	2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September	15	20	Julie Wyndham – Manager Corporate Planning and Performance
11.4	Draft Nature Strategy 2020-2024	57	65	Peter Moran – Acting Manager City Works
11.5	Draft Social Justice Charter for Yarra	172	175	Cristina Del Frate – Acting Community Partnerships Unit Manager
11.6	Yana Ngargna Plan 2020-2023	228	235	Cristina Del Frate – Acting Community Partnerships Unit Manager
11.7	Draft Homelessness Strategy 2020-2023	306	308	Cristina Del Frate – Acting Community Partnerships Unit Manager
11.8	Social and Affordable Housing Strategy	369	376	Malcolm McCall – Unit Manager Social Policy and Research
11.9	Council Land Abutting Goodwood Street Richmond	461	463	Ivan Gilbert – Group Manager Chief Executive's Office
11.10	East - West access through former AMCOR site	465	468	Dennis Cheng – Manager Traffic and Civil Engineering
11.11	Heritage Strategy - response to public exhibition and an amended strategy for council consideration for adoption	470	475	Ivan Gilbert – Group Manager Chief Executive's Office
11.12	Change to Ordinary Council Meeting Schedule	566	567	Ivan Gilbert – Group Manager Chief Executive's Office
11.13	Appointment of Authorised Officers - Planning and Environment Act 1987	568	569	Ivan Gilbert – Group Manager Chief Executive's Office

The public submission period is an opportunity to provide information to Council, not to ask questions or engage in debate.

Public submissions procedure

When you are invited by the Mayor to make your submission, please come forward, take a seat at the microphone, state your name clearly for the record and:

- Speak for a maximum of five minutes;
- direct your submission to the Mayor;
- confine your submission to the subject under consideration;
- avoid repetition and restating previous submitters;
- refrain from asking questions or seeking comments from the Councillors or other submitters;
- if speaking on behalf of a group, explain the nature of the group and how you are able to speak on their behalf.

Once you have made your submission, please remain silent unless called upon by the Mayor to make further comment or to clarify any aspects.

12. Notices of motion

Nil

13. Urgent business

Nil

11.1 Penalty Amount for Parking Infringements in Schedule 6 of Road Safety Regulations

Reference: D19/181490
Authoriser: Director Corporate, Business and Finance

Purpose

1. To seek an updated Council resolution to fix the penalty amount at 0.5 of a penalty unit for parking infringements cited in Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019.

Background

2. Section 87(4) of the Road Safety Act 1986 permits a municipal council, by resolution, to fix a penalty for a parking infringement in contravention of a regulation under the Act, if the penalty to be fixed is not more than 0.5 penalty unit and is no more than the penalty prescribed by the regulations.

3. Council previously made such a resolution at a meeting on 17 October 2006, for parking offence codes prescribed in the regulations to fix the penalty amount at 0.5 penalty unit.

4. The Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019 were recently implemented with a revised Schedule 6 – Parking infringements, which prescribes the penalty unit amount for parking infringement offences. Therefore to ensure that we capture these revised changes and to confirm consistency in respect to the penalty unit that is charged, Council needs to adopt these charges by resolution.

5. The parking offences set out in Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019 with a 0.2 penalty unit are:

   (a) 621 - Stopped contrary to a no parking sign;

   (b) 701 – Parking for longer than indicated;

   (c) 702 – Parked – fail to pay fee and obey instructions on sign, meter, ticket;

   (d) 704 – Stopped on a bicycle parking area;

   (e) 705 – Stopped on a motor bike parking area;

   (f) 706 – Parked contrary to requirement of parking area;

   (g) 707 – Parked – fail to comply with angle parking requirement;

   (h) 708 – Parked – fail to comply with 90° angle parking requirement;

   (i) 711 – Parked not completely within a parking bay;

   (j) 712 – Parked – long vehicle exceeding minimum number of bays; and

   (k) 713 – Parked – wide vehicle exceeding minimum number of bays.

6. There is only one new addition to the penalty amounts presently being charged by Council; being the revised 621 – ‘Stopped contrary to a no parking sign’. This is a new code/offence not previously covered in Schedule 6. All other charges / offences have been in place since the 2006 resolution and been charged at 0.5 penalty ever since.

7. A resolution is required to fix the penalty for 621 – Stopped contrary to a no parking sign; at 0.5 penalty units. As the total Schedule 6 table has been updated in the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019, it is prudent to re-include all the parking offences in that Schedule in the resolution.

8. If Council does not resolve to maintain 0.5 penalty unit for the above offences then they will revert back to 0.2 penalty unit.

External Consultation

9. Surrounding Councils, such as City of Melbourne, City of Stonnington and City of Port Phillip, all have 0.5 penalty unit set for these offences.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

10. Not applicable.

Financial Implications

11. If Council was to revert the penalty unit amount to 0.2 penalty unit for these offences instead of maintaining the penalty amount at 0.5., Council could see a potential reduction in income received of more than 4 million dollars per annum..

12. The current value of one penalty unit is $165.00; the value of 0.2 penalty unit is $33.00; and the value of 0.5 penalty unit is $83.00.

13. Given the importance of penalties in discouraging illegal parking, a decreased penalty may reduce the deterrence of poor parking behaviour.

Economic Implications

14. It is recommended that the minimum penalty amount of 0.5 penalty unit be maintained to ensure Council's ability to fund a range of programs.

Sustainability Implications

15. A reduction in the penalty amount for parking infringements could increase non-compliance with the parking regulations which would impact traffic congestion, emissions and fuel consumption.

Social Implications

16. A reduction in the penalty amount for parking offences could increase the level of non-compliance and affect both community amenity in local streets and public safety.

Human Rights Implications

17. Not applicable.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

18. Not applicable.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

19. A reduction in parking revenue will impact the Council's Strategic Resource Plan, in particular the long term management of financial resources and funding for various strategies and programs.

Legal Implications

20. Section 87(4) of the Road Safety Act 1986 permits a municipal council, by resolution, to fix a penalty for a parking infringement in contravention of a regulation under this Act at not more than 0.5 penalty unit and not more than the penalty prescribed by the regulations.

Options

21. Council fix the penalty amount of 0.5 penalty unit for parking infringements cited in Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019.

22. Council does not the fix the penalty unit and it becomes 0.2 penalty unit for parking infringements cited in Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That:

   (a) Council resolves to fix the penalty amount at 0.5 penalty unit for all parking infringements cited in Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019 with a current prescribed Infringement penalty amount of 0.2 penalty unit.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Grant Kelly**
TITLE: **Coordinator Parking Services**
TEL: **9205 5250**

Attachments
There are no attachments for this report.

11.2 Q1 2019 Forecast and Q1 Budget Review

Trim Record Number: D19/178432
Responsible Officer: Director Corporate, Business and Finance

Purpose

1. For Council to note the Q1 Forecast position, and for Council to consider funding the following projects specifically referred to the Q1 Forecast and Budget review:
   (a) Dancehouse air-conditioning upgrade;
   (b) Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan Implementation; and
   (c) Holtom Street East car parking removal and replacement with planting.

Background

2. At its meeting on 25 June 2019, Council resolved to review its financial position after the first quarterly finance report.
3. Officers have also reviewed the forecast position, as at 30 September 2019.

2019/20 Full Year Forecast

4. As at 30 September 2019, from a forecast year-end position, Council is anticipating a full year surplus result of $12.2m, favourable to Budget by $1.47m. This result is due to:
   (a) Expected favourable variances to budget in corporate costs of $2.1m, most notably in legal costs $750k and consultancy costs $500k. These favourable variances however also incorporate the assumption of Council achieving a budgeted efficiency dividend of $500k, which is a key assumption built into the 2019-20 budget; and
   (b) Expected favourable variance to budget in Open Space Contributions of $463k. These funds are restricted to be spent on eligible open space projects and therefore do not represent available cash.
5. These favourable outcomes are offset by:
   (a) Higher than budgeted doubtful debts expense of $1.0m, directly related to an adjustment in the rate used to provide for doubtful debts.
6. It is important to note that of the $1.47m favourable forecast variance to budget identified, $699k of this is required to fund carry forward operating grant expenditure commitments and $463k is restricted to be spent on eligible open space projects, and is therefore not available to be spent.
7. Council's cash position is anticipated to exceed budget, however the majority of the funds over budget are to fund carry forward operating grant expenditure commitments or are restricted to be spent on eligible open space projects.
8. Based on the forecast financial position, Council does potentially have an additional $305k to make available to further projects, including those specifically referred to this review.

External Consultation

9. External consultation was not required.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

10. Internal consultation with the responsible officers for these projects has occurred.

Financial Implications

11. The financial implications will be for Council to utilise its modest forecast above budget surplus of $305k to fund a selection of the projects referred to the Q1 forecast review. This then reduces the amount of cash available going in to the 2020/21 budget year by the same amount.

Economic Implications

12. There are no economic implications.

Sustainability Implications

13. There are no sustainability implications.

Social Implications

14. There are no social implications.

Human Rights Implications

15. There are no Human Rights implications.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

16. Communications with CALD Communities was not required.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

17. There are no Council Plan, Strategy, or Policy implications.

Legal Implications

18. There are no legal implications.

Projects Referred to Q1 Budget Review

Dancehouse Air-Conditioning Upgrade

19. The main theatre at Carlton Hall does not have permanently installed air-conditioning, meaning that conditions for patrons, performers and staff may be oppressive and in extreme cases, hazardous during dance performances or training during warmer months.

20. Council installed a relatively low-cost temporary air-conditioning solution to the main theatre to support the Dance Massive program hosted by Dancehouse in March 2019, but this proved to be of limited effect and too noisy for the theatre environment.

21. $70k was put towards further air-conditioning works at the adoption of Council's 2018/2019 budget and the project was further referred to this quarterly review.

22. Officers from Council's Building Projects Unit have further engaged with Dancehouse management, a HVAC engineer, an acoustic engineer, a structural engineer and three air-conditioning suppliers to review and firm-up a scope of works and budget for air-conditioning of the Carlton Hall main theatre. Council's Sustainable Energy Officer has also provided valuable input.

23. The total budget now sought for the project is $154k, being an additional $84k above the allocation held by Council in its budget resolution of 25 June 2019. Officers now recommend the allocation of an additional $84k funding to allow this project to be delivered in the 2019/20 budget year.

24. Dancehouse have indicated a desire to have a completed installation of air-conditioning to the main theatre before performances scheduled in February 2020.

25. This is an extremely short duration to deliver this project, noting the typical Christmas/New Year period closures of suppliers and contractors. Officers have commenced preparations for the delivery of this project and will use best endeavours to achieve this objective if possible, although there is some risk this timeframe may not be able to be achieved.

Bridge Road Streetscape Masterplan Implementation

26. At Budget adoption. Council was advised that $200k for delivery of certain Bridge Road precinct treatments were unable to be delivered in 2019/2020, with the work this financial year focused on design. This project was referred to this quarterly review. It is Officers advice that the $200k for implementation is still most unlikely to be required in 2019/2020, albeit design works are progressing well. Officers will revisit this project as part of the regular mid-year budget review in February and will advise Council if there is any potential requirement or scope for further funds in this financial year.

Holtom Street East car parking removal

27. The project is to convert the existing centre road parking on Holtom Street East to a planted centre median.

28. The required works are planned to be delivered by a City Works in-house crew utilising existing resources and allocated budget amounts which will be sufficient to complete the works.

29. No additional funds or resources are required from the Q1 forecast process to complete this work.

30. It should be noted that parking fine revenue from this area, while not predictable, was $4,200 in 2018/2019.

On-Line Planning Applications

31. Council have been advised of recent and proposed efforts to transform our Planning application and approval process, from a predominantly paper based and physical process towards a more digital and on-line method.

32. Officers are working on this project as a high priority; however to provide further impetus, speed and expertise to the work, Council is requested to allocate $200k towards this project now as part of this quarterly budget review.

33. These funds will be used for additional consulting, project, I.T. or similar resources to help us more quickly determine best practice methods, process options and potential Infrastructure and IT providers and products.

Options

34. Council has the following options:

    (a) Accepting the officer's recommendation; or

    (b) Holding all of the forecast surplus for carry over into the 2020/21 Budget; or

    (c) Changing the officer's recommendation and choosing different projects.

Conclusion

35. Council has a small amount of forecast above budget surplus available; $305k, to potentially allocate to projects referred to the Q1 forecast review.

36. Officers have confirmed based on forecast expectations that sufficient funding is available to allocate this $305k in the 2019/20 financial year.

37. The recommendation below is based on deliverability of projects in the remainder of the 2019/20 financial year.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council, having noted the Q1 Forecast Review:
   (a) allocate the $305k available surplus cash identified from the Q1 forecast review to the following:
      (i) $84k to the Air-conditioning of Carlton Hall (leased to Dancehouse);
      (ii) $200k to more rapidly progress on-line and Digital planning application process; and
      (iii) $21k to be retained within budget.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Mark Montague**
TITLE: **Deputy Chief Financial Officer**
TEL: **9205 5503**

Attachments
1⇩ Q1 2019 Forecast and Budget Review

Attachment 1 - Q1 2019 Forecast and Budget Review

YARRA CITY COUNCIL
FINANCIAL REPORT
1 July 2019 to 30 September 2019
Income Statement by Revenue and Expenditure with Variance Commentary

Income Statement	Full Year Adopted Budget	Full year Adjusted Budget	YTD Adjusted Budget	YTD Actuals	YTD Variance Fav/(Unfav)	YTD Variance Fav/(Unfav)	Full year forecast	Variance to Full Year Adjusted Budget Fav/(Unfav)	Forecast variance Fav/(Unfav)
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	%	$'000	$'000	%
Revenue from ordinary activities									
Rates and charges	112,465	112,465	110,314	110,237	(77)	-0.1%	112,465	-	0.0%
Statutory fees and fines	32,935	32,935	9,117	9,115	(2)	0.0%	32,935	-	0.0%
User Fees	32,330	32,330	8,330	8,106	(224)	-2.7%	32,330	-	0.0%
Reimbursements	1,055	1,055	179	340	161	89.9%	1,055	-	0.0%
Grants - Operating	12,542	12,587	2,885	4,521	1,636	56.7%	12,587	-	0.0%
Grants - Capital	2,433	2,433	608	836	228	37.5%	2,433	-	0.0%
Contributions - OSR	4,300	4,300	1,075	1,538	463	43.1%	4,763	463	10.8%
Contributions - Other monetary	397	397	99	204	105	106.1%	397	-	0.0%
Net gain/(loss) on disposal	180	180	45	15	(30)	-66.7%	180	-	0.0%
Other Income	2,036	2,036	509	546	37	7.2%	2,036	-	0.0%
Total Revenue	**200,671**	**200,716**	**133,161**	**135,458**	**2,297**	**1.7%**	**201,179**	**463**	**0.2%**
Expenses from ordinary activities									
Employee Costs	87,115	87,443	20,668	20,527	141	0.7%	87,729	(286)	-0.3%
Materials and services	73,303	73,719	17,630	16,257	1,373	7.8%	71,429	2,290	3.1%
Bad and doubtful debts	4,000	4,000	1,199	1,377	(178)	-14.8%	5,000	(1,000)	-25.0%
Depreciation & Amortisation	22,800	22,800	5,700	5,737	(37)	-0.6%	22,800	-	0.0%
Borrowing costs	2,035	2,035	509	488	21	4.1%	2,035	-	0.0%
Total Expenses	**189,253**	**189,997**	**45,706**	**44,386**	**1,320**	**2.9%**	**188,993**	**1,004**	**0.5%**
Net Result	**11,418**	**10,719**	**87,455**	**91,072**	**3,617**	**4.1%**	**12,186**	**1,467**	**13.7%**

Legend:

> (50,000) and/or (5%)	Unfavourable variance
> = 50,000 and/or 5%	Favourable variance
No highlight indicates that the item is within tolerance	

Operating Grant carry forward funding	(699)
Open space project funding	(463)
Adjusted forecast (net of restricted funds):	11,024
Adjusted budget:	10,719
Available cash:	**305**

11.3 2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Executive Summary

Purpose

To present the 2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report for the September period to Councillors for noting.

Key Issues

The 2019/20 Annual Plan has 43 Actions.

Annual targets set a requirement for 75% of Annual Plan actions to be Complete or On Track (>90%) by 30 June each year.

Of the 43 Actions in the Annual Plan, 35 were scheduled to have commenced by September, an additional 3 Actions commenced earlier than scheduled, totalling 38 Actions in progress as at 30 September. Council achieved a result of 84% or 32 of 38 Actions in progress assessed as On Track or Complete.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications.

PROPOSAL

That Council note the 2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report September 2019.

11.3 2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

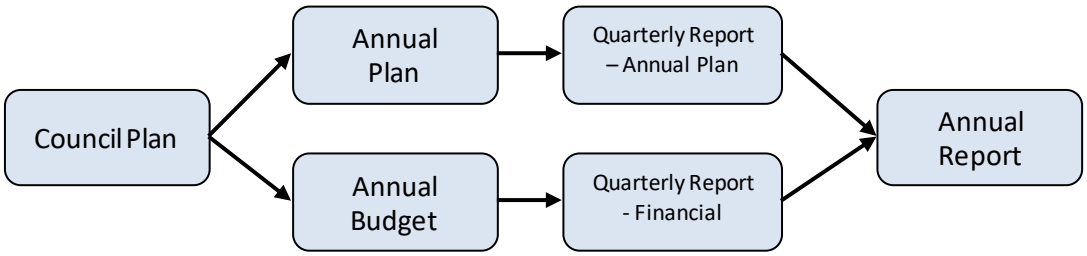
Trim Record Number: D19/185474
Responsible Officer: Director Corporate, Business and Finance

Purpose

1. To present the 2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report for the September period to Councillors for noting.

Background

2. This year, 2019/20, represents the third year of the 4-year *Council Plan 2017-21*, adopted by Council on 1 August 2017.
3. The Annual Plan and Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Reports are two of Council's key accountability documents to the community.



4. The 2019/20 Annual Plan was endorsed by Council on 25 June 2019 and details the organisation's annual response to Initiatives contained in the 4-year Council Plan.
5. Council Plan Initiatives are significant projects and activities that are proposed to be worked on over the term of the Council Plan.
6. The Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report notes the year-to-date progress of the Annual Plan Actions and Milestones providing a performance rating and supporting commentary.
7. The 2019/20 Annual Plan contains 43 Actions spread across the Council Plan's Strategic Objectives. It is achievable, delivers on Council's priorities and reflects the organisation's focus on delivering the Council Plan's Initiatives in 2019/20.

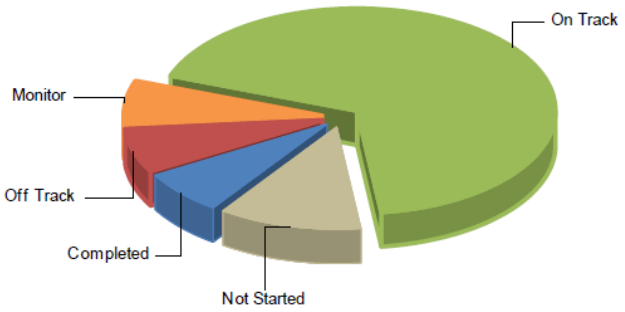
Strategic Objective	Number of Actions 2019/20 Annual Plan
A healthy Yarra: a place where Community health, safety and wellbeing are a focus in everything we do	6
An inclusive Yarra: a place where Inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated	4
A sustainable Yarra: a place where Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances its natural environment	9
A liveable Yarra: a place where Development and growth are managed to maintain and enhance the character and heritage of the city	11
A prosperous Yarra: a place where Local businesses prosper and creative and knowledge industries thrive	4

Strategic Objective	Number of Actions 2019/20 Annual Plan
A connected Yarra: a place where Connectivity and travel options are environmentally sustainable, integrated and well-designed	6
A leading Yarra: a place where Transparency, performance and community participation drive the way we operate	3
Total	**43**

8. There are 49 Strategies in the *Council Plan 2017-21,* with 99 associated Initiatives. Not all of these have a corresponding Action in the 2019/20 Annual Plan. The Council Plan is a four-year document and Initiatives will commence across a range of years. A number of Initiatives are predominantly operational in nature and will be reported on six monthly with the December and June reports.
9. To ensure the integrity and transparency of the Annual Plan, which is endorsed by Council, Actions including their descriptions and milestones can only be changed by resolution of Council.
10. Officers or Councillors may propose changes to the Annual Plan.

    2019/20 Annual Plan Progress Report – September 2019, Attachment 1
11. The progress of an Action is measured by the status of its individual milestones which are weighted to represent the relative time and effort they contribute to achievement of the overall Action.
12. The following thresholds are used to determine the status of an Action:
    (a) On track ≥ 90%
    (b) Monitor 75-89%
    (c) Off track < 75%

13. Annual Plan Action progress summary as at 30 September 2019:



Strategic Objective	No. of Actions Reported	Complete	On track (>=90%)	Monitor (75-90%)	Off track (<75%)	Not Started
A healthy Yarra	6	0	4	2	0	0
An inclusive Yarra	4	1	1	0	1	1
A sustainable Yarra	9	0	5	0	1	3
A liveable Yarra	11	1	8	0	1	1
A prosperous Yarra	4	0	4	0	0	0
A connected Yarra	6	1	4	1	0	0
A leading Yarra	3	0	3	0	0	0
	43 (100%)	3 (6.98%)	29 (67.44%)	3 (6.98%)	3 (6.98%)	5 (11.63%)

14. The 2019/20 Annual Plan has 43 Actions scheduled to be completed this year.

15. Annual targets set a requirement for 75% of Annual Plan Actions to be Complete or On Track (>90%) by 30 June each year.

16. Of the 43 Actions in the Annual Plan, 35 were scheduled to have commenced by September, an additional 3 Actions commenced earlier than scheduled, totalling 38 Actions in progress as at 30 September. Council achieved a result of 84% or 32 of 38 Actions in progress assessed as On Track or Complete.

17. The following Actions are recorded as Monitor or Off Track at the end of September. These Actions have experienced delays to one or more of their milestones. More detail is contained in the attached report.

    Monitor

    1.01 Yarra Open Space Strategy
    1.04 Provision of boat storage and clubhouse facility design - Panther Pavilion
    6.02 Low speed traffic environments

    Off track

    2.02 Active and Healthy Ageing
    3.04 Review and update Council's Urban Agriculture guidelines
    4.06 Structure planning for Major Activity Centres in Yarra

External Consultation

18. Significant community engagement and consultation was undertaken during the development of the *Council Plan 2017-21*. The 2019/20 Annual Plan reflects the community priorities identified during this process, included in the *Council Plan 2017-21* initiatives.

19. Members of the community will have the opportunity to comment on the progress report when it is presented to Council on 12 November 2019.

20. Projects contained in the 2019/20 Annual Plan are subject to external consultation and engagement on a case-by-case basis.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

21. Managers and Directors were consulted during development of the 2019/20 Annual Plan Actions, and are responsible for providing quarterly updates on their progress against delivery of these Actions.

Financial Implications

22. Actions in the 2019/20 Annual Plan were resourced within the 2019/20 Budget.

Economic Implications

23. The *Council Plan 2017-21* includes the Strategic Objective *A prosperous Yarra: a place where Local businesses prosper and creative and knowledge industries thrive*. The 2019/20 Annual Plan includes 4 actions that respond to initiatives under this Strategic Objective.

Sustainability Implications

24. The *Council Plan 2017-21* includes the Strategic Objective *A sustainable Yarra: a place where Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances it natural environment*. The 2019/20 Annual Plan includes 9 actions that respond to initiatives under this Strategic Objective.

Social Implications

25. The *Council Plan 2017-21* includes the Strategic Objective *A healthy Yarra: a place Community health, safety and wellbeing are a focus in everything we do*. The 2019/20 Annual Plan includes 6 actions that respond to initiatives under this Strategic Objective.

Human Rights Implications

26. The *Council Plan 2017-21* includes the Strategic Objective *An inclusive Yarra: a place where inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated*. The 2019/20 Annual Plan includes 4 actions that respond to initiatives under this Strategic Objective.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

27. CALD groups were specifically targeted as part of the engagement plan for the *Council Plan 2017-21* and were represented in a group workshop which included Council's advisory groups.

28. Translation service assistance is available via Council's website for members of the CALD community and this service extended to the Council Plan engagement process.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

29. The 2019/20 Annual Plan represents Year 3 of the *Council Plan 2017-21* adopted on 1 August 2017.

Legal Implications

30. There are no legal implications.

Other Issues

31. There are no other issues.

Options

32. The report does not include any options.

Conclusion

33. The 2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report September 2019 is presented to Council for noting.

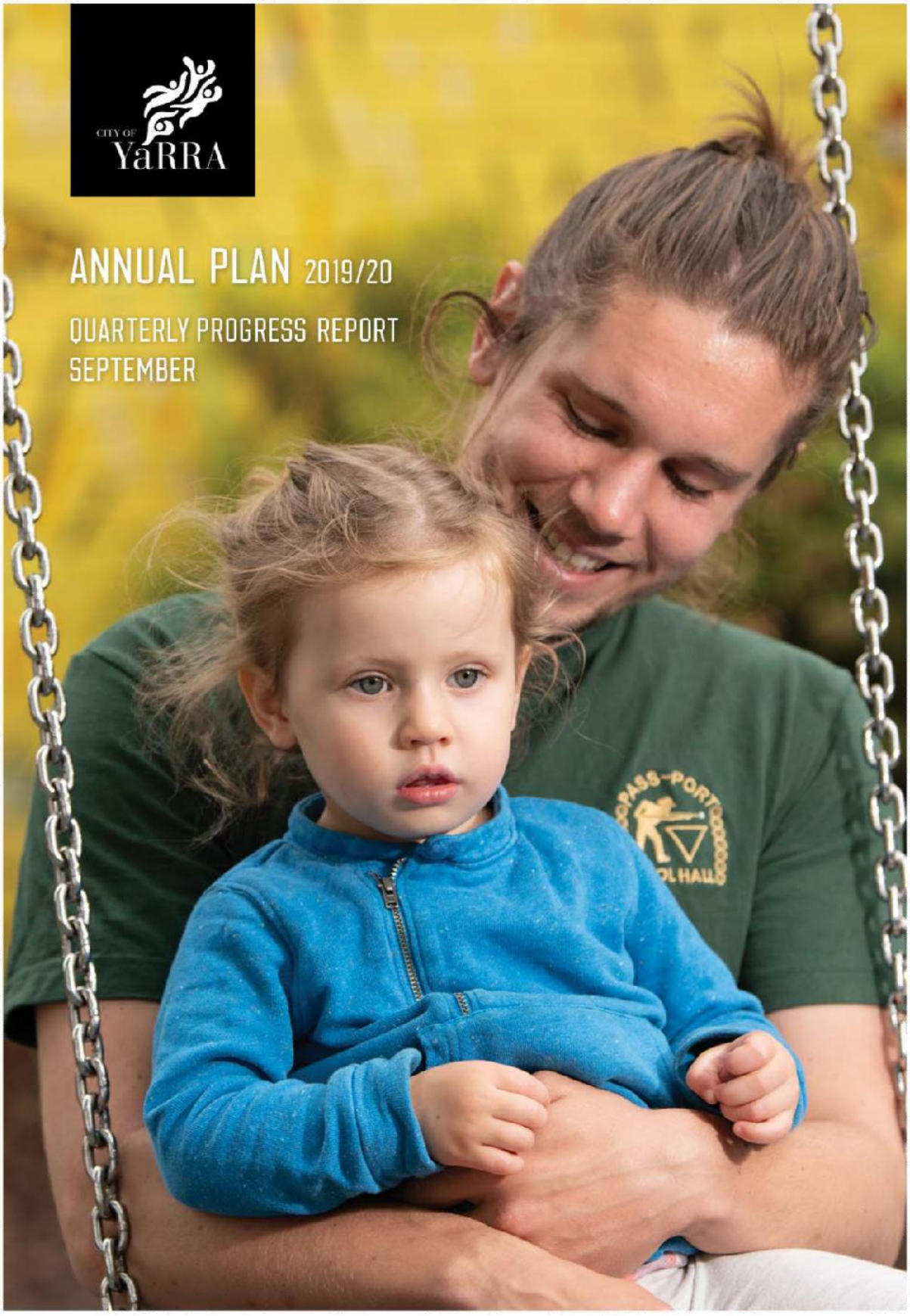
RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council note the end of September result as reported in the 2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Shane Looney**
TITLE: **Corporate Planner**
TEL: **9205 5397**

Attachments
1⇩ 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September



Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Introduction

The Yarra City Council adopted its Council Plan 2017 – 21 on 1 August 2017. The Council Plan 2017 – 21 sets out the medium-term direction of Council and the outcomes sought by Councillors for their term. For the first time, the Council Plan incorporates the Health and Wellbeing Plan. This financial year, 2019/20 is Year three of the Council Plan 2017 – 21.

Under the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act), each council is required to produce a four-year Council Plan by 30 June in the year following a general election. The Plan must include Strategic Objectives, Strategies, Strategic Indicators and a Strategic Resource Plan.

Council has identified a number of initiatives under each Strategic Objective which are significant projects and activities that are proposed to be worked on over the term of the Council Plan, subject to approval through the annual budget process.

Council produces an Annual Plan alongside each year's Budget , setting out specific projects and activities that Council will undertake towards achieving the Strategic Objectives. This will include priority projects, capital works projects, actions in response to initiatives in the Council Plan and other Council strategies and plans as well as service reviews and improvements.

The Council Plan 2017 – 21 has seven Strategic Objectives which relate to a different aspect of service delivery :

A healthy Yarra: Community health, safety and wellbeing are a focus in everything we do. Council plays a key role in contributing to our community's health and wellbeing . From delivering maternal and child health services to ensuring access to open space, enforcing noise regulations to supporting community and cultural initiatives, community health, safety and wellbeing is central to everything we do.

An inclusive Yarra: Inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated. Identity was a passionate and recurring theme throughout community consultation for the Council Plan. Our community values its diversity. Creating a safe place where people of all ages, genders, sexualities, abilities, cultures and backgrounds feel welcome and connected is a priority for Council.

A sustainable Yarra: Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances its natural environment. As Victoria's first carbon-neutral council, we are proud of our commitment to sustainability. Protecting our natural environment and supporting our community to reduce its environmental footprint will continue to be a priority for Council.

A liveable Yarra: Development and growth are managed to maintain and enhance the character and heritage of the city. With demand for inner city housing increasing, Council is mindful of the importance of balancing the needs of new and existing residents, and ensuring that development does not encroach on the amenity or heritage of our city.

A prosperous Yarra: Local businesses prosper and creative and knowledge industries thrive. Yarra is a great place to do business and to work. Supporting local businesses and creative industries not only contributes to Yarra's economy , but also increases local employment opportunities, enhances street life and fosters community connectedness.

A connected Yarra: Connectivity and travel options are environmentally sustainable, integrated and well-designed. Council is committed to creating a city that is accessible to all irrespective of levels of personal mobility, to support a fulfilling life without the need for a car.

A leading Yarra: Transparency, performance and community participation drive the way we operate. Council is committed to change through an energised, cohesive team of professionals, recognised for our leadership, innovation and service.

In response to its Strategic Objectives, Council has committed to 43 projects and activities from a broad cross-section of services in the 2019/20 Annual Plan.

Progress of these projects and actions will be reported in the 2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Reports.
Further information can be found in the published version of the Council Plan 2017 – 21 on the City of Yarra's website (https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/about-us/council-information/council-plan).

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

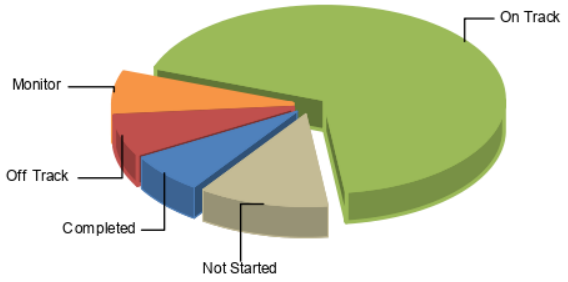
Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Quarter Summary

Council has committed to 43 actions across a range of services. Any variations to the Annual Plan are made openly and transparently in the context of priorities that arise over the course of the year.

The status of actions is classified based on the percentage of targets achieved as assessed by the responsible officer (forecast milestones compared to actual work completed).



Strategic Objective	No. of Actions Reported	Complete	On track (>=90%)	Monitor (75-90%)	Off track (<75%)	Not Started
A healthy Yarra	6	0	4	2	0	0
An inclusive Yarra	4	1	1	0	1	1
A sustainable Yarra	9	0	5	0	1	3
A liveable Yarra	11	1	8	0	1	1
A prosperous Yarra	4	0	4	0	0	0
A connected Yarra	6	1	4	1	0	0
A leading Yarra	3	0	3	0	0	0
	43 (100%)	3 (6.98%)	29 (67.44%)	3 (6.98%)	3 (6.98%)	5 (11.63%)

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

1 . A healthy Yarra

a place where…Community health, safety and wellbeing are a focus in everything we do

Council plays a key role in contributing to our community's health and wellbeing . From delivering maternal and child health services to ensuring access to open space, enforcing noise regulations to supporting community and cultural initiatives, community health, safety and wellbeing is central to everything we do.

Strategies

Council's work to achieve this Strategic Objective includes the following strategies :

1.1 Maintain and enhance Yarra's open space network to meet the diverse range of community uses
1.2 Promote a community that is inclusive, resilient, connected and enjoys strong mental and physical health and wellbeing
1.3 Provide health promoting environments that encourage healthy eating and active living
1.4 Assist to reduce the harms from alcohol and drugs on individuals and the community in partnership with State Agencies and key service providers
1.5 Promote environments that support safe and respectful sexual practices, reproductive choices and gender equity
1.6 Promote a gender equitable, safe and respectful community
1.7 Promote an effective and compassionate approach to rough sleeping and advocate for affordable , appropriate housing
1.8 Provide opportunities for people to be involved in and connect with their community

The following actions are being undertaken in 2019/20 to work toward achieving Council's strategic objective of A healthy Yarra.

Action Progress Summary

- At least 90% of action target achieved
- Between 75 and 90% of action target achieved
- Less than 75% of action target achieved
- Not Started
- Completed

Target
% Complete

Action	Start Date / End Date		Budget (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	% variance
1.01 Yarra Open Space Strategy	01/07/19 30/06/20	0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%	$0	$0	0%
1.02 National Aged and Disability Care Reforms	01/07/19 30/06/20	0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%	$0	$0	0%
1.03 Yarra 0 to 25 Plan	01/07/19 30/06/20	0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%	$0	$0	0%
1.04 Provision of boat storage and clubhouse facility design - Panther Pavilion	01/07/19 30/06/20	0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%	$0	$0	0%
1.05 Ryan's Reserve Netball/Tennis Court and Pavilion	01/07/19 30/06/20	0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%	$0	$0	0%
1.06 Malcolm Graham Pavilion - Kevin Bartlett Reserve	01/07/19 30/06/20	0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%	$0	$0	0%

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

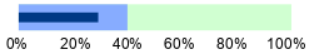
2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

1.01 Yarra Open Space Strategy

Council Plan initiatives:
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
Prepare a Planning Scheme Amendment to introduce the open space strategy into the Yarra Planning Scheme and increase the rate of contribution towards open space (Strategic Objective 4: A liveable Yarra)

The Yarra Open Space Strategy guides the future provision, planning, design and management of public open space in Yarra. The new Open Space Strategy is a renewed direction for the provision and enhancement of the open space network, including changes in community needs since the last strategy was developed. The strategy aims to achieve a cohesive, linked and well managed network of open space to meet the full range of residents' needs.

Following adoption of the new Open Space Strategy, Council will prepare a Planning Scheme amendment seeking to include open space design overlay controls in the Yarra Planning Scheme.



Branch *City Strategy*

Quarterly Milestones

September	Brief Councillors on consultant's work and funding aspects
	Finalise draft Open Space Strategy technical report
	Refine analysis regarding priorities, locations and acquisition considerations
December	Present draft Open Space Strategy to Council for endorsement for public exhibition
March	Consider submissions and finalise Strategy
	Present Open Space Strategy to Council for adoption
June	Present report to Council seeking authorisation from the State Government for the amendment to be placed on public exhibition Formulate Planning Scheme amendment regarding open space contribution percentage

Quarterly Progress Comments

The Draft Technical Report has been completed for the purpose of consultation, final adjustments to the report will occur after consultation has been completed.

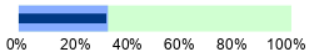
Councillors were briefed on the consultant's progress and funding aspects, a second briefing is scheduled for October.

The Draft Open Space Strategy is expected to go to Council in December.

1.02 National Aged and Disability Care Reforms

Council Plan Initiative:
Continue to implement the National Aged and Disability Care reforms and develop new strategic directions for support of older people and people with disability

The Federal Government is making major changes to the aged and disability care service system and this requires Council to determine its role and implement changes already announced.



Branch *Aged and Disability Services*

Quarterly Milestones

September	Make a submission to the National Disability Information, Linkages and Capacity Building – Economic and Community Participation grant program to support locally based community building initiatives
December	Continue to advocate directly and through the Municipal Association of Victoria to achieve the best outcomes for older people and people with disability from the national reform
March	Work with local partner agencies to maintain CHSP funding that support at risk groups to access basic support services Support residents currently within the Linkages service to transition to Home Care Packages by 31 March 2020, pending the Federal Government's final decision

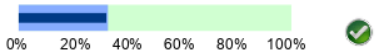
Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

	Subject to Federal Government decisions on the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP), determine Council's position on future delivery of the program and individual services
June	Support the transition of the Regional Assessment Service to the new model adopted by the Federal Government by 1 July 2020, pending the Federal Government's final decision
Quarterly Progress Comments	Officers attended 2 MAV workshops regarding the Information Linkages and Capacity (ILC) funding, with an analysis undertaken regarding alignment to the Access and Inclusion Strategy. The ILC funding does not align, and is not a replacement Metro Access funding program, no application has therefore been submitted.

1.03 Yarra 0 to 25 Plan

Council Plan initiative:
Continue to provide a range services and work collaboratively with external groups to improve the health and wellbeing of the Yarra community

Yarra's 0 to 25 Plan takes an integrated life-stage approach to guide priorities and actions relating to children, young people and their families. Council will work with external groups to improve the delivery of coordinated, responsive and evidence-based services.



Branch *Family, Youth and Children's Services*

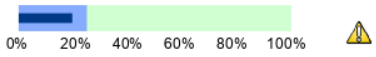
Quarterly Milestones

September	Coordinate delivery and promotion of Council programs and activities for children and young people across school holidays to provide better services
December	Review data from school survey of children and young people and facilitate with partners the Communities that Care Action Plan for 2020/21
March	Investigate areas of identified need in the Australian Early Development Census 2018 and other relevant data to improve service responsiveness
Quarterly Progress Comments	Family Youth and Children's Services staff met with representatives from Leisure, Libraries, Arts and Culture and Sport and Recreation and other external providers to collate and develop a collaborative school holiday activities program for children and young people during September/October. Providers included The Drum youth services, Brotherhood of St Laurence and Collingwood Neighbourhood House. A calendar of activities and snapshot postcard, "School holidays in Yarra", were designed in partnership with Communications, and promoted in the community and through Council's website and social media accounts. (https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/services/young-people/school-holiday-program) Children's Services are supporting cross council collaborations to improve coordination of activities for primary school age children (5 to 12 years) during school holidays. with further collaborations planned for 2020 summer holidays.

1.04 Provision of boat storage and clubhouse facility design - Panther Pavilion

Panther Pavilion was identified as one of the highest priorities for investment in a recent report - Status of Council owned Sporting Facilities and Pavilion report. A design for the pavilion will guide future investment and enable the facility to better meet community needs now and into the future.

The Panther Pavilion currently stores around 227 boats within it and the Ivanhoe Northcote Canoe Club (INCC) wish to create a dedicated storage facility to enable the removal of boats from the club house. Removing the 227 boats from the Pavilion will be an important first step in enabling greater use and functionality of the Pavilion and enable design work to take place.



Branch *Recreation and Leisure Services*

Quarterly Milestones

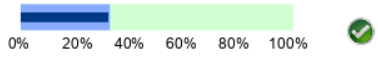
September	Commence boat storage construction
December	Complete boat storage construction
March	Commence pavilion design

June Complete pavilion design

Quarterly Progress Comments Design work for the boat storage facility complete and submitted for Planning approval. Subject to Planning approval, project is on track for delivery in 2019/20.

1.05 Ryan's Reserve Netball/Tennis Court and Pavilion

Following a community campaign, the State Government reversed a decision to rezone Ryan's Reserve and has provided funding for a major upgrade of the netball courts and old pavilion. The redevelopment will include an upgrade of the pavilion to ESD (Environmentally Sustainable Design) and DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) requirements, resurfacing four netball courts, increasing run-off outside courts to meet competition standards, replacement of sports lights and alterations to boundaries and open space.



Branch *Recreation and Leisure Services*

Quarterly Milestones

September Apply for Planning Permit for pavilion and court works
December Complete court refurbishment works
June Commence pavilion refurbishment works

Quarterly Progress Comments Stage 1 Netball Court Reconstruction 90% Complete
- All four courts have been poured.
- Acrylic surface application as per Netball Vic specification underway.
- Sports lights are now installed.

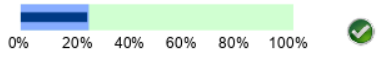
1.06 Malcolm Graham Pavilion - Kevin Bartlett Reserve

State Government funding has been provided to refurbish Malcolm Graham Pavilion in Kevin Bartlett Reserve. The refurbishment and extension allow local clubs to grow, provide them greater flexibility and capacity to train, and boost their ability to host competitions.

The works will take place in two stages:

Stage 1 – Extension with two additional change rooms, storage areas, disability change and toilet facilities, first aid room and covered spectator viewing area

Stage 2 – Refurbish Pavilion that meets functional, DDA and environmental sustainability requirements



Branch *Building and Asset Management*

Quarterly Milestones

September Commence extension constructions works
December Complete extension construction works
March Commence refurbishment works for DDA and sustainability requirements
June Complete refurbishment works for DDA and sustainability requirements

Quarterly Progress Comments Construction Works on the extension have commenced

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Highlights and Achievements

Branch ***Family, Youth and Children's Services***

Unit ***Family Services***

The Family Services team have provided a wide range of supports and services to Yarra families between July and September. This includes the provision of over 250 home visits to our parents within the first few days after the birth of their child and over 2,000 Key Age and Stage visits for children under school age. A highlight for the period has been the commencement of a pilot specialist breastfeeding service, aimed at promoting breastfeeding and providing specialist support for women experiencing difficulties feeding.

The playgroup service have commenced the delivery of the evidenced based Smalltalk program which includes a home-visiting for families which promotes the early home learning environment for children.

Branch ***Family, Youth and Children's Services***

Unit ***Service Planning and Development***

Completion of an Evaluation of the Casual Care Trial that included analysis of utilisation and consultative data from 310 informants (children, parents / guardians, leisure centre members and the broader Yarra community).

Project and community consultation planning and external grant application to progress project in accordance with Council resolution of in principle support for Chas Farquhar Complex into an integrated community hub offering complementary services for children and families.

Branch ***Family, Youth and Children's Services***

Unit ***Youth and Middle Years***

- Over 50 people attended a Yarra CTC event at Bargoonga Nganjin in July, celebrating work to date on Strengthening Family Relationships in Yarra, and launching two videos.
- 17 young people graduated the Young Entrepreneurs in the North Program, culminating in a pitch night event in Brunswick
- Real Industry Job Interviews (RIJI) event held at Fitzroy Town Hall. Facilitated by INLLEN as part of Jobs for Youth campaign, over 200 students participated from local high schools. Two YYS staff, and other staff from across Council participated as volunteer 'mentors' on the day.
- Young Eritreans Melbourne event at Youth Centre with 150 young people, plus community elders. Event was managed by YYS staff member, and used as pilot activity for project exploring the Youth Centre as a venue for young people and youth-led organisations to hire.
- Richmond Youth Space – consultation with young people (co-facilitated by the drum & DHHS) took place on 10 September 2019. Input from young people will inform architect's plans.
- Re-development of Yarra Youth Advisory Committee. Workshop held with young people (co-facilitated by YYS & Comm's) in September. Input will inform Council Briefing Report scheduled for October.

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

2 . An inclusive Yarra

a place where…Inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated

Identity was a passionate and recurring theme throughout community consultation for the Council Plan. Our community values its diversity. Creating a safe place where people of all ages, genders, sexualities, abilities, cultures and backgrounds feel welcome and connected is a priority for Council.

Strategies

Council's work to achieve this Strategic Objective will include the following strategies :

2.1 Build resilience by providing opportunities and places for people to meet, be involved in and connect with their community
2.2 Remain a highly inclusive Municipality, proactive in advancing and advocating for the rights and interests of specific groups in the community and community issues
2.3 Continue to be a local government leader and innovator in acknowledging and celebrating Aboriginal history and culture in partnership with Traditional Owners
2.4 Acknowledge and celebrate our diversity and people from all cultural backgrounds
2.5 Support community initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion

The following actions are being undertaken in 2019/20 to work toward achieving Council's strategic objective of An inclusive Yarra.

Action Progress Summary

- At least 90% of action target achieved
- Between 75 and 90% of action target achieved
- Less than 75% of action target achieved
- Not Started
- Completed

Target
% Complete

Action	Start Date / End Date	Budget (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	% variance
2.01 Deliver the Volunteer Strategy and implementation plan	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
2.02 Active and Healthy Ageing	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
2.03 Social Justice Charter	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
2.04 LGBTIQ Strategy	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

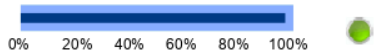
Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

2.01 Deliver the Volunteer Strategy and implementation plan

Council Plan initiative:
Develop and adopt a Volunteer Strategy

Most community organisations in Yarra rely on volunteers and Council can support these groups in promoting their volunteer opportunities. A Volunteer Strategy and implementation plan will provide clear direction for Council in how it supports volunteering in Yarra.



Branch *People, Culture and Community*

Quarterly Milestones

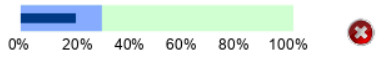
September Present draft Volunteer Strategy and implementation plan to Council for adoption

Quarterly Progress Comments Yarra's Volunteer Strategy 2019-2023 and Year One Action Plan was formally adopted at Council in September.

2.02 Active and Healthy Ageing

Council Plan Initiative:
Work with the community and other levels of government and advocate to challenge discrimination , and address disadvantage, whether based on income, age, gender, sexuality, cultural background, religion or abilities

The Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy was developed with the support of Council's Active Ageing Advisory Group (AAAG). In the midst of the national aged care reforms, it provides an opportunity to consider strategic directions to ensure our 50+ residents remain engaged, active and independent.



Branch *Aged and Disability Services*

Quarterly Milestones

September Implement the Good Access is Good Business Project
Pilot new social support group model which is interest based, and combines centre and community based activities to better engage diverse groups

December Pilot age friendly approach to develop new initiatives in identified neighbourhoods that are vulnerable (SEIFA index)
Complete community consultation on opportunities for improvement and development of a Hub at the Collingwood Seniors Centre

March Evaluate new social support group model

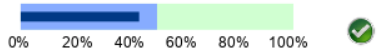
Quarterly Progress Comments The Good Access is Good Business activity will occur in the January 2020 to 30 June 2020 period. This change has occurred due to the cessation of the MetroAccess program and the need to re-orientate the work plan.

In this quarter two social support initiatives were developed and implemented:
- the establishment of an LGBTI Elders Social Group which is now on-going and meeting independently of direct Council support,
- a Digital Technology Group for older people.

2.03 Social Justice Charter

Council Plan initiative:
Develop a social justice/human rights charter to better articulate council's commitment

The development of a Social Justice Charter for Council will provide an over-arching commitment to human rights which will then inform everything Council does. The Charter will be developed in consultation and engagement with stakeholders.



Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Branch *People, Culture and Community*

Quarterly Milestones

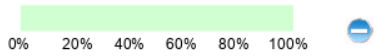
September Present draft Charter to Council for endorsement for public exhibition
December Present draft Charter to Council for adoption

Quarterly Progress Comments The Social Justice Charter Draft is complete and is tabled for briefing at Executive and Council in October, and Council meeting in November.

2.04 LGBTIQ Strategy

Council Plan initiative:
Advocate to support social justice and community issues including preventing family violence, LGBTIQ rights, and welcoming refugees

Develop a whole of Council LGBTIQ strategy.



Branch *People, Culture and Community*

Quarterly Milestones

December Present draft Strategy to Council for endorsement for public exhibition
June Present draft Strategy to Council for adoption

Quarterly Progress Comments Strategy development progressing, no formal September milestone to report on.

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Highlights and Achievements

Branch ***People, Culture and Community***

Unit ***Community Partnerships***

Community Partnerships
•A rough sleeping site at Loys Paddock which had been occupied by a rough sleeper for 7 years was cleared with no issues, to make way for revegetation works commencing in September. This had the potential for negative consequences, but was safely managed.
•Council's online homelessness reporting tool has been updated and is operating correctly. This now allows for backend to be captured with an image upload option available.

Community grants
•267 Annual Grant applications were received and processed for the 2020 round with the recommendations going to Council in October.

Aboriginal Partnerships
•Smith St Dreaming festival in July 2019. This event was well attended by Yarra's community, with approximately 500-700 people attending. A successful partnership event including various internal and external stakeholders.
•The public exhibition phase for the draft Aboriginal Partnerships Plan (Yana Ngargna 2020-2023) was completed, revisions made to the Plan, and has been presented to Executive in September, with a view to progressing to Council in November for final adoption.
•NAIDOC week events include Billabong NAIDOC in the Park, NAIDOC at the Collingwood Children's Farm, as well as a Government event at MAYSAR.

Multicultural Partnerhsips
We Stand Together Anti-racism project developed a training program for people from CALD backgrounds with low level English literacy and delivered two sessions in September to a total of 100 participants. This partnership involves Vic Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, Vic Police and various other stakeholders and the aim of the training is to raise awareness of what is racial discrimination and how to report.

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

3 . A sustainable Yarra

a place where…Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances its natural environment

As Victoria's first carbon-neutral council, we are proud of our commitment to sustainability. Protecting our natural environment and supporting our community to reduce its environmental footprint will continue to be a priority for Council.

Strategies

Council's work to achieve this Strategic Objective will include the following strategies :

3.1 Investigate strategies and initiatives to better manage the long term effects of climate change
3.2 Support and empower a more sustainable Council and Community
3.3 Lead in sustainable energy policy and deliver programs to promote carbon neutral initiatives for the municipality and maintain Council as a carbon neutral organisation.
3.4 Reduce the amount of waste-to-landfill with a focus on improved recycling and organic waste disposal
3.5 Promote responsible water usage and practices
3.6 Promote and facilitate urban agriculture with a focus on increasing scale and uptake in the community
3.7 Investigate strategies and initiatives to improve biodiversity

The following actions are being undertaken in 2019/20 to work toward achieving Council's strategic objective of A sustainable Yarra.

Action Progress Summary

- At least 90% of action target achieved
- Between 75 and 90% of action target achieved
- Less than 75% of action target achieved
- Not Started
- Completed

Target
% Complete

Action	Start Date / End Date	Budget (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	% variance
3.01 Yarra Environment Strategy	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
3.02 Climate Emergency	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
3.03 Embedding Sustainability (including adaptation)	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
3.04 Review and update Council's Urban Agriculture guidelines	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
3.05 Actively Avoid and Reduce Waste	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
3.06 Commence holistic waste system trial in selected areas with 1300 households	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
3.07 Investigate replacing paved spaces with permeable surfaces	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
3.08 Edinburgh Gardens storm water harvesting project	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
3.09 Develop an Integrated Water Management Strategy	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

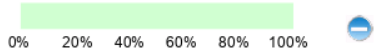
Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

3.01 Yarra Environment Strategy

Council Plan initiative
Continue to be a leading Council and Municipality in the field of Environmental Sustainability

Yarra's Environment Strategy provides direction and actions required to integrate sustainable practices into Council's operations, as well as its community programs and services. Council has been developing a new Environment Strategy and this year will be seeking public comment on, and adopting, a new Environment Strategy.



Branch *Sustainability*

Quarterly Milestones

December	Present draft Yarra Environment Strategy to Council seeking endorsement for public exhibition
March	Consider submissions and finalise draft Strategy
June	Present Yarra Environment Strategy to Council seeking adoption

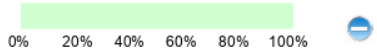
Quarterly Progress Comments Strategy development progressing, no formal September milestone to report on.

3.02 Climate Emergency

Council Plan Initiative:
Promote programs that monitor and reduce emissions across the municipality and strive to maintain its carbon neutral status

Climate Emergency is a growing global movement that seeks to dramatically accelerate climate action to an emergency response by invoking mass-mobilisation of people and practices. Council's Community Greenhouse Action Plan will be renamed its Climate Emergency Plan in light of scientific advice that we have just 12 years to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions before runaway climate change.

Council will develop a Climate Emergency Plan in partnership with the Yarra Energy Foundation (YEF) to support programs and initiatives to reduce its energy use and greenhouse emissions across the municipality.



Branch *Sustainability*

Quarterly Milestones

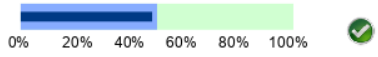
December	Present draft Climate Emergency Plan (including plan to reduce organisational emissions) to Council seeking endorsement for public exhibition Achieve certification for Council as a carbon neutral organisation
March	Consider submissions and finalise draft Strategy
June	Present Climate Emergency Plan and Action Plan to Council seeking adoption

Quarterly Progress Comments Strategy development progressing, no formal September milestone to report on.

3.03 Embedding Sustainability (including adaptation)

Council Plan Initiative:
Improve integration across environmental and sustainability policies and strategies

Council will continue to embed sustainability and adaptation across it's decision making processes and report to Council on it's progress.



Branch *Sustainability*

Quarterly Milestones

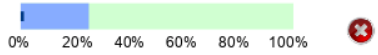
Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

September	Present report to Council on ways to improve embedding sustainability and adaptation at Council
March	All new initiative bids include assessment through the Quadruple Bottom Line Tool
Quarterly Progress Comments	A briefing was provided to Council on ways to improve embedding sustainability and adaptation at Council.

3.04 Review and update Council's Urban Agriculture guidelines

Council Plan Initiative:
Showcase urban agriculture and support community initiatives in sustainable practices

In 2018/19, City of Yarra developed a new Urban Agriculture Strategy 2019 – 2023. The new Urban Agriculture Strategy moves toward a food systems approach comprising how food is grown, processed, distributed, consumed and recycled. Review of the Urban Agriculture Guidelines is an action within the new Urban Agriculture Strategy.



Branch *City Works*

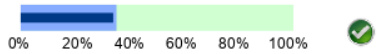
Quarterly Milestones

September	Commence guideline review processes
December	Consult internal and external stakeholder
March	Update draft Guidelines
June	Present report on new Guidelines to Council
Quarterly Progress Comments	Commencement of the review has been deferred to the second quarter of 2019/20 due to staff changes and competing priorities.

3.05 Actively Avoid and Reduce Waste

Council Plan Initiative:
Reduce volume of kerbside waste collection per capita by behaviour change programs and increase of recycling. (Promote the use of recycled materials through procurement and advocacy)

Develop and deliver education/engagement program to encourage residents to consume mindfully as an initiative to reduce the volumes of waste materials going to landfill.



Branch *City Works*

Quarterly Milestones

September	Develop education / engagement campaign about waste reduction, avoidance, recycling and re-use Promote the use of recycled materials through procurement and advocacy
December	Commence delivery of campaign
March	Evaluate program
June	Brief Council on outcomes
Quarterly Progress Comments	Development of the education / engagement campaign on waste reduction, avoidance, recycling and re-use is underway with roll out scheduled for November. Council's procurement and tender process promotes and the use of recycled materials in the specification and evaluation stages.

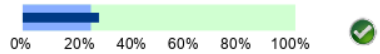
3.06 Commence holistic waste system trial in selected areas with 1300 households

Council Plan Initiative:
Investigate, implement and promote initiatives to divert organic waste from landfill

Undertake a trial aimed at introducing a holistic program to reduce volume of kerbside waste collection per capita by behaviour change programs and increase of recycling.

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September



Branch *City Works*

Quarterly Milestones

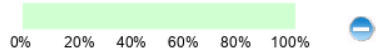
September	Commence collection of food and green waste and glass in selected trial areas
December	Evaluate trial program and brief Council on outcomes
March	Depending on outcome of trial, develop plan for delivery of holistic waste system municipal wide
June	Commence engagement, communication and marketing to get community ready for roll out

Quarterly Progress Comments The trial for collection of food and green waste and glass in selected areas is nearing conclusion, evaluation scheduled for next quarter.

3.07 Investigate replacing paved spaces with permeable surfaces

Council Plan initiative:
Investigate feasibility of replacing road and paved space with permeable surfaces

Permeable surfaces have the potential to increase infiltration of water to the subsoil, act as a water retention system and reduce high run off rates during a storm event. Council will investigate and identify at least 3 possible trial sites for permeable surfaces to replace road or paved space. Identified trial sites will be delivered and sites, monitor/report to Council in following financial year.



Branch *Traffic and Civil Engineering*

Quarterly Milestones

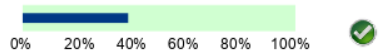
December	Report to Council on at least 3 possible trial sites for permeable surfaces
June	Deliver trial sites as identified in report to Council, and monitor/analyse for 6 month period

Quarterly Progress Comments Officers are working with University of Melbourne to determine if their permeable pavement research/product can be applied in Yarra, with the aim of a possible partnership for trials in Yarra. City Works and Traffic and Civil Engineering continue to work together to identify other trial treatments and sites. A report will be brought to Council in December 2019 on possible trial sites.

3.08 Edinburgh Gardens storm water harvesting project

Council Plan initiative:
Continue to implement and promote evidence based water conservation initiatives

Council will design and commence installation of a large scale storm water harvesting system in Edinburgh Gardens to reduce potable water use, and better use storm water within the Gardens.



Branch *City Works*

Quarterly Milestones

December	Award contract for design and construction of the Edinburgh Gardens storm water harvesting project
June	Complete detailed design and site establishment for the Edinburgh Gardens storm water harvesting project

Quarterly Progress Comments All of quotes have been evaluated and City West Water consultation completed. The consultancy agreement is being drafted in preparation for awarding of the Contract.

Complete detailed design and site establishment for the Edinburgh Gardens storm water harvesting project-The detailed design is on track for completion ahead of schedule. Site establishment doesn't need to be commenced before July 2020.
Last Updated - 17/10/2019 Fadi Fakhoury

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

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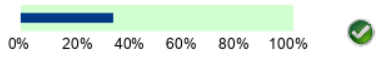
3.09 Develop an Integrated Water Management Strategy

Council Plan initiative:
Continue to implement and promote evidence based water conservation initiatives

Undertake investigation of Council's water management assets, and use this to inform the development of an Integrated Water Management Strategy.



Branch *City Works*

Quarterly Milestones

March	Brief Council on the findings from the investigations and analysis of Councils drainage infrastructure
June	Develop a draft Water Management Strategy

Quarterly Progress Comments Investigations have commenced, initial findings and market research are indicating that the budget allocation needs to be increased to allow for the completion of this action.

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

4 . A liveable Yarra

a place where... Development and growth are managed to maintain and enhance the character and heritage of the city

With demand for inner city housing increasing, Council is mindful of the importance of balancing the needs of new and existing residents, and ensuring that development does not encroach on the amenity or heritage of our city.

Strategies

Council's work to achieve this Strategic Objective includes the following strategies:

4.1 Protect Yarra's heritage and neighbourhood character
4.2 Actively plan for Yarra's projected growth and development and advocate for an increase in social and affordable housing
4.3 Plan, promote and provide built form, open space that is accessible to all ages and abilities
4.4 Protect Council assets through effective proactive construction management
4.5 Encourage and promote environmentally sustainable building, urban design, place-making and public realm outcomes
4.6 Provide direction and improve decision making on infrastructure projects through the application of the Strategic Community Infrastructure Framework
4.7 Encourage engagement with the community when developments are proposed

The following actions are being undertaken in 2019/20 to work toward achieving Council's strategic objective of A liveable Yarra.

Action Progress Summary

- At least 90% of action target achieved
- Between 75 and 90% of action target achieved
- Less than 75% of action target achieved
- Not Started
- Completed

Target
% Complete

Action	Start Date / End Date	Budget (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	% variance
4.01 Development Contributions Plan – Planning Scheme Amendment	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
4.02 Strategies for the hospital and education precincts	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
4.03 Queens Parade Design and Development Overlay	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
4.04 Built Form Analysis for Heidelberg Road, Alphington	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
4.05 Built Form Analysis for Major Activity Centres	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
4.06 Structure planning for Major Activity Centres in Yarra	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
4.07 Negotiate Joint Use Agreement with Richmond High School	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
4.08 Review and develop a framework for management of Council's own heritage assets	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Action	Start Date / End Date	Budget (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	% variance
4.09 Deliver Social and Affordable Housing Strategy	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
4.10 Nicholson Village Bus Depot	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
4.11 Progress the Yarra Planning Scheme rewrite	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%

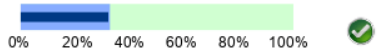
Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

4.01 Development Contributions Plan – Planning Scheme Amendment

Council Plan Initiative:
Progress a Planning Scheme amendment to implement a Development Contribution Plan

Council approved a Development Contributions Plan (DCP) in 2018/19. The DCP will require developers to contribute to infrastructure upgrades like roads and footpaths and community facilities to help provide for the needs of our growing city. Council will prepare a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the DCP approved by Council , for submission to the Minister of Planning for approval.



Branch *Office of the Director Planning and Place Making*

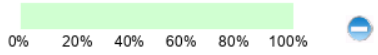
Quarterly Milestones

September	Advocate to Minister for Planning to approve DCP Amendment post Council adoption
December	Complete internal systems to capture contributions and systematically record receipt and acquittals (if approved)
March	Implement system once approved by Minister for Planning
Quarterly Progress Comments	Advocacy is ongoing at the regular meetings between the CEO and the Local Member of Parliament (also the Minster for Planning) and the Director Planning and Place Making. It is expected the Amendment will be approved in December 2019.

4.02 Strategies for the hospital and education precincts

Council Plan Initiative:
Prepare strategies for the Epworth and St Vincent's hospital precincts and the Australian Catholic University education precinct identified in Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

Council will scope proposal and engage with state agencies to prepare strategies for the hospital and education precincts around St Vincent's and Epworth hospitals, and the Australian Catholic University.



Branch *City Strategy*

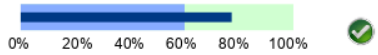
Quarterly Milestones

March	Scope proposal and seek engagement and support from state agencies
Quarterly Progress Comments	No Milestones to report on this quarter.

4.03 Queens Parade Design and Development Overlay

Council Plan Initiative:
Prepare a Planning Scheme amendment seeking permanent development and design overlay controls for Queens Parade North Fitzroy

Council will prepare and exhibit a new Design and Development Overlay for the Queens Parade area of Fitzroy North to introduce improved planning policy and guidance for the area within the Yarra Planning Scheme .



Branch *City Strategy*

Quarterly Milestones

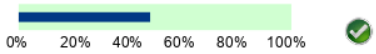
September	Advocate Council's position at panel
December	Consider the report and recommendations of the Planning Panel and seek Council adoption of the Amendment

Quarterly Progress Comments Advocacy at Planning Panel completed

4.04 Built Form Analysis for Heidelberg Road, Alphington

Council Plan initiative:
Develop planning controls for Heidelberg Road, Alphington in conjunction with Darebin Council

Council will undertake built form analysis for Heidelberg Road, Alphington, which will be implemented by planning controls in the Yarra Planning Scheme.



Branch *City Strategy*

Quarterly Milestones

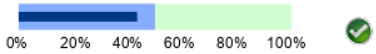
December Prepare draft Local Area Plan for consultation
March Seek Council consent to undertake consultation
June Finalise Local Area Plan and commence preparations for a Planning Scheme Amendment

Quarterly Progress Comments Draft Local Area Plan has been prepared for consultation ahead of the December Milestone for this activity.

4.05 Built Form Analysis for Major Activity Centres

Council Plan Initiative:
Prepare a built form analysis as part of the preparation of structure plans for major activity centres

Council will prepare Built Form Analysis to inform Structure Plans for the Brunswick Street /Smith Street Major Activity Centres in Yarra and to support the future preparation of Design and Development Overlays in the Yarra Planning Scheme.



Branch *City Strategy*

Quarterly Milestones

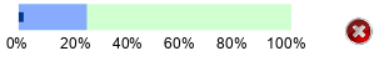
September Consider report on the Built Form Studies and commence preparation of a planning amendment for interim planning controls
June Seek Council consent to undertake consultation on draft studies and draft amendment

Quarterly Progress Comments Preparation of a planning amendment for interim planning controls has commenced. Report to Council is proposed for December meeting.

4.06 Structure planning for Major Activity Centres in Yarra

Council Plan Initiative:
Continue to develop structure plans for Yarra's major activity centres which build on the unique character of each precinct

Council will prepare Built Form Analysis and Structure Plans for Major Activity Centres in Yarra to support the future preparation of Design and Development Overlays in the Yarra Planning Scheme.



Branch *City Strategy*

Quarterly Milestones

September Complete background analysis report for Victoria Street and Bridge Road
December Finalise draft Structure Plans
March Seek Council consent to undertake community consultation

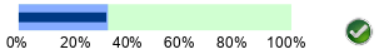
June Report to Council seeking consideration of final Structure Plans

Quarterly Progress Comments Preliminary work on the background analysis report for Victoria Street and Bridge Road being undertaken. Progress has been delayed due to resources required for Amendment C231 Queens Parade.

4.07 Negotiate Joint Use Agreement with Richmond High School

Council Plan Initiative:
Campaign for appropriate joint use agreements for shared use community facilities as part of the Richmond High School project

Council will work with the Department of Education and Training to develop a Joint Use Agreement for community facilities as part of the Richmond High School project.



Branch *Office of the Director City Works and Assets*

Quarterly Milestones

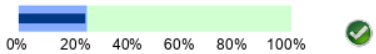
September Continue to engage with School Principal regarding use of facilities in the precinct to determine the details of the Joint Use Agreements, including potential stakeholders and user groups for the school facilities
December Finalise draft Joint Use Agreement with the School Principal
March Seek School Council and Yarra City Council endorsement of Joint Use Agreement

Quarterly Progress Comments Officers have had ongoing conversations with the Richmond High School Principal, and both parties agree in principle to develop a Joint Use Agreement (JUA) to enable school use of Council and community facilities, and community use of school facilities. The Richmond High School Principal has indicated a preference to formalise a JUA in the latter part of 2019, once the operations and needs of the school are better understood. The Principal has also informed officers that the school facilities in Gleadell Street are already being heavily utilised for both formal and informal community uses, and that the school will continue to support and facilitate this.

4.08 Review and develop a framework for management of Council's own heritage assets

Council Plan initiative:
Strengthen the protection of Yarra's heritage through the planning scheme, education, and resource provision

Council will identify and assess properties with shared heritage value and update their statements of significance.



Branch *CEO Office*

Quarterly Milestones

September Initiate preparation of a framework for management of Yarra's own heritage assets
December Consult with internal and external stakeholders
March Present a draft framework to Executive
June Present a draft framework to Council

Quarterly Progress Comments Preparation of a framework for management of Yarra's own heritage assets commenced.

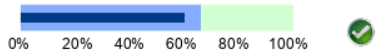
4.09 Deliver Social and Affordable Housing Strategy

Council Plan Initiative:
Advocate to federal and state governments through Yarra IMAP, MAV, ISMMF, VLGA on affordable and community housing.

Through Council Plans and other strategic documents, Council has expressed its commitment to maintain and support a socially, economically and culturally diverse community. This commitment is further evidenced by the financial support it has provided to the community housing sector, its resolute pursuit of affordable housing

outcomes at major development sites and strategic advocacy to state and commonwealth governments.

A Social and Affordable Housing strategy, will encompass strategic directions for Council through its roles as a planning authority and community advocate.



Branch *Social Policy and Research*

Quarterly Milestones

September Complete public exhibition/consultation
Present draft Strategy to Council for adoption
December Commence implementation of strategy

Quarterly Progress Comments A month-long public consultation on Yarra's draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy concluded on Friday 23 August. A Your Say Yarra page – with a summary of key points, a survey and copies of the draft strategy and background documents – was promoted to the community through Yarra Life eNews, social media and postcards at our neighbourhood houses, service centres and libraries. Service providers, industry, resident groups and state government were all contacted directly and officers presented to six Yarra advisory groups. Additionally, two internal workshops were held with officers from Community Wellbeing, Community Partnerships and Strategic and Statutory Planning.

More than forty community members completed the online survey and around a dozen submissions were received from stakeholder organisations, representing the positions of the not-for-profit sector, community housing, developers, community banking, peak-body and advocacy organisations.

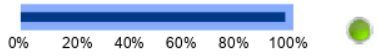
The redrafting of the Strategy following public and internal consultation is nearing completion and is scheduled to go to Council in October.

Slight delays are due to officers working through the extensive and detailed submissions, updating the Policy Guidance Note to be in accordance with the new strategy, and providing information on Tiny Houses as per the recent Councillor request.

4.10 Nicholson Village Bus Depot

Council Plan Initiative:
Develop planning controls for the Nicholson Street Bus Depot, North Fitzroy

Progress a built form analysis for the Nicholson Village Bus Depot Precinct.



Branch *City Strategy*

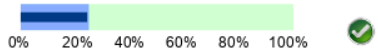
Quarterly Milestones

September Brief Councillors on a planning assessment for the bus depot site

Quarterly Progress Comments Council received a briefing in September on the outcomes of the review of the existing planning controls for the Nicholson Street Bus Depot.site.

4.11 Progress the Yarra Planning Scheme rewrite

The Planning Scheme sets out how land can be used, developed and protected. Council has been working on a major rewrite of the Planning Scheme to update areas of local policy that needed to be strengthened. This year Council will finalise the draft Planning Scheme and seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning to put it on exhibition for public consultation.



Branch *City Strategy*

Quarterly Milestones

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

September	Continue to draft policies in the new format required by DELWP, and Continue to brief Councillors of the proposed policies
December	Seek Council consent to seek 'authorisation' from the Minister for Planning to place on exhibition a draft new Yarra Planning Scheme
March	If authorisation provided, brief Councillors on submissions received
June	Report back to Council post exhibition regarding submissions and recommend final planning scheme provisions
Quarterly Progress Comments	Council has complied with and adopted the new DELWP Planning Policy Framework (PPF), the basis of which is to integrate state, regional and local policy. Councillors will participate in a workshop on the draft PPF in October.

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

5 . A prosperous Yarra

a place where…Local businesses prosper and creative and knowledge industries thrive

Yarra is a great place to do business and to work. Supporting local businesses and creative industries not only contributes to Yarra's economy, but also increases local employment opportunities, enhances street life and fosters community connectedness.

Strategies

Council's work to achieve this Strategic Objective include the following strategies :

5.1 Maintain and strengthen the vibrancy and local identity of retail and commercial precincts
5.2 Strengthen and monitor land use change and economic growth including new and emerging economic clusters
5.3 Create local employment opportunities by providing targeted and relevant assistance to facilitate business growth, especially for small and medium size enterprises and entrepreneurs through the attraction and retention of businesses
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
5.5 Facilitate and promote creative endeavour and opportunities for the community to participate in a broad range of arts and cultural activities
5.6 Attract and retain creative and knowledge industries in Yarra
5.7 Ensure libraries and neighbourhood houses support lifelong learning, wellbeing and social inclusion

The following actions are being undertaken in 2019/20 to work toward achieving Council's strategic objective of A prosperous Yarra.

Action Progress Summary

- At least 90% of action target achieved
- Between 75 and 90% of action target achieved
- Less than 75% of action target achieved
- Not Started
- Completed

Target
% Complete

Action	Start Date / End Date	Budget (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	% variance
5.01 Economic Development Strategy	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
5.02 Local retail precincts	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
5.03 Brunswick Street Streetscape Master Plan (BSSMP)	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
5.04 Develop Yarra as a Smart City	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

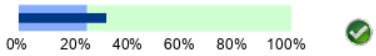
Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

5.01 Economic Development Strategy

Council Plan initiative:
Promote the benefits of doing business locally including the benefit of access by walking and cycling

Yarra's Economic Development Strategy outlines how Council can best support economic development by fostering greater investment and jobs growth in the municipality. Council will review the current Strategy, including consultation with stakeholders, for adoption by Council.



Branch *City Strategy*

Quarterly Milestones

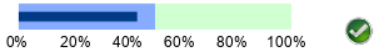
September	Commence project inception
December	Complete review and prepare draft strategy
March	Seek Council consent to undertake consultation on draft strategy
June	Finalise strategy and seek Council adoption

Quarterly Progress Comments Consultants for the project have been appointed and a draft background paper prepared with preliminary findings discussed at the Business Advisory Group's September meeting.

5.02 Local retail precincts

Council Plan initiatives:
Promote the benefits of doing business locally including the benefit of access by walking and cycling
Engage with local traders, leasing agents and property owners to strengthen the viability of Yarra's activity centres such as Bridge Road including the activation of empty spaces

To support local retail precincts, this year Council will trial various marketing channels to help inform an annual marketing strategy to encourage residents to shop locally, with an emphasis on walking/cycling options, participate in State Government project to better manage retail vacancies using Bridge Road and Victoria Street as a pilot and complete Year 3 of the Victoria Street shop front improvement program.



Branch *City Strategy*

Quarterly Milestones

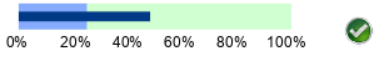
September	Participate in revitalisation project sponsored by the Minister for Planning Complete development of digital maps for 12 precincts that will provide content for marketing on various media and marketing platforms
December	Promote and advocate the benefits of walking, cycling and supporting local businesses
March	Complete third year program of shop front improvements in Victoria Street

Quarterly Progress Comments Council officers are participating in the revitalisation project and have attended all project meetings to date. Digital maps have been completed for 4 retail precincts with the remaining 8 to be completed by June 2020. Promotion of public transport walking and cycling has been incorporated into the online directory for retail precincts.

5.03 Brunswick Street Streetscape Master Plan (BSSMP)

Council Plan Initiative:
Undertake at least three streetscape masterplans for shopping strips based on Place Making principles

Council will prepare a masterplan for the Brunswick Street activity centre, undertake consultation and seek adoption of final masterplan by Council.



Branch *City Strategy*

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

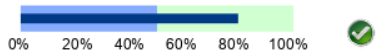
Quarterly Milestones

September	Finalise background report on issues, opportunities and vision
December	Seek Council consent to undertake consultation on background report
March	Prepare draft masterplan for Council consideration
June	Report back to Council post submissions
Quarterly Progress Comments	Background report and consultation completed. Draft master plan is being prepared.

5.04 Develop Yarra as a Smart City

Council Plan initiative:
Implement an innovation hub to bring people together to focus on creative solutions, enabling a culture of continuous improvement, innovation and collaboration

Collaborate with the local community and relevant stakeholders to ensure Yarra becomes a Smart City which delivers a connected, informed and sustainable future.



Branch *Office of the Director City Works and Assets*

Quarterly Milestones

September	Identify and implement the hub for smart and future city solutions (Yarra CityLab) Establish a dedicated Internet of Things network to enable Yarra and its community to connect
March	Connect with 20 Local Government Authorities and Industry organisations around smart city and smart infrastructure opportunities
June	Initiate 4 Internet of Things and smart city trials
Quarterly Progress Comments	The dedicated Internet of Things network was installed at 13 sites across Yarra in a three week period. Completed three days ahead of schedule. Yarra CityLab is operational as the Yarra's Smart City Office (hub for smart and future city solutions). The core foundation has been established which includes development and implementation of the strategy, governance structure, prioritisation process and measures/KPIs. A socialisation schedule of Yarra CityLab has also been implemented (and will be ongoing) and Yarra CityLab has delivered a number of projects and partner projects to date.

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Highlights and Achievements

Branch ***City Strategy***

Unit ***Economic Development***

Retail Precinct Audit, 2,700 ground floor premises across 12 retail precincts (covering approx. 20km) visited to record changes in businesses and vacancies. 2018 data uploaded into GIS for internal use. Produced 2018 Precinct Pulse fact sheets, a series of one-page infographic publications communicating mix and trends of each precinct. Precinct Pulses published on council website along with interactive graph of retail changes over the past five years. Presented findings to Business Advisory Group.

Branch ***Library Services***

Unit ***Community Learning and Partnerships***

Children's Activities -
July 99 Activities - attendance 3199
Aug 108 Activities - attendance 3593
Sep 100 Activities - attendance 3398 Total Children's attendance - 10,190
Adult Activities -
July 85 Activities - attendance 686
Aug 80 Activities - attendance 598
Sep 71 Activities - attendance 1580 Total Adult attendance - 2,864

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

6 . A connected Yarra

a place where…Connectivity and travel options are environmentally sustainable, integrated and well-designed

Council is committed to creating a city that is accessible to all irrespective of levels of personal mobility, to support a fulfilling life without the need for a car.

Strategies

Council's work to achieve this Strategic Objective includes the following strategies:

6.1 Manage traffic movement and promote road safety within local roads
6.2 Work in partnership with Vicroads and influence traffic management and road safety on main roads
6.3 Investigate and implement effective parking management options
6.4 Improve accessibility to public transport for people with mobility needs and older people
6.5 Develop and promote pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that encourages alternate modes of transport, improves safety and connectedness
6.6 Advocate for increased infrastructure and performance of public transport across Melbourne

The following actions are being undertaken in 2019/20 to work toward achieving Council's strategic objective of A connected Yarra.

Action Progress Summary

- At least 90% of action target achieved
- Between 75 and 90% of action target achieved
- Less than 75% of action target achieved
- Not Started
- Completed

Target
% Complete

Action	Start Date / End Date	Budget (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	% variance
6.01 Variable parking trial and consultative forum	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
6.02 Low speed traffic environments	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
6.03 Complete Wellington Street Bike Lane	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
6.04 Review Local Area Place Making Policy	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
6.05 Advocate for Disability Discrimination Act compliant tram stops	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
6.06 Public Transport Advocacy	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

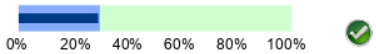
2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

6.01 Variable parking trial and consultative forum

Council Plan Initiative:
Continue to utilise data, technology and community consultation in considering the appropriate management of parking

A trial of variable paid parking options on Bridge Road commenced in 2018/19 to understand how variable pricing will influence occupancy rates of the on-street Bridge Road parking. Council will analyse trial data and consider options of variable pricing for different sections of Bridge Road and develop a template that can be applied to other locations within Yarra.

Council will consult with the community to seek further ideas and input into car-parking initiatives and the use of road space.



Branch *Compliance and Parking Services*

Quarterly Milestones

September	Complete variable parking trial
December	Hold a community consultative forum on parking and related matters
	Analyse data
March	Present report to Council on results of trial to consider any further action

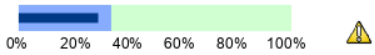
Quarterly Progress Comments	Analysis of trial data undertaken and consideration of changes to restrictions and paid parking for implementation.

6.02 Low speed traffic environments

Council Plan Initiative:
Continue to provide low speed environments and community education for pedestrians, cyclists, motor-cyclists and vehicle drivers and passengers

Yarra became the first council in Australia to trial a 30km/h area-wide speed limit in September 2018. The trial area is in the neighbourhood streets bordered by Alexandra Parade, Johnston Street, Hoddle Street and Nicholson Street and aims to create safer and more liveable streets, especially for people who walk and cycle. Council will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the trial and the potential for wider application across Yarra .

Council will advocate to State Government for reduced speed through activity centres on arterial roads to a consistent 40 km/h, including Nicholson Street and St Georges Road activity centres.



Branch *Traffic and Civil Engineering*

Quarterly Milestones

September	Conclude 12 month 30km/h trial in Fitzroy and prepare initial report to Council
December	Advocate to State Government for reduced speed through activity centres on arterial roads to a consistent 40 km/h, including Nicholson Street and St Georges Road activity centres
March	Following analysis, present a report to Council on results of trial to consider any further action

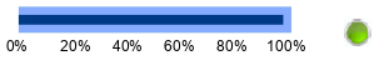
Quarterly Progress Comments	The 30kmh trial has concluded and officers are now preparing information on the trial for Council to consider .
	The 30km speed limit will remain in place although the actual trial period for collecting qualitative and quantitative data has officially Concluded.
	Note: officers are continuing to liaise with Department of Transport on trial outcomes as their approval will be required should Council resolve to extend/expand 30km/h zone.

6.03 Complete Wellington Street Bike Lane

Council Plan Initiative:

Complete construction of the Wellington Street Bike (Copenhagen style) Lane to Johnston Street

Council is extending the existing protected bike lanes on Wellington Street in Collingwood to provide a safer and better connected journey for cyclists. Construction of the bike lane on Wellington Street, between Gipps Street and Johnston Street, commenced in 2018/19 and will be completed this year.



Branch *Strategic Transport*

Quarterly Milestones

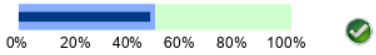
September Complete Stage 2 separated bicycle lane project

Quarterly Progress Comments Construction of stage 2 of the wellington street bike lane is completed. There will be a formal launch by the Minister early October.

6.04 Review Local Area Place Making Policy

Council Plan initiative:
Transition Local Area Traffic Management programs to Local Area Place Making programs

Council will review the Local Area Place Making policy following the transition from a Local Area Traffic Management approach to ensure appropriate coverage and inclusion of all relevant place making aspects.



Branch *Traffic and Civil Engineering*

Quarterly Milestones

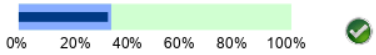
September Undertake an internal review of the current policy
March Inform Council of results of internal review of policy

Quarterly Progress Comments The Local Area Place Making Policy review will take place in 2019/20, and outcomes reported to Council by March 2020.

6.05 Advocate for Disability Discrimination Act compliant tram stops

Council Plan Initiatives:
Continue to facilitate the upgrade of local tram stops to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act to support both access and viability of activity centres
Advocate to the state government for improved accessibility to public transport services

Public transport in the City of Yarra needs to be made more accessible for people with disability and to comply with the provisions of the Commonwealth Government's Disability Discrimination Act (1992) (DDA) and the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (2002). Accessibility is at the forefront of ensuring independence and engagement for people 50+ and people with disability in our municipality.



Branch *Strategic Transport*

Quarterly Milestones

September Agree MOU with Yarra trams re DDA tram stops
December Provide advice on DDA trams stops on Brunswick Street as part of the streetscape master plan
March Continue to advocate for Disability Discrimination Act compliant tram stops on Bridge Road

Quarterly Progress Comments Council has signed an MOU with Yarra trams regarding tram safety and this topic ties into the broader question of DDA tram stops. Meetings have occurred between Council, Yarra Trams, Public Transport Victoria and Department of Transport to discuss tram stop upgrades in advance of the state government budget bid process.

6.06 Public Transport Advocacy

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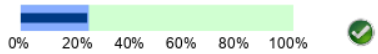
Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan initiative:
Advocate to the State Government for improved accesibility to public transport services

Advocate for improved public transport services to meet population growth including Chandler Highway north-south bus route, Doncaster Rail, Hoddle Street Study, Airport Rail, MM2 and Alexandra Parade.

The North East Link (NEL) is a proposed $16 billion freeway connection of the M80 Ring Road to the Eastern Freeway. The project also includes new cycle paths and construction of a busway on the Eastern Freeway. While the NEL is some distance from Yarra, it has the potential to bring large volumes of additional traffic to Yarra via the Eastern Freeway. In May 2019, Council resolved to make a formal submission on the NEL Project and Environment Effects Statement.



Branch *Strategic Transport*

Quarterly Milestones

September	Deliver Council submission to NEL Panel hearings including on the NEL busway and public transport solutions
December	Prepare mitigation plans and other projects to discuss with consortia if the NEL is tendered
March	Hold discussions with NEL consortia regarding Councils position
June	Provide briefing to Councillors on NEL updates and on ongoing public transport advocacy

Quarterly Progress Comments	Officers presented Council's submission on the North East Link (NEL) at the panel hearings in July 2019. NEL Panel released their initial responses to issues raised with the majority being deemed out of scope and or having insignificant impact to Yarra.

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

7 . A leading Yarra

a place where…Transparency, performance and community participation drive the way we operate

Council is committed to change through an energised, cohesive team of professionals, recognised for our leadership, innovation and service.

Strategies

Council's work to achieve this Strategic Objective includes the following strategies:

7.1 Ensure Council's assets and financial resources are managed responsibly to deliver financial sustainability
7.2 Continue to develop a culture of continuous improvement and innovation
7.3 Maintain a culture of transparency, governance, ethical practice and management of risks that instils a high level of community respect and confidence in Council decision-making
7.4 Ensure Council services are efficient, well-planned, accessible and meet community needs
7.5 Provide the community with meaningful and genuine opportunities to contribute to and participate in Council planning and decision making processes with a focus on young people, hard to reach and traditionally underrepresented communities
7.6 Enable greater transparency and access to the conduct of Council Meetings
7.7 Develop innovative Smart City solutions in collaboration with Government, Industry and Community which will use open data technology
7.8 Continue a 'customer centric' approach to all service planning and delivery
7.9 Advocate for the best interests of our community

The following actions are being undertaken in 2019/20 to work toward achieving Council's strategic objective of A leading Yarra.

Action Progress Summary

- At least 90% of action target achieved
- Between 75 and 90% of action target achieved
- Less than 75% of action target achieved
- Not Started
- Completed

Target
% Complete

Action	Start Date / End Date	Budget (YTD)	Actual (YTD)	% variance
7.01 Community engagement	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
7.02 Customer Experience Strategy 2019-2022	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%
7.03 Council meeting live streaming	01/07/19 30/06/20	$0	$0	0%

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

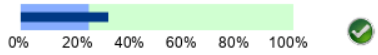
Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

2019/20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

7.01 Community engagement

Council Plan initiative:
Design and deliver planned engagement processes to encourage community involvement in Council decision making in line with the Community Engagement Policy

Engaging our community and stakeholders is an important part of making decisions at Yarra . Our community engagement policy sets out our commitment to inclusive community engagement. Council is undertaking a number of community consultations and engagements in 2019/20 involving targeted methods to reach out to traditionally under-represented groups and creative approaches to involve broad representation of the community.



Branch *Advocacy and Engagement*

Quarterly Milestones

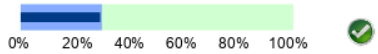
September	Utilise digital mapping tools to engage a wide demographic of residents in the North Carlton LAPMS engagement process
December	Partner with the finance branch to deliver a municipal-wide early 2020/21 budget consultation
March	Present refreshed Community Engagement Policy (with a greater focus on tailored engagement to our diverse community) to Council for adoption
June	Commence implementation of Engagement Policy year 1 actions

Quarterly Progress Comments In August and September 2019, Council spoke to the community about Carlton North's streets to inform a Local Area Place Making Study. This first stage of engagement saw more than 280 ideas and comments posted on our online map from around 80 people. This was complemented by an online survey, community meetings, and pop-ups.

7.02 Customer Experience Strategy 2019-2022

Council Plan Initiative:
Continue to implement strategies that enhance customer and community experience with Council across services

Our approach is to create experiences where we value our connection, engagement and relationship with every customer and provide consistency, ease and speed across all customer channels.



Branch *Customer Service*

Quarterly Milestones

September	Promote and implement Customer Experience Strategy
March	Develop customer journey maps for high volume/high impact requests

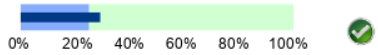
Quarterly Progress Comments CX strategy developed and promoted to senior management meetings. The strategy outlines a three year road map of improvements to support internal and external service experience transformation. First stages of promotion and implementation have included a presentation to Executive this quarter. Second quarter will target engaging leaders across the organisation.

Ongoing promotion and implementation will occur over the life of the strategy.

7.03 Council meeting live streaming

Council Plan initiative:
Implement a cost effective system to broadcast Council meetings

Commission and install equipment and infrastructure to enable live streaming of Council meetings from Collingwood, Fitzroy and Richmond Town Halls. Commence live streaming meetings with the Ceremonial Meeting in November 2019.



Branch *CEO Office*

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

Council Plan 2017-2021 : Year 3

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Quarterly Milestones

September	Develop project scope and undertake procurement process
December	Stream ceremonial meeting from Collingwood Town Hall
	Install and commission equipment
March	Commence streaming of ordinary meetings from Fitzroy Town Hall
June	Commence streaming of ordinary meetings from Richmond Town Hall
Quarterly Progress Comments	Project scope defined and provider selected.
	Initial scoping for equipment ans installation completed, subject to confirmation.
	Ceremonial meeting to be held at Richmond Town Hall. Equipment investigation has commenced.
	Investigation of installation of blinds in Fitzroy Town Hall Reading Room.

Attachment 1 - 2019-20 Annual Plan Quarterly Progress Report - September

11.4 Draft Nature Strategy 2020-2024

Executive Summary

Purpose

To present the Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020 - 2024, for adoption to exhibit and proceed to community consultation.

Key Issues

After significant internal and selected external consultation, officers have completed a Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020-2024, for endorsement to proceed to public exhibition and community consultation for a 4 week period commencing in November 2019.

Following a 4 week community consultation period, officers will provide Council with a formal report that outlines any changes as a result of consultation and a recommendation to adopt a Final Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020-2024 in February 2020.

Delivery of the Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020-2024 actions is proposed to commence in March 2020.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications of proceeding to community consultation. The Final Nature Strategy will be informed by community feedback on the draft, and any budget implications will be confirmed when presented to Council as a final Strategy for adoption.

It is envisaged that delivery of the Final Nature Strategy actions will commence in early 2020. The actions for the first half of Year 1 of the Final Nature Strategy will be delivered by the Streetscapes and Natural Values Team using existing resources.

Budget bids will be prepared for the resources required to deliver actions in subsequent years of the Strategy. These would be considered by Council as part of the annual budget process each year.

PROPOSAL

That Council:

(a) note the report and attached the Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020 – 2024; and

(b) endorse the Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020 – 2024 for exhibition and public consultation for a four week period commencing in November 2019.

11.4 Draft Nature Strategy 2020-2024

Reference: D19/198875
Authoriser: Director City Works and Assets

Purpose

1. To present the Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020 - 2024, for adoption to exhibit and proceed to community consultation.

Background

2. In 2013, a new Yarra Environment Strategy (YES) 2013-2017 was developed in conjunction with the community and key stakeholders, via an extensive engagement and consultation process and review of existing Council actions and plans.
3. The extensive consultation process acknowledged that to best deliver on Council's commitment to protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity within the municipality, a Biodiversity Health Survey (BHS) and a Biodiversity (Nature) Strategy are required.
4. A Biodiversity (Nature) Strategy will provide direction on how to prioritise decision making on protecting and increasing the diversity and sustainability of remnant vegetation and fauna habitat across the municipality.
5. A Biodiversity (Nature) Strategy will establish best practices in biodiversity protection, the use of adaptive management techniques and increased biodiversity connectivity in a bioregional context. It will also provide key indicators of the overall ecological health and resilience of native vegetation and its contribution to ecological integrity and resilience for Yarra and the region.
6. The terms Biodiversity and Nature are both used within this report, and both contained within the report title. In the drafting of this report there have been divergent views on whether the term Biodiversity is well enough understood or whether it resonate with the community, and whether the term Nature adequately captures the breadth and importance of what the Strategy is seeking to achieve. The Draft Strategy is titled Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020 – 2024, in an attempt to satisfy both views, and to both engage the community and to communicate as well as possible, the intent of the Strategy.

Biodiversity Health Survey

7. The key findings from the Biodiversity Health Survey (BHS):
   (a) Large Areas of Bushland
      - Significant areas of bushland were mapped at Hall, Kevin Bartlett, Rushall Recreation Reserves and Burnley Park; providing habitat for native plants and animals.

   (b) High Diversity of Plants and Animals
      - 430 plant species were recorded with 209 indigenous to Yarra.
      - A diversity of animals recorded: birds, mammals, reptiles, frogs and insects.
      - High diversity of bat species, largely microbats (7 species), including Eastern False Pipistrelle and Yellow-bellied Sheath-tail Bat.
      - National and state significant animals recorded, including Grey-headed Flying Fox and Nankeen Night-heron.

   (c) Wetland Habitats

- Alphington Park Wetland, and McConchie Reserve & its surrounds ('Burnley Harbour'); provide habitat for a variety of wetland plant and animal species.
- Wetlands were a hotspot of bird and micro-bat activity

(d) Wildlife Corridors & Urban Stepping Stones

- Wildlife corridors were identified along the Merri Creek, Yarra River, and the Park Street Linear reserves
- Urban parks and larger urban parks such as Edinburgh Gardens and Darling Gardens; provide 'stepping stones' across the Yarra landscape between larger areas of fauna habitat

(e) Significant Habitat Trees

- Significant River Red Gums and Sugar Gums were mapped in Burnley Park and Kevin Bartlett Reserve
- Other hollow-bearing native trees and larger canopy trees including non-native species like Oaks, were mapped across the municipality

Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020-2024

8. The Draft Nature Strategy has been developed to align with the State Government's Biodiversity Plan - *'Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037'*. This plan presents a long term vision for Victoria's biodiversity supported by two goals:
   (a) Victorian's Value Nature; and
   (b) Victoria's Natural Environment is Healthy.
9. The Draft Nature Strategy has been developed to acknowledge the legislative requirements of The *Yarra River Protection (Willip-gin Birrarung Murron) Act 2017***.** Yarra River Strategic Plan (YRSP) (in preparation), driven by a Yarra River 50 Year Community Vision, responds to the Act and will enable responsible agencies to protect the Birrarung, Yarra River.
10. As one of the 15 managing authorities that has statutory obligations to deliver the objectives of the YRSP over the first 10 year period, the City of Yarra is committed to delivering on the YRSP plan objectives and actions.
11. The City of Yarra is one of 8 councils listed as a managing authority as identified under the Act. This draft Yarra Strategic Plan sets out the first 10 years of action to contribute to the delivery of the Yarra River 50 Year Community Vision.
12. The *Yarra River Protection (Willip-gin Birrarung Murron) Act 2017*, provides for the preparation of an unprecedented, holistic YRSP to coordinate 15 public entities that operate along the river corridor, to guide future use and development and identify areas for protection within the Yarra corridor. Objectives for the first 10 years of the YRSP:
   (a) A healthy river and lands - YRSP will improve the water quality of the Birrarung and protect its land, floodplains and billabongs to achieve greater biodiversity;
   (b) Greater Yarra Urban Parkland - YRSP will seek to protect and improve the river's parklands in order to support the Yarra River 50 Year Community Vision;
   (c) A culturally diverse river corridor - YRSP will acknowledge, protect and commemorate the rich heritage of the Birrarung; and
   (d) Protecting the natural beauty of the Birrarung - YRSP will seek to respect the significance of the Birrarung's landscapes. Where we build, we will protect and celebrate the river's natural beauty, landscapes and views.

13. The Draft Nature Strategy is being developed at a time when the value of nature is being recognised; and as the effects of increasing urbanisation and climate change are hitting urban environments and an awareness of the plight of nature is becoming heightened.

14. This is the inaugural Nature Strategy for the City of Yarra and while it includes a strong focus on the conservation of nature and on engaging the community with natural values, importantly it also seeks to strengthen internal processes and resources to ensure that natural values are considered as core council business. This is being undertaken with the overall aim that the City of Yarra will lead via its nature conservation activities, like Yarra has for many years on other important issues like sustainability and climate action.

Stakeholder input

15. The stakeholder engagement process identified the following opportunities and challenges that informed the Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity vision, goals, targets and actions:

- *Biodiversity values*:
    - Understating the value 'urban significant' species and their role in engaging the community in local nature based programs
    - Valuing the role of local experts in protecting and enhancing natural values
    - Recognition of the importance of the Yarra River corridor and its northern and southern tributaries as critical habitat links that provide critical north-south and east–west fauna movement links
- *Council Internal Synergies:*
    - Improving the interaction between relevant units to achieve improved outcomes for nature in Yarra
    - Exploring the biodiversity opportunities associated with new development and higher density urban areas to achieve better nature outcomes in the private realm.
- *Water Management:*
    - Understanding the role water management, waterways and wetlands play in the health of natural systems and cultural importance of waterways to the Wurundjeri.
- *Wurundjeri:*
    - Engagement and involvement of the Wurundjeri Council in the aim to ensure their values and stories are honoured and conserved is integral to this Nature Strategy.
- *Community:*
    - Community groups are currently acting as a conduit for community engagement. This could be built on but should be complimented by investment in staff resources as well as augmenting relationships with existing community groups, recognising the work that they currently do and assisting them to build on that
    - The community has emphasised the importance of ongoing ecological knowledge, innovation and trials in implementing more sophisticated approaches to on-ground biodiversity management. This could involve:
        - annual review of elements of ecological function
        - planning for ecological outcomes based on natural systems, species outcomes and corridors rather than by park/reserve

- consideration of senescent (aging) vegetation and on ground management techniques to replace vegetation, possibly through natural recruitment
- provision for trials and innovation in on-ground management and reintroductions
- continuity in management and preserving/documenting ecological knowledge
- coordination of land management across all land managers i.e. Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water

- The Draft Yarra Environment Strategy community engagement process has demonstrated that there is an appetite for integrating nature-focussed elements and habitat features into the private, streetscape and neighbourhood-scale realm. Community members believe this will result in benefits for health, wellbeing and amenity over and above the ecological benefits.

- Urban Agriculture programs and activities which are already well established in the City of Yarra contributes to positive natural values outcomes and there are natural synergies which should be explored and strengthened through both this strategy and the Urban Agriculture strategy. Good working relationships will see improved outcomes in each complimentary area.

- *Communication:*
  - A dedicated communication program for nature-focussed news, initiatives and interactions is desirable. This would serve to build trust with the community, that council are managing natural values in an informed and timely way. In particular the community were interested to see greater transparency around what is being done/where/why. One suggestion was for council to develop a semi-accessible online platform for the community to observe progress/logic of land management and to contribute to it.

- *Adjacent councils:*
  - Other councils have implemented initiatives and set standards that can be adopted by the City of Yarra. Many examples exist that could be easily adopted, thereby enabling council to benefit from the learnings of others. One example is City of Melbourne's native street garden planting palate and urban nature planting guide that is available on the City of Melbourne's website.

  - There is goodwill and enthusiasm for cooperation between staff from adjoining municipalities to work across-borders on projects that will benefit all.

- *Relationships with other institutions:*
  - The City of Yarra is very well placed to engage with academic institutions who are actively involved in urban ecology research. Melbourne University's Burnley Campus lies within the municipality and already completes projects within council reserves. Other institutions like RMIT also have an interest in urban ecology and could assist with collaborative research and other initiatives as they have with other urban municipalities.

Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020-2024 - Vision

16. The Draft Nature Strategy's Vision is:

'The land within the City of Yarra supports a natural environment that is diverse, connected and resilient. Its custodians, the Wurundjeri/Woiwurrung people, continue to care for Country as is their traditional lore. Yarra's residents and visitors appreciate and enhance the natural and cultural values of the land and water, contributing to benefits for all.'

17. The following four goals were established to achieve the vision:
    (a) A more diverse, connected and resilient natural environment;
    (b) People appreciate and seek to enhance the natural values of the Yarra landscape;
    (c) Nature is considered core council business; and
    (d) Innovation, communication and collaboration are the cornerstones of nature-focussed programs.
18. The Draft Nature Strategy Action Plan's intent is to engage and mobilise the community to value and protect biodiversity. The Action Plan will also be implemented by influencing existing City of Yarra programs, initiatives and projects and will be largely funded through existing annual recurrent and capital budgets that are reviewed against service delivery priorities. The business impact of each proposed action is outlined in the Strategy Action Plan 2020-24 section.

Engagement Plan

19. The Community engagement process planned to commence in November 2019 and is envisaged to include the following elements:
    (a) Your Say Yarra Project page, with links to the Biodiversity Health Survey Discussion Summary Paper;
    (b) Feature article in Yarra News;
    (c) Regular social media posts;
    (d) Frog Census or Microbat Community Activity to launch the community consultation process;
    (e) Articles to promote the consultation process in newsletters including:
        (i) Merri Creek Management Committee and Friends of Merri Creek;
        (ii) Darebin Creek Management Committee and Friends of Darebin Creek;
        (iii) Yarra River Keepers, Abbotsford Riverbankers Instagram Page, VINC
        (iv) Melbourne University, RMIT and local School newsletters; and
        (v) Monday Musings.
    (f) Email to electronic databases, resident advocacy groups and friends of groups;
    (g) Email to relevant Yarra Advisory groups and attendance at meetings when invited including:
        (i) Aboriginal Advisory Group;
        (ii) Environmental Advisory Committee; and
        (iii) Urban Agriculture Advisory Committee.

External Consultation

20. In developing the Draft Nature Strategy, external biodiversity policy and technical consultation workshops involved the following groups:
    (a) community experts in land management, flora, fauna and policy including representatives from Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC), Darebin Creek Management Committee (DCMC), Friends of Merri Creek (FoMC), Abbotsford River

(ARB) Bankers, Victorian Indigenous Nursery Co-operative (VINC) and Yarra River Keepers (YRK);

(b) adjoining land managers including representatives from the Cities of Melbourne, Boroondara and Darebin and research institutions including Melbourne University;

(c) partner organisations including State Government agencies representatives from Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Parks Victoria (PV) and Melbourne Water (MW) and contractor staff from Felix Botanica; and

(d) Extensive traditional owner consultation with Elders from the Wurundjeri Council.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

21. In developing the Final Draft Nature Strategy, an internal biodiversity policy consultation workshop involved officers from the following areas of Council:

(a) Urban Design
(b) Open Space Planning
(c) Statutory Planning
(d) Strategic Planning
(e) Communications and Engagement
(f) Sustainability
(g) City Work Branch Manager
(h) City Works and Assets Director
(i) Planning and Place Making Director
(j) Community Partnerships
(k) Waste Minimisation and Agriculture
(l) Community Engagement
(m) City Heritage
(n) Streetscapes and Natural Values
(o) Drainage and Stormwater
(p) Engineering Services

Financial Implications

22. There are no direct financial implications of proceeding to community consultation. The Final Nature Strategy will likely be updated based on community feedback.

23. It is envisaged that delivery of the Final Nature Strategy actions will commence in early 2020. The actions for the first half of Year 1 of the Final Nature Strategy will be delivered by the Streetscapes and Natural Values Team using existing resources.

24. Budget bids will be prepared for the resources required to deliver actions in subsequent years of the Strategy. These would be considered by Council as part of the annual budget process each year.

Economic Implications

25. The Final Nature Strategy will provide direction on how to prioritise decision making on protecting and increasing the diversity and sustainability of remnant vegetation and fauna habitat across the municipality. Protecting and enhancing remnant vegetation will have positive impacts on the urban forest, therefore providing a range of economic benefits including:

(a) Reduction in health costs through a range of health and well-being benefits that trees, open space and connection with nature can provide;

(b) Improved amenity, character, recreational and cultural opportunities, interactions with nature that may encourage more people into an area to live, work and visit; and

(c) Assisting to reduce the impacts of the urban heat island effect through planting large indigenous canopy trees that contribute to the urban forest.

Sustainability Implications

26. The Final Nature Strategy will establish best practices in biodiversity protection, the use of adaptive management techniques and increased biodiversity connectivity in a bioregional context. It will also provide key indicators of the overall ecological health and sustainability/resilience of native vegetation and its contribution to ecological integrity and sustainability resilience for Yarra and the region.

Social Implications

27. The Yarra River not only gives the municipality its name, it's also one of the Melbourne's most important natural assets and supports many social and cultural activities. Council will seek to showcase Yarra's waterways including the Yarra River, Merri Creek, Darebin Creek, Gardner's Creek and Alphington Wetlands and the diversity of opportunities to interact with waterways environs as well as ways to ensure its future health.

28. The Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity has been developed to align with the State Government's Biodiversity Plan - 'Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037'. This plan presents a long term vision for Victoria's biodiversity supported by two goals:

    (a) Victorian's Value Nature; and

    (b) Victoria's Natural Environment is Healthy.

29. The role of Yarra's community in development and delivery of the strategy actions will inevitably provide many social benefits as different members of the community work within their local neighbourhoods to effect positive biodiversity change.

Human Rights Implications

30. There are no human rights implications associated with developed of the Biodiversity Strategy.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

31. The public consultation phase of the Draft Nature Strategy will be delivered with the assistance of Councils Communication and Engagement Unit to ensure culturally and linguistically diverse members of the Yarra community will be engaged through this process.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

32. Council's 2017/18 Annual Plan identifies developing a Biodiversity/Nature Strategy as a key strategic objective.

    Strategic Objective 3: Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances its natural environment.

    Council Plan Strategy 3.1;

        Investigate strategies and initiatives to improve biodiversity

    Council Plan Initiatives;

        3.1.1 Develop a Biodiversity Strategy

        3.1.2 Utilise findings contained in the biodiversity health survey to inform future planning across the City

33. The Draft Nature Strategy was developed to acknowledge and compliment the suite of companion strategies that exist such as the Urban Forestry Strategy and Urban Agriculture Strategy and strategies under development such as Open Space Strategy, Heritage Strategy, Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, Integrated Water Strategy (currently in development) and Yarra Environment Strategy.

Legal Implications

34. There is no legal obligation for Council to develop or implement a Nature Strategy. However, the implementation of certain actions may relate to specific legislation or regulations, and will need to be addressed on a case by case basis.

Other Issues

35. There are no other issues presented.

Options

36. Officers recommend Council endorse the Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020 – 2014, for exhibition and community consultation.
37. If Council does not support this approach, it could elect to hold off on endorsement pending further review of the Draft Strategy.

Conclusion

38. After significant internal and selected external consultation, officers have completed a Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020-2024.

39. This report and the Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020-2024, are presented to Council for endorsement to proceed to public exhibition and community consultation for a 4 week period commencing in November 2019.

40. Following the community consultation period, officers will provide Council with a formal report that outlines any changes as a result of consultation and a recommendation to adopt a Final Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020-2024.

41. Delivery of the Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020-2024, actions is planned to commence in early 2020. The actions for the first half of Year 1 of the Strategy will be delivered by the Streetscapes and Natural Values Team using existing resources.

42. The proposed costs and approach to resourcing the implementation of the Nature Action Plan in future years will be considered as part of the annual budget process.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council:

   (a) note the report and attached the Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020 – 2024; and

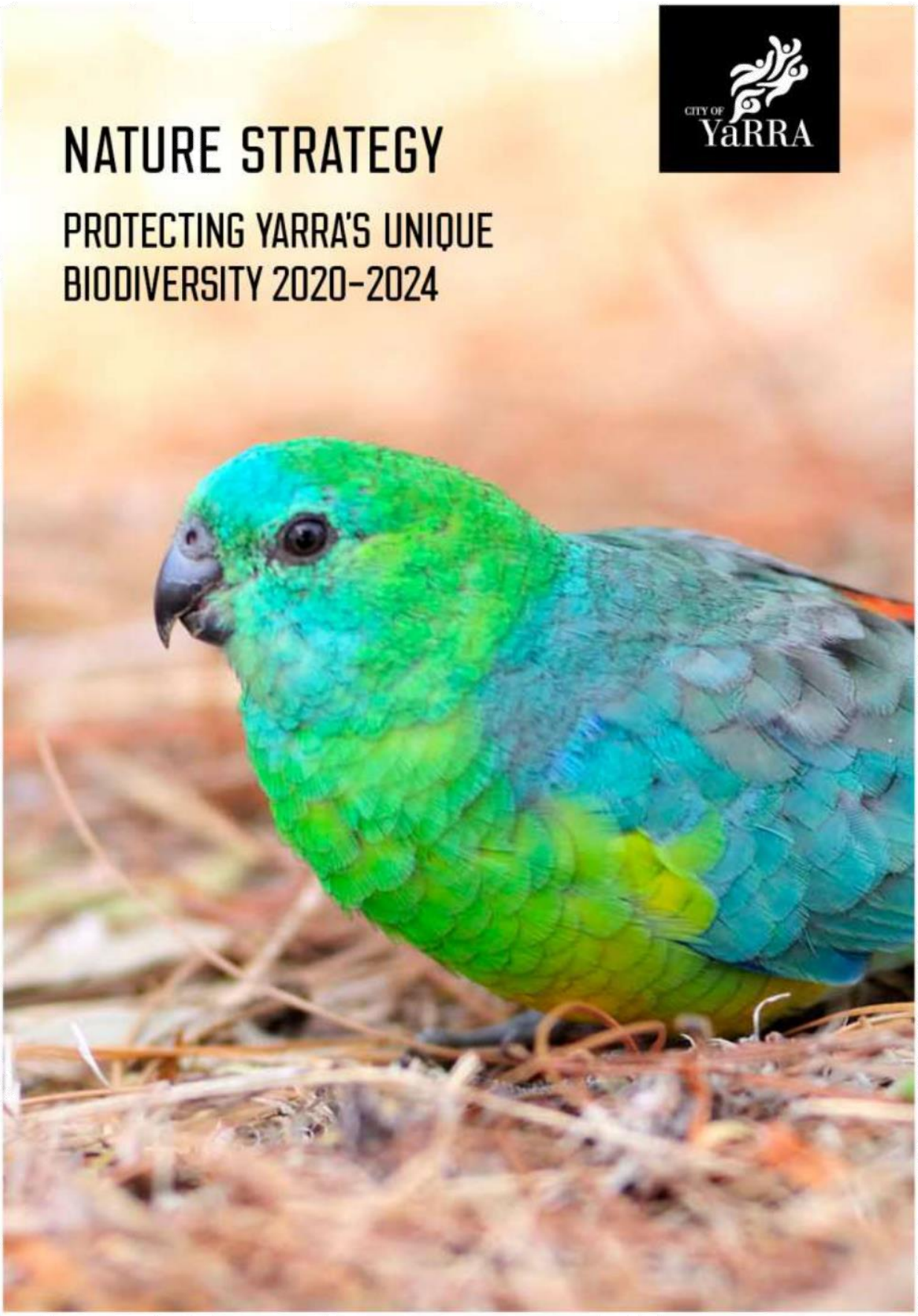
   (b) endorse the Draft Nature Strategy: Protecting Yarra's Unique Biodiversity 2020 – 2024 for exhibition and public consultation for a four week period commencing in November 2019.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Craig Lupton**
TITLE: **Coordinator Streetscape and Natural Values**
TEL: **9205 5727**

Attachments

1⇩ Final Draft Yarra Nature Strategy 2020-2024

Attachment 1 - Final Draft Yarra Nature Strategy 2020-2024



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[Include figures and photo references in final strategy]

DRAFT

Acknowledgement of country

Yarra is deeply proud of its connection to the Aboriginal community and acknowledges the Wurundjeri/Woiwurrung people as the true sovereigns, caretakers and custodians of the land now known as Yarra. Prior to the colonisation of Melbourne, the area known as Yarra held significant and cultural importance to the Wurundjeri/Woiwurrung people, and this connection still exists today. The spiritual connection to places within Yarra's municipal boundaries, like the Yarra River, and the confluence of the Yarra River and Merri Creek, extends back thousands of years to the Dreamtime. Since the early 1900s, Victoria's Aboriginal community has flocked to Yarra, to find the sense of community that is the strength of Aboriginal people. The City of Yarra is committed to keeping this sense of connection alive, and over a number of years has forged an increasingly robust relationship with the local Aboriginal community.

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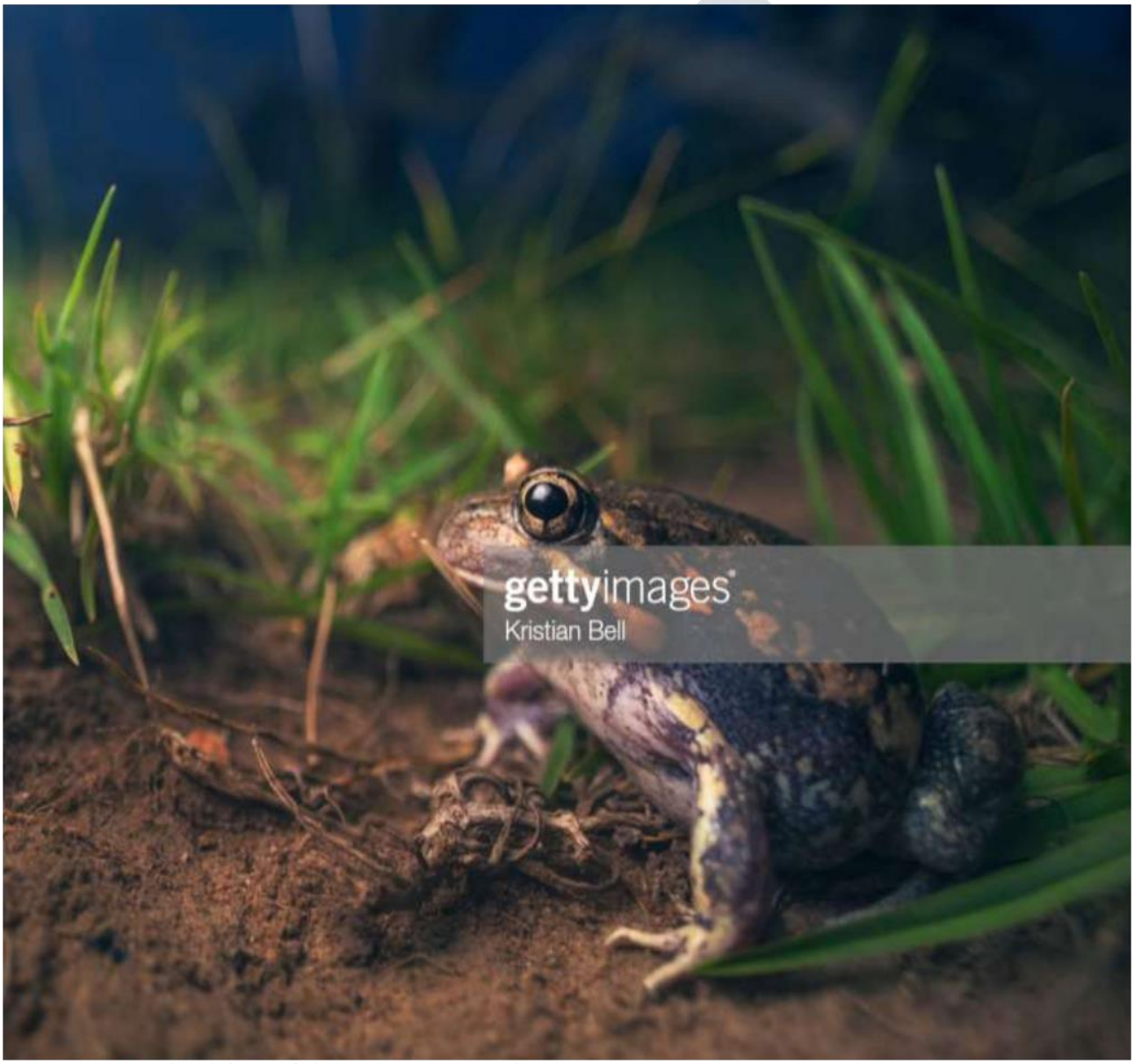
Figure 1. [Placeholder image] Mural by Tom Civil and Wurundjeri Council artists, Dights Falls. **Permission requested from Wurundjeri Council to use images of the mural.**

Message from the Mayor

[Placeholder] – To be included in the finally strategy



Vision and goals

The land within the City of Yarra supports a natural environment that is diverse, connected and resilient. Its custodians, the Wurundjeri/Woiwurrung people, continue to care for Country as is their traditional lore. Yarra's residents and visitors appreciate and enhance the natural and cultural values of the land and water, contributing to benefits for all.

Goal 1: A more diverse, connected and resilient natural environment

Goal 2: People appreciate and seek to enhance the natural values of the Yarra landscape

Goal 3: Nature is considered core council business

Goal 4: Innovation, communication and collaboration are the cornerstones of nature-focussed programs

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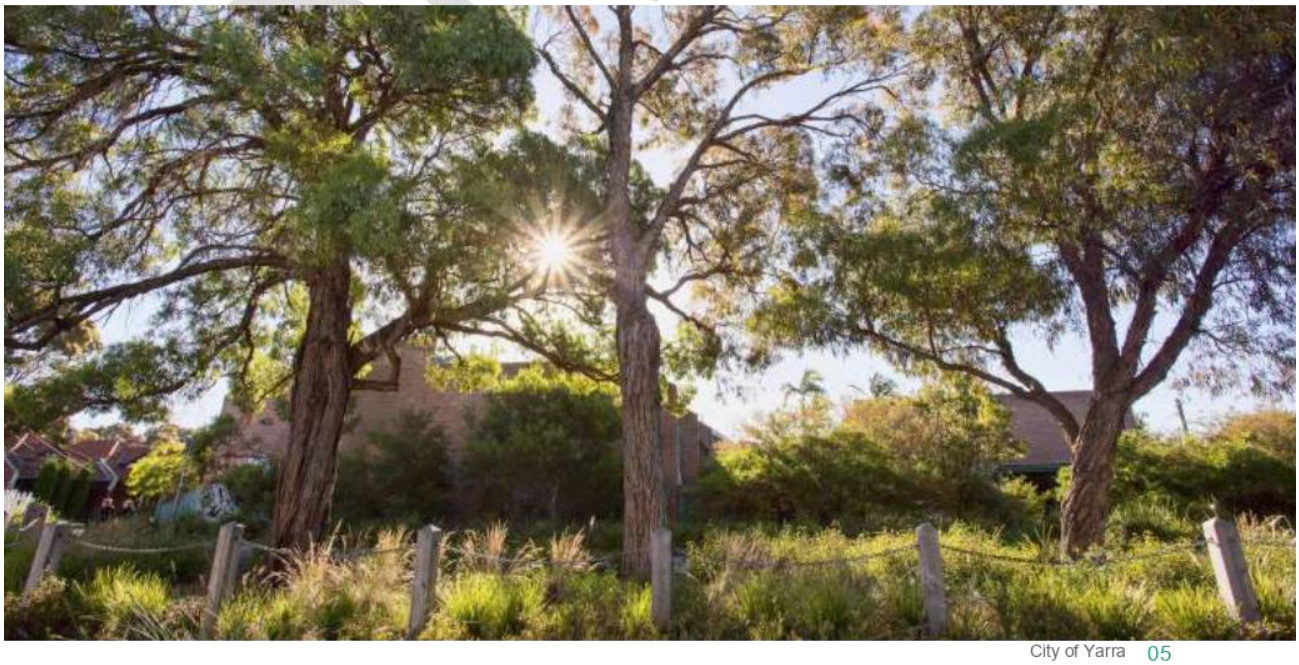

Introduction

One touch of nature makes the whole world kin. William Shakespeare

Why have a nature strategy?

Nature is valuable

Nature is life and includes everything from the land, soil, rocks, groundwater, waterways and every living thing, to the atmosphere and beyond. . It provides our landscape and sets the scene of every day, providing everything we need to live and to be comfortable.

There are many and diverse reasons why Australians care for nature, from the intrinsic belief that nature is beautiful and has a right to exist, through to a recognition of the services nature provides. Known as 'natural capital' or 'eco-system services', these services include food, drinking water, fibre, building and manufacturing materials, and other, less direct services like carbon storage, filtering air and water, pollination, protection from storms and floods, and places for rest and recreation.

If we want to understand how nature benefits us, we can consider the ecosystem services that are provided by nature.

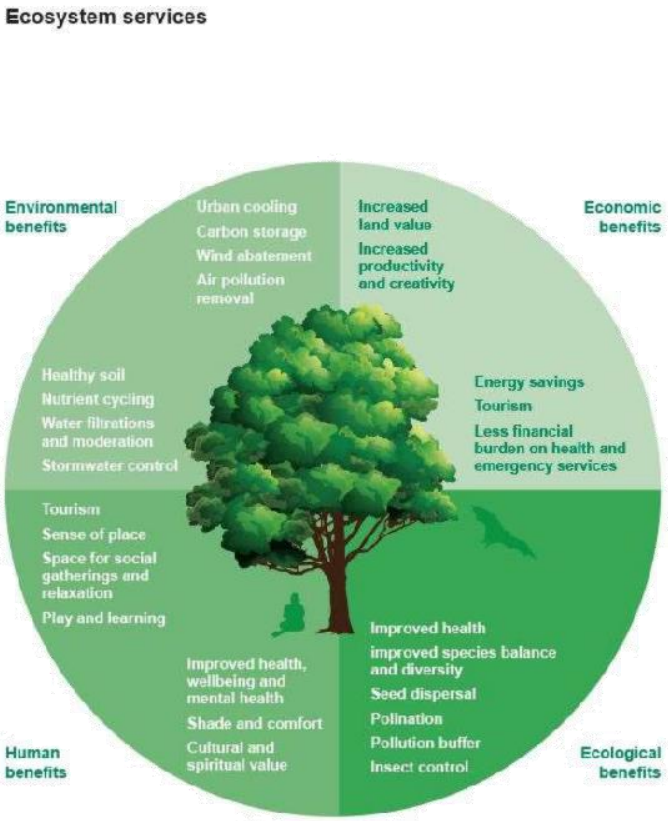

Figure 2. The Ecosystem Services that biodiversity can provide to the City of Yarra community.

Nature is our home

The landscape and waterways shape the municipality providing the structure for the plants, animals and other elements of nature that form our home. Traditionally, this land is the home of the Wurundjeri people of the Woi-wurrung language group, of the Kulin nation.

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Figure 3. [Placeholder Image] Cultural importance e.g. Mandy Nicholson's Cultural Map of Melbourne. Melbourne Potential Wurundjeri Country Art Photograph. **Permission requested from Wurundjeri Council to use this image.**

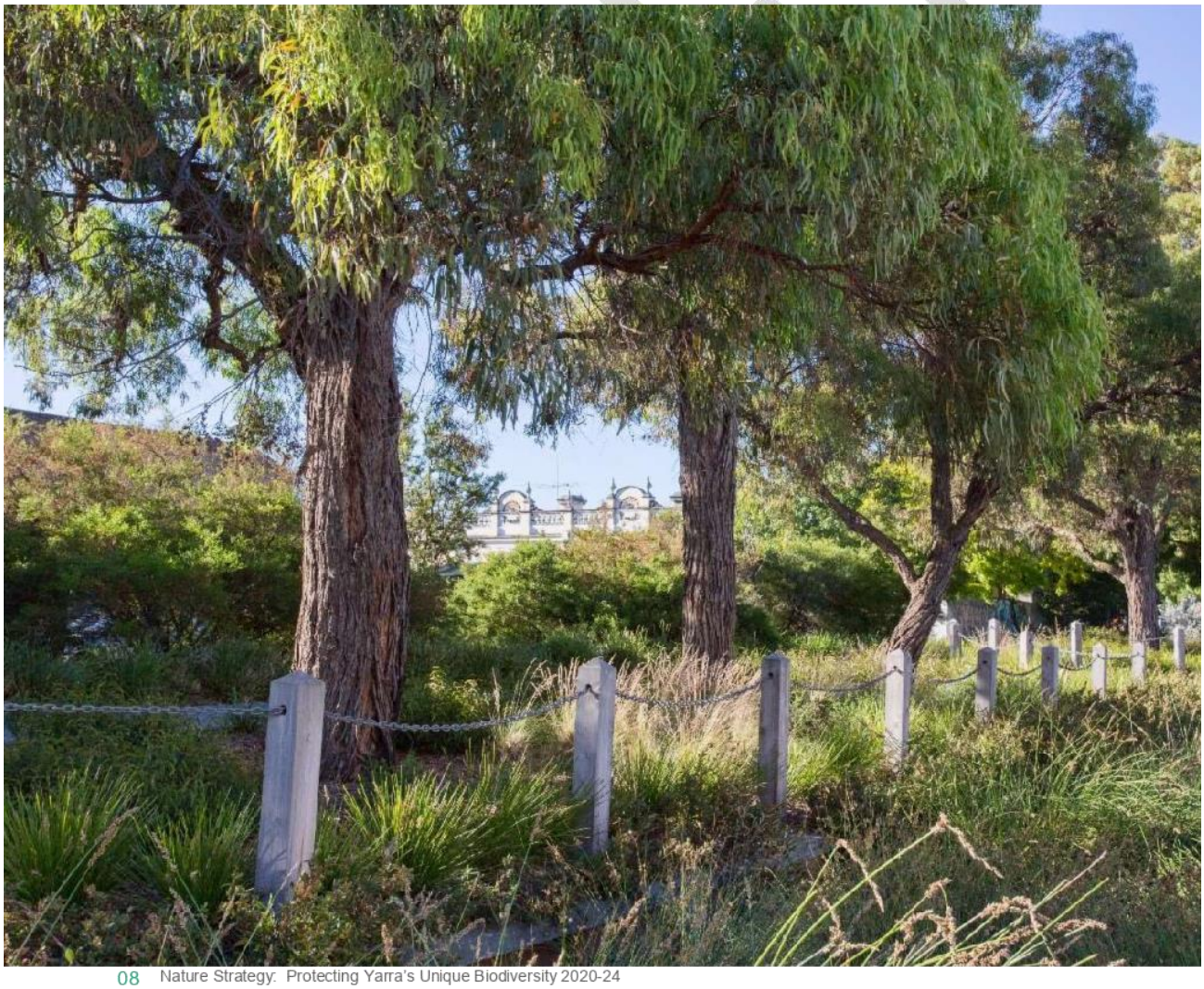
Nature in Yarra

The landscape of Yarra has been shaped by its geology. It sits at the junction of two distinctly different geological regions that in this case also geographically align with two bioregions. These bioregions are generally separated by the Yarra River:

- The Victorian Volcanic Plain, characterised by its basaltic rock and clay soils, formed by volcanic eruptions to the west of Melbourne covering the majority of the municipality; and
- The Gippsland Plain Bioregion: associated with sedimentary, layered geology of Silurian siltstones, Tertiary aged sandstones and Quaternary aged basalt. Each of these layers is much older than the western plains basalt and is derived from times when Victoria sat within a deep ocean basin.

The majority of Yarra's topography is gently undulating, which is characteristic of the western basalt plains. Subtle changes in topography are evident at Richmond Hill, where the elevation facilitates great views across the municipality, formerly attracting some of the district's first grand homes and churches. Conversely the lower areas, formerly known as the Fitzroy, Collingwood and Richmond 'Flats,' include the wet and swampy ground which was formerly part of the Yarra River floodplain.

The waterway corridors provide the most significant change in topography across the City of Yarra, with areas of the Darebin Creek, Merri Creek and the Yarra River deeply incised at various locations. Of course, much of the natural topography has been modified with the urban development of the area.



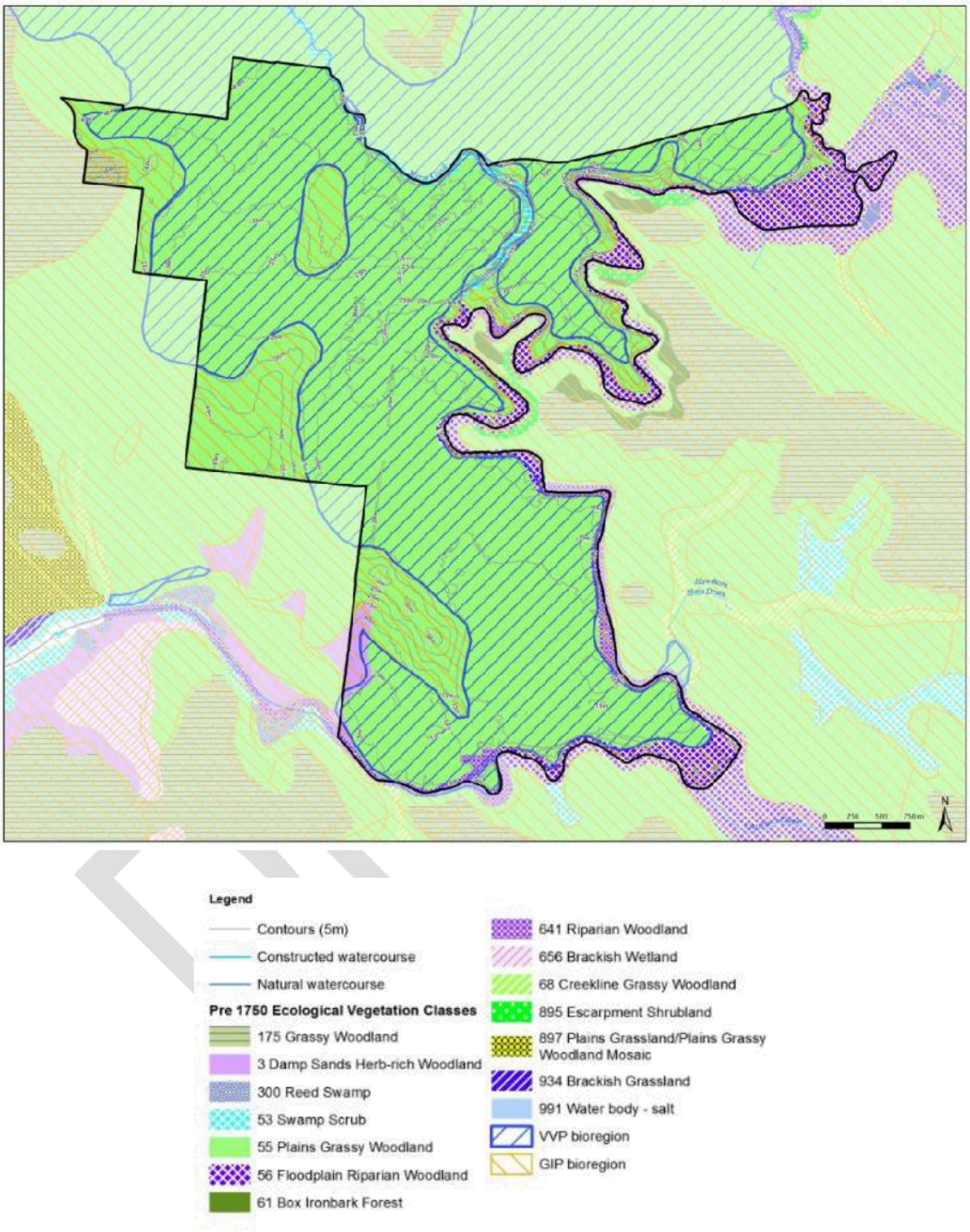


Figure 4. Bioregions and original native vegetation (Ecological Vegetation Classes) – Option to improve this via graphic design. Aiming to provide information about the original landscape.

Seasons of Wurundjeri Country

Traditional owners have developed a deep understanding of natural systems and processes through more than 40,000 years of experience and connection to country, with an example being understanding of seasons.

Like many Traditional owner groups around Australia, the Wurundjeri people have a detailed, local understanding of the seasons and the environment. Each season is marked by the movement of the stars in the night sky and changes in the weather, coinciding with the life cycles of plants and animals. Seasons were also defined not only by temperature and the amount of rainfall, but also by more subtle distinctions related to patterns of rainfall and the types of events. Reading this seasonal rhythm helped maximise the availability of food and shelter. When food was plentiful there were opportunities to carry out ritual responsibilities and ceremonial gatherings.

In Melbourne and surrounds, there are seven annual seasons alongside two non-annual seasons: flood and fire seasons. Flood season is likely to occur on average about every 28 years, and fire season occurs on average about every seven years. (Aboriginal Victoria)

Lifestyle depended very much on the rhythm of the seasons. Traditional owners moved over their extensive territories in regular cycles, maximising the availability of food and shelter. When food was plentiful there were opportunities to carry out ritual responsibilities and opportunities for ceremonial gatherings.

They were always mindful of the seasons in selecting the localities in which to spend their time, taking into account not only the natural features of the ground, but the facilities for obtaining food.

Much was known about the stars and the seasons. People could read the sky. For example, they would know that when a particular constellation appeared it was time to hunt a particular animal, or dig up a particular plant. The flowering of particular plants was often used to mark seasonal events. Even today, fisherman use the flowering of the Coast Tea-tree in early November to mark the entry of Snapper into Port Phillip Bay.

7 Seasons of the Wurundjeri Country

Museums Victoria have named the seasons after the Woiwurrung language names for eels, wombats, and orchid, tadpoles and grass, but it is not known if these names were used by the Woiwurrung. According to Musems Victoria;

"The Kulin have a detailed local understanding of the seasons and the environment. Each season is marked by the movement of the stars in the night sky and changes in the weather, coinciding with the life cycles of plants and animals."

Their calendar has seven seasons:

Guling Orchid Season, (August) and it is marked by orchids flowering, the silver wattle bursting into colour and male koalas bellowing at night.

Poorneet Tadpole Season, (September and October) is when temperatures rise, rain continues and the pied currawongs call loudly. The days and nights are of equal length.

Buath Gurru Grass Flowering Season, (November) is warm and it often rains. (A good thing to remember as we start planning picnics.)

Kangaroo-Apple Season, (December) is marked by its changeable, thundery weather, longer days and shorter nights.

Biderap Dry Season, (January and February) has high temperatures and low rainfall.

Iuk (Eel) Season, (March) is when the hot winds stop and the temperatures cool, while the manna gums flower and the days and nights are again equal in length.

Waring Wombat Season, (April-July) has cool, rainy days and misty mornings, with our highest rainfall and lowest temperatures.

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Figure 5. [Placeholder Image]. Example, City of Melbourne, 7 Seasons of Wurundjeri Country. **City of Yarra currently producing a Infographic based on the above example.**

The Biodiversity Health Survey – an inventory of Yarra's natural values

The Biodiversity Health Survey (BHS) was a two-year study that aimed to develop an inventory of the biodiversity values present across the open space areas within the City of Yarra.

The project involved a comprehensive survey of various open space areas across the municipality. This included 30 open space reserves such as Hall Reserve, Edinburgh Gardens and Alphington Park Wetland; 10 pocket parks including Flockhart Reserve, Holden Byrne Park and Dame Mellie Melba Park; and 12 streetscapes including Heidelberg Road, Hoddle Street and Pigdon Street. An important aspect of the study was the inclusion of areas not typically considered to be associated with the presence of native plants and animals.

The survey methods used as part of the study aimed to capture the broad array of primarily native animals and also plants still existing within the City of Yarra. The survey included the use of:

- database searches
- identification of land cover and vegetation types
- assessment of fauna habitat values: leaf litter, significant habitat trees and hollow abundance
- documentation of plant species diversity, including indigenous plants and weeds
- daytime (diurnal) and night-time (nocturnal) bird surveys.
- frog surveys
- reptile surveys, microbat surveys using specialised bat detector devices
- wildlife camera trap surveys

Figure 6. Fauna survey during the Biodiversity Health Survey, 2016. Photographs: Practical Ecology

Attachment 1 - Final Draft Yarra Nature Strategy 2020-2024

Key findings from the Biodiversity Health Survey

Large Areas of Bushland

- Significant areas of bushland were mapped at Burnley Park, and Hall, Kevin Bartlett & Rushall Recreation Reserves; providing habitat for native plants and animals

High Diversity of Plants and Animals

- 430 plant species were recorded with 209 indigenous to Yarra.
- A diversity of animals recorded: birds, mammals, reptiles, frogs and insects.
- High diversity of bat species, largely microbats (7 species), including Eastern False Pipistrelle (pictured) and Yellow-bellied Sheathtail Bat.
- National and state significant animals recorded, including Grey-headed Flying Fox and Nankeen Night-heron.

Wetland Habitats

- Alphington Park Wetland, and McConchie Reserve & its surrounds ('Burnley Harbour'); provide habitat for a varierty of wetland plant and animal species.
- Wetlands were a hotspot of bird and microbat activity

Wildlife Corridors & Urban Stepping Stones

- Wildlife coridoors were identified along the Merri Creek, Yarra River, and the Park Street Linear reserves
- Urban parks and larger urban parks such as Edinburgh Gardens and Darling Gardens; provide 'stepping stones' across the Yarra landscape between larger areas of fauna habitat

Significant Habitat Trees

- Significant River Red Gums and Sugar Gums were mapped in Burnley Park and Kevin Bartlett Reserve
- Other hollow-bearing native trees and larger canopy trees including non-native species like Oaks, were mapped across the municipality

Vegetation cover and type

Across the City of Yarra open space and sporting reserves; lawns and planted tree canopy cover (including non-local native or exotic species) were the dominant land cover types. This was followed by bushland (16%) and garden beds (10%) (Figure 9). This suggests there are considerable opportunities to increase plantings of midstorey (shrubs) and groundstorey (grasses and herbaceous species) bushland vegetation in the majority of council managed reserves.

Where opportunities exist in lawn areas (open space) and under tree canopy where appropriate, the introduction/reinstatement of local bushland understory and ground cover vegetation should be considered as a part of future open space management objectives and outcomes. For example, areas that are a liability to maintain due to terrain, areas that are adjacent to gaps in the riparian corridor and areas that assist in achieving open space maintenance sustainability should be considered for revegetation.

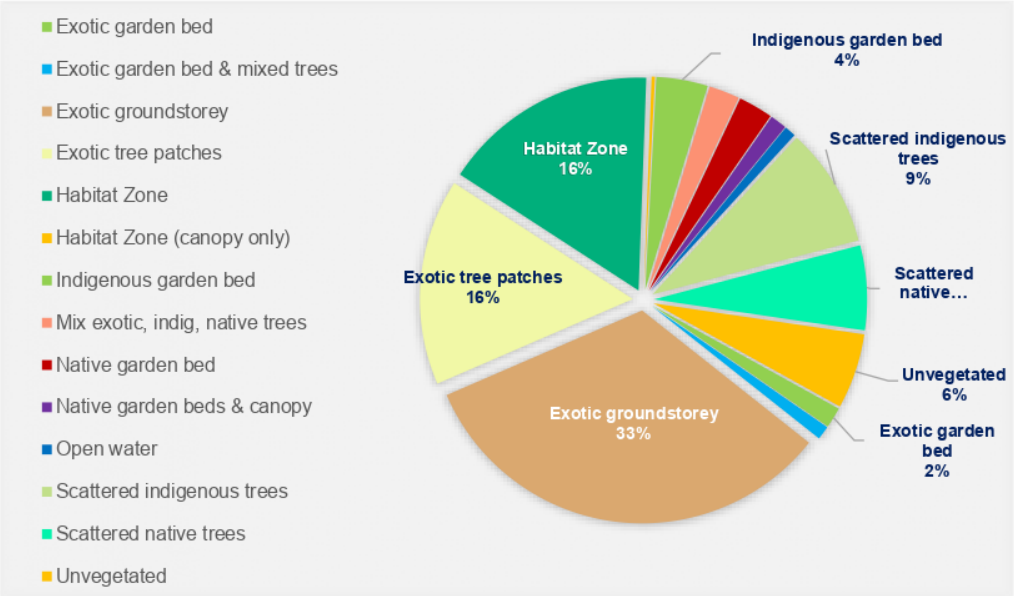

Figure 7. Vegetation cover across the municipal reserve system

The City of Yarra is home to many sites of natural significance; which are primarily linked with the waterway corridors and more specifically, the Yarra River; with the vast majority of remnant native vegetation located on public land (Map 2 shows locations of remnant native vegetation and mapped trees of significance and Map 3).

In total, the City of Yarra includes 263.4 hectares (ha) of publically accessible open space, with an additional 85.3 ha of 'restricted access' open space, namely sporting ground/s or golf courses (Thompson Berril Landscape Design 2016), shown in Map 1.

When compared to neighbouring municipalities (Figure 8), a relatively high proportion (approximately 11%) of the City of Yarra landscape is attributable to native vegetation cover. This is almost as high as the City of Banyule, with it's' less urban landscape. Of Yarra's native vegetation cover, 6% occurs within public land, leaving approximately 5% cover within private land. While this provides a good base from which to work, this is well below recommended percentages for landscape vegetation cover and there are good opportunities for increasing the cover of native vegetation within council's open spaces (a benchmark of 20% native vegetation cover is the accepted amount to sustain woodland bird communities).

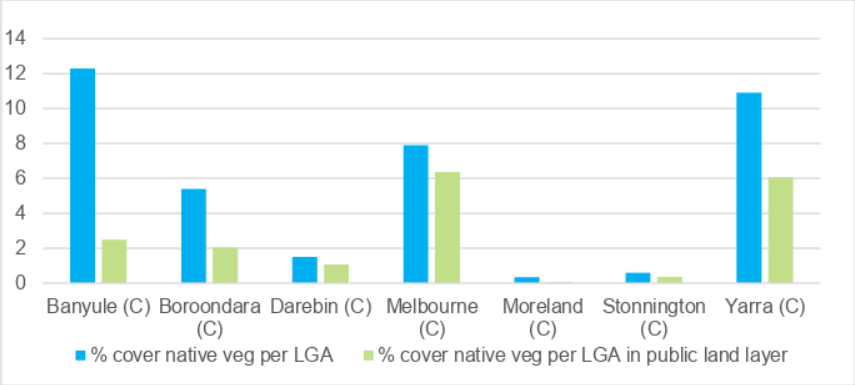

Figure 8. Comparison of native vegetation cover between adjoining municipalities

While the majority of the natural areas of open space; largely located within Yarra Bend Regional Park, are managed by Parks Victoria, the City of Yarra manages 94 open space reserves or parks, that cover over 157 ha (see Map 2) The City of Yarra managed open space reserves range in area from approximately 24 ha (i.e.: Kevin Bartlett Reserve in Burnley) to less than 0.1 ha (i.e.: Chestnut Street Reserve in Cremone); with the larger reserves generally situated along the waterways, and the smaller reserve within the urban development matrix.

During the BHS, native vegetation cover was mapped and six different vegetation communities (Ecological Vegetation Classes; EVCs) were recorded across the surveyed areas. Areas of bushland that met a set of criteria using the 'Habitat Hectare' native vegetation assessment method (DSE 2004) were mapped as 'Habitat Zones' totalled 27.25 hectares across the City of Yarra. The reserves with the greatest number of bushland areas (habitat zones) were Burnley Park (6), Hall Reserve (5), Alphington Park Wetland (5), Rushall Recreation Reserve (5), Park Street Linear Reserves (4), and Coulson Reserve/Knott Reserve (4).

Figure 16 shows the relative percentage cover for each EVC that contributes to the total indigenous vegetation cover within the City of Yarra. Riparian Woodland and Plains Grassy Woodland accounted for over half of the indigenous vegetation surveyed. Figures 11 to 15 illustrate the various EVCs mapped within the municipality.

Map 3 shows the extent of native vegetation by EVC within Yarra; including confirmed native vegetation which was mapped during the BHS, and modelled native vegetation cover sourced via government mapping.

Small areas of wetland vegetation: Aquatic Herbland and Tall Marsh are restricted to locations within a few reserves: Alphington Wetland and McConchie Reserve.

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Figure 9. Aquatic Herbland, Alphington Wetlands

Figure 10. Floodplain Riparian Woodland at Rudder Grange, Alphington

Figure 11. Escarpment Shrubland at the Circus Site, Burnley

Figure 12. Plains Grassy Woodland at Coate Park, Alphington

Figure 13. Tall Marsh at McConchie Reserve, Burnley

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Map 1. [**Placeholder Map – Check with Open Space Planning to confirm use**] Existing Open Space (from Draft Yarra Open Space Strategy 2019). Make an A3 pull out.

Significant habitat trees

Large significant habitat trees act as 'stepping stones' across the landscape for birds, bats and arboreal mammals. They are distributed broadly throughout the municipality (Map 4), either as single trees or they are positioned along streetscapes; although there are some key areas where they occur in relatively high densities (e.g. Edinburgh Gardens and Darling Gardens). Focal animal species such as the Powerful Owl can use tall trees as roosting and/or foraging sites.

During the Biodiversity Health Survey (BHS), significant indigenous habitat trees were recorded when they were encountered in each patch of native vegetation (habitat zone) and as incidental observations within reserves and streetscapes that were surveyed.

Generally, large indigenous hollow-bearing trees are scarce across the municipality. A high proportion of the assessed indigenous trees in the municipality are young and not large enough for the development of hollows. A large proportion of the older trees across the municipality, are species that are less likely to form hollows which includes both planted exotic and introduced native species. Exotic trees in reserves such as Edinburgh Gardens rarely provide a wide range of hollow sizes suitable for a diversity of native fauna and tend to be utilised by introduced/non-indigenous and/or urban tolerant bird species (e.g. Rainbow Lorikeets, Galahs, and Corellas) and Brushtail Possums.

The majority of hollow-bearing trees recorded in the BHS were either very large old River Red Gums (which were sparse), or in exotic Elm or Oak trees. Regardless of the origin of the tree species, hollow-bearing trees should be protected wherever possible, as they are a key habitat resource which can take many human lifetimes and sometimes hundreds of years to replace naturally.

Bird usage and tree habitat values

During the BHS bird censuses conducted along the streetscapes; native street trees were assessed as providing greater habitat values for bird species than exotic trees; particularly for honeyeaters, lorikeets and insectivores (Figure 14). These trees may also provide occasional habitat for endangered bird species such as the Swift Parrot. Insectivorous birds were expected to use a greater number of exotic street trees.

Both native and exotic tree species provide flowering resources for honeyeaters and lorikeets, and the appropriate canopy structure and tree trunks for foraging insectivorous species. Native trees are expected to provide greater numbers and size ranges of hollows that can be potential nesting and/or breeding sites. Frugivorous bird species would be mainly limited to foraging in native fruit-bearing trees (or backyard fruit trees, which were not assessed as part of the BHS). The streetscape along Pigdon Street provides nesting habitat for Cockatoos in the Canary Island Date Palm trees. Other resources for Cockatoos occur along Stawell Street where Sheoak and Hakea spp. are present. All the mapped significant habitat trees and street trees provide 'stepping stones' across the landscape for bird movement.

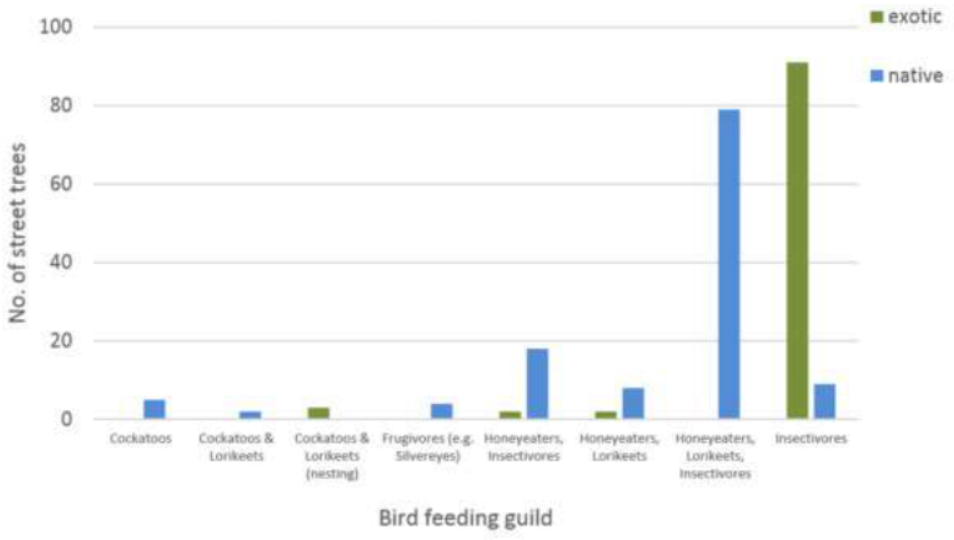


Figure 14. Usage of street trees situated along streetscapes by bird feeding guilds

The location and type (exotic, native or indigenous) of tree species will influence the range of bird species likely to inhabit the trees present.

The exotic trees across the City of Yarra tend to generally be older, and whilst they do provide some refuge and nesting opportunities, it is only for a small suite of urban tolerant bird species.

Native and/or indigenous tree species provide a wider range of habitat values across the full spectrum of bird species recorded in the municipality. Although the bulk of these tree species are yet to reach their maturity, there is a clear indication (as depicted in Figure 14) that their presence is potentially providing a broader spectrum of foraging activities for birds, than those provided by exotic tree species.

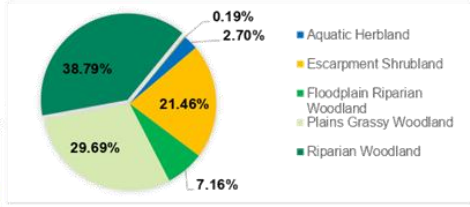
What are significant habitat trees?

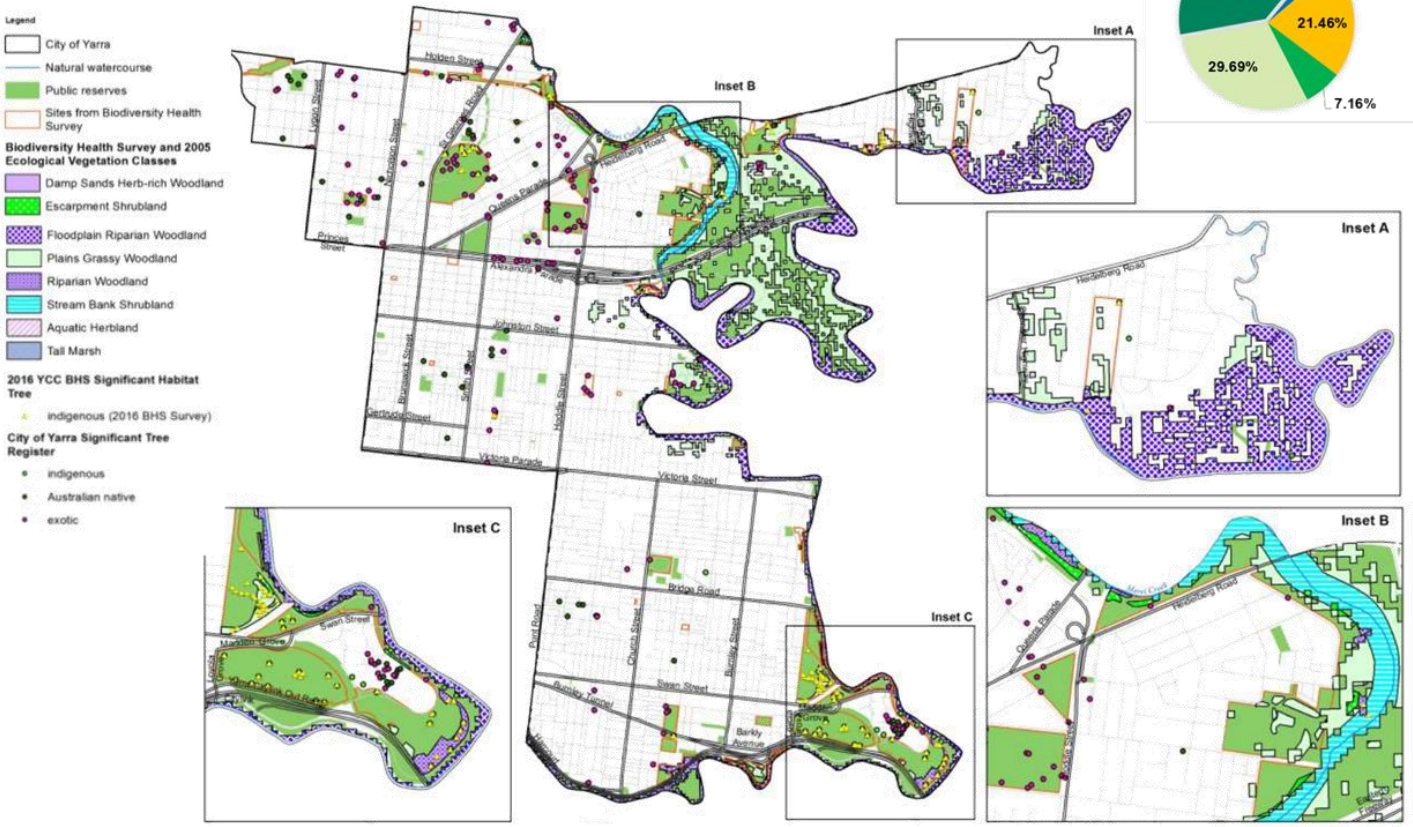
- Trees that are native to the area (indigenous trees) that also qualify as Large Old Trees under the *Habitat Hectare* method, are large dead stags, or support a number of hollows.
- Australian native or exotic trees if they provide a relatively high proportion of shelter (hollows or canopy to nest in) or food resources (flowers, fruits, seeds, and insects) for fauna in the local environment. The level of food resources can be related to tree size with larger trees providing greater canopy extent, food resources, and shelter opportunities such as hollows or canopy for nesting in.

Figure 15. Large Old River Red Gum Tree provides excellent habitat value. Photograph: C. Lupton

Attachment 1 - Final Draft Yarra Nature Strategy 2020-2024

Figure 16. EVCs that are present within the City of Yarra's Open Space Network





Map 2. Distribution of native vegetation and significant trees in Yarra.

Critical habitat, ecosystems and habitat corridors

During the Biodiversity Health Survey a number of locations of Critical Habitat were identified within the municipality. These were primarily for wetland and waterway dependent species in and around the Yarra River and its wetlands. Further from the immediate waterway areas, critical habitat is provided in other locations for woodland species. This is sometimes on the basis that significant habitat trees or other key habitat features are present. Areas of Critical Habitat are shown in 3.

Synthesis of the results of the Biodiversity Health Survey assisted in creating an Ecosystem Model that can be used to plan and measure management actions. This is shown in 17. This model includes animals that can be considered as focal species, as their needs align with a series of important habitat features. Therefore, if this type of animal is healthy and reproducing, it can be derived that the elements that that animal needs (food, water, shelter) are all at satisfactory levels. It is recommended that this ecosystem model is promoted internally and to the community. Additionally, these animals are recommended for use when planning and designing habitat links or enhancing existing areas of critical habitat.

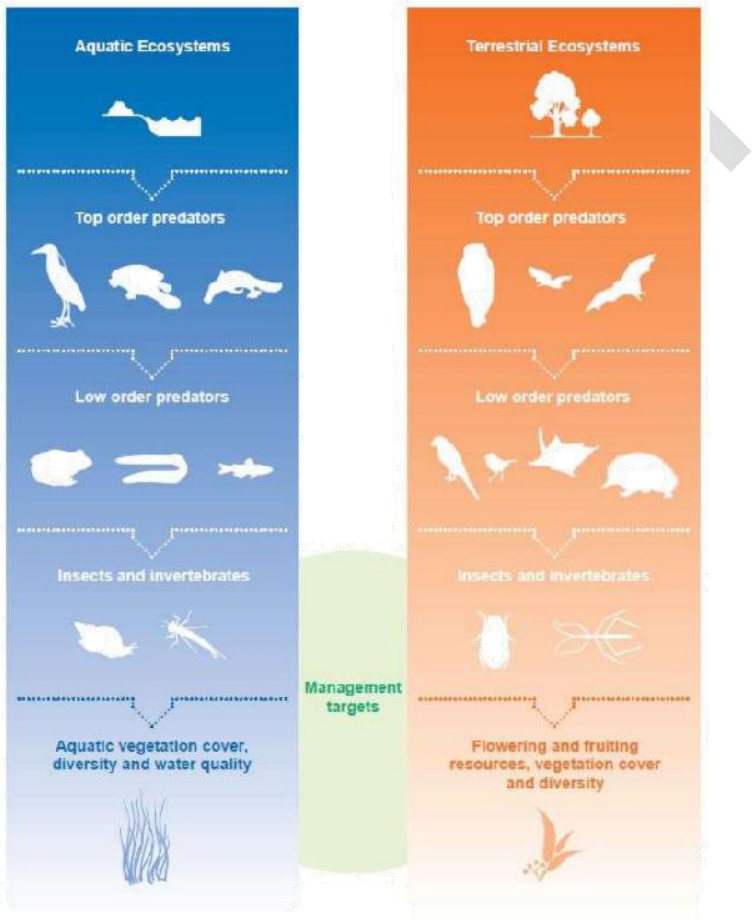
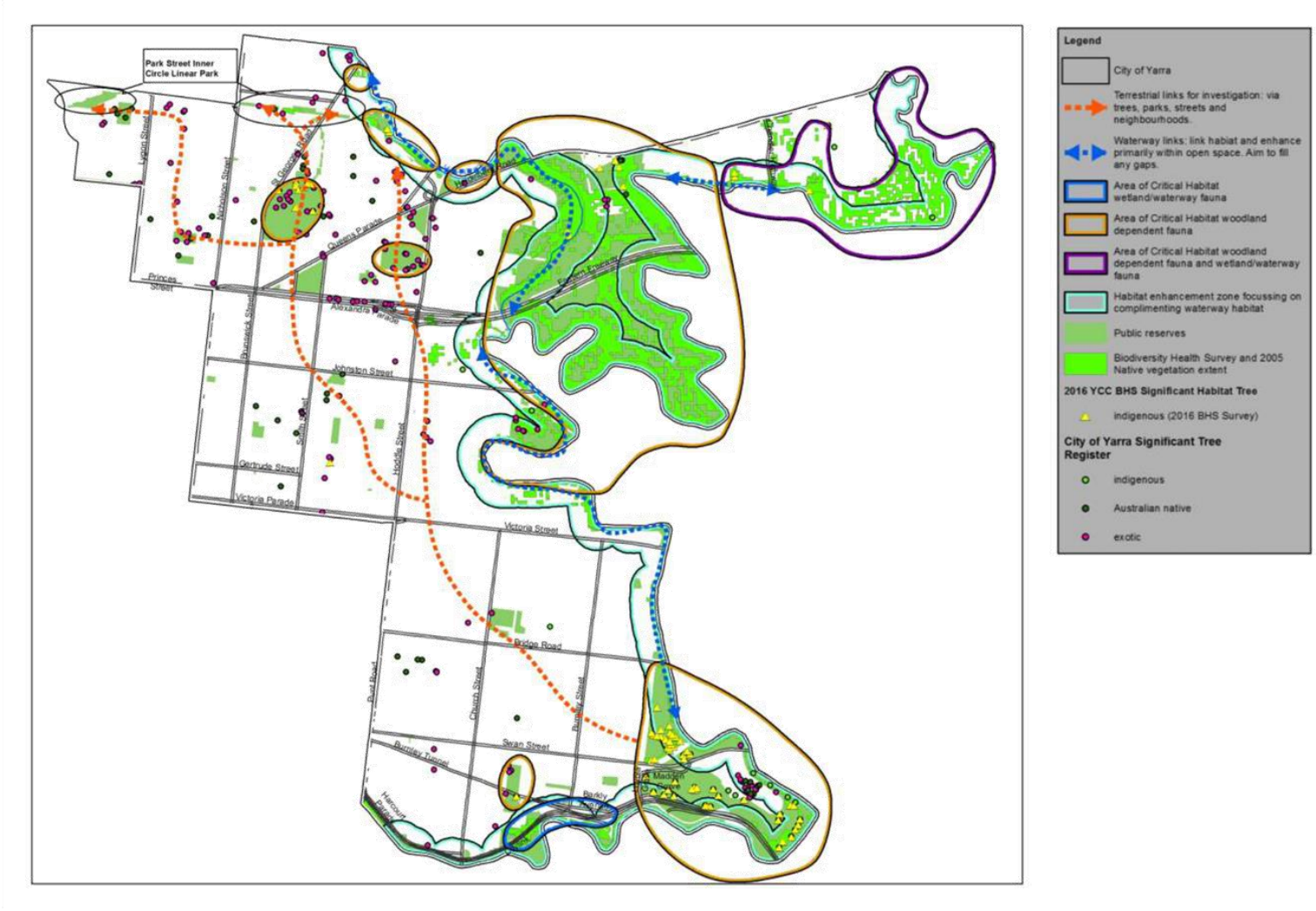


Figure 17. Eco-system model for the City of Yarra.

Habitat corridors or links differ from critical habitat in that they provide fewer habitat resources for fauna to complete their life cycle. Corridors provide the basic habitat elements to enable animals to move safely across the landscape, sometimes between two or more areas of critical habitat. There are several important corridors for fauna movement within the City of Yarra, and further corridors that could be created. These are shown in Map 4.

Attachment 1 - Final Draft Yarra Nature Strategy 2020-2024



Map 3. Opportunities for strengthening and creating habitat links across the City of Yarra

Could sugar-gliders fly across Yarra's skies?

The Yarra River corridor is known to support populations of Sugar Gliders (*Petaurus breviceps*), small gregarious creatures that creep out and soar between trees as the sun goes down.

While there are only a few official records of these animals locally, a recent study in the City of Boroondara found populations that live just to the east of Yarra. As they're now known to live so close, it's likely they're in the City of Yarra as well.

While we don't know exactly how many Sugar Gliders live locally, we can encourage more of them to move in! It might take a while to eventually see them soaring above Carlton, but why not if we really try?

Would you like to see Sugar Gliders gliding in the Yarra skies? This is how can we make it happen!

- They live in small tree hollows that have developed in older trees. So if there aren't lots of old trees with hollows, we can help by putting up nest boxes or create artificial hollows.
- More trees could be planted so that they too would eventually become large and old with their own hollows.
- Retain as many large old trees (LOT) as possible. Undertake interventions to prolong LOT life (cabling and other stability works).
- Implement a program of person-made chainsaw hollows in suitable large trees along the waterways and adjacent park areas.
- They love to eat nectar, insects and fruit. And they especially love feasting on the sap of Wattles, their favourite treat. So we'd need to plant plenty of the types of trees and food plants that they like. Again this would include indigenous trees like Yellow Box and Manna Gums as well as wattles, in clusters near the trees.
- They like to live in family groups called clans of around seven animals, so for them to live in one place together they would need enough room for everyone.
- They can glide, they need tall trees within a distance that they can safely reach (up to 90 metres apart, but preferably closer). And for them to feel safe, they need trees with good canopy cover.
- Start a community next box program on Council and private land. Engage qualified arborists/tree climbers to install boxes and the community can use wireless nest box cameras to monitor how many Sugar Gliders use the boxes as homes.

Figure 18. Sugar Glider in a nest box. Photograph: C. Lupton

Policy and strategy relevant to natural values

The maintenance and enhancement of natural values are relevant to a cross organisation focus and has close relationships with a broad range of other council policies and strategies. The most closely related strategies and policies are shown in Figure 19. Further detail on each of these policies, strategies and how they relate to the Nature Strategy is provided in Appendix 1. Further information on the legislative context for the Nature Strategy provided in Appendix 2.

Plans, policies and strategies:

City of Yarra:

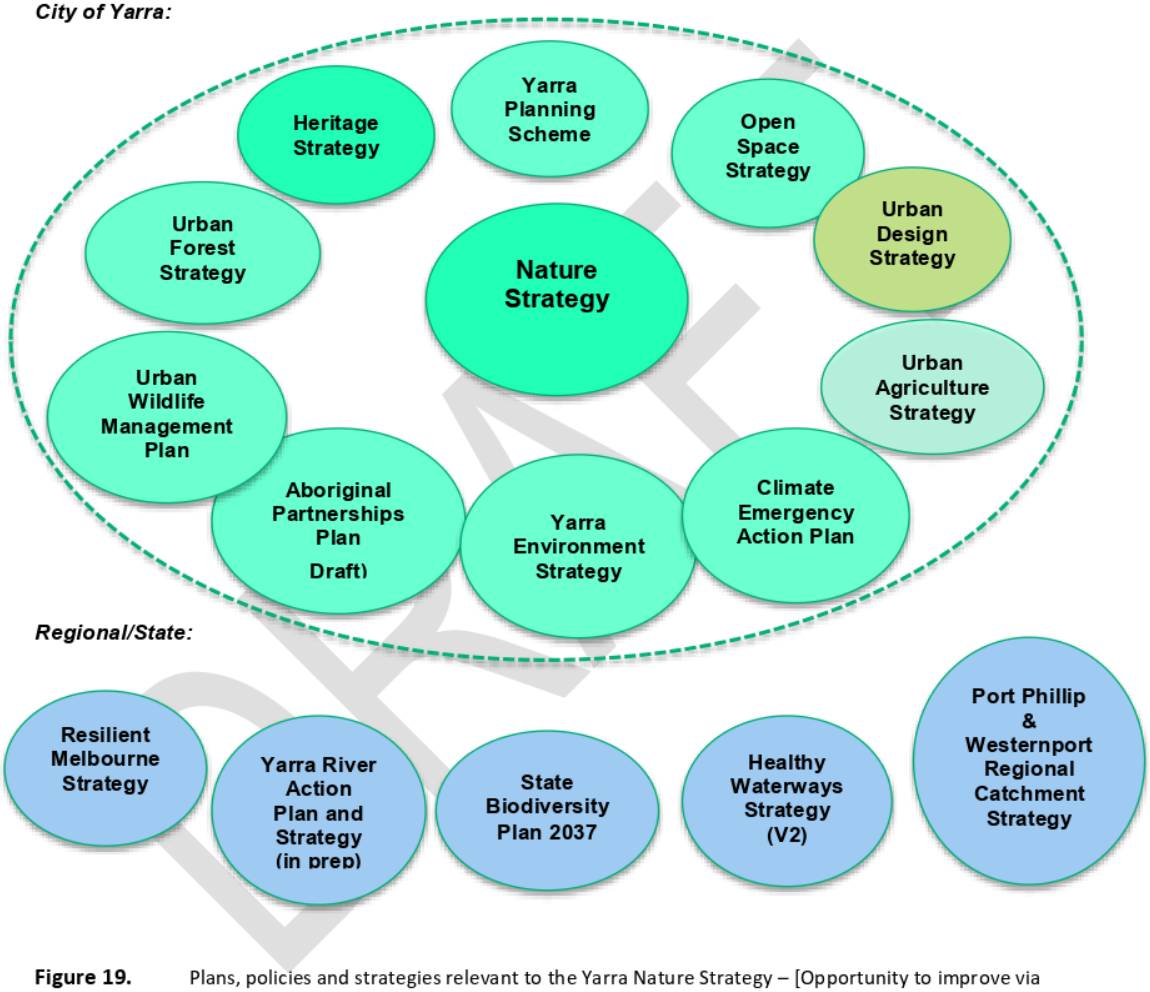


Figure 19. Plans, policies and strategies relevant to the Yarra Nature Strategy – [Opportunity to improve via graphic design]

What does Yarra do to support nature?

There is a suite of direct and indirect actions/approaches that Council implements that have positive impacts on nature conservation and engagement. For example:

Staff resources:

The City of Yarra currently allocates approximately 0.8 FTE to nature conservation outcomes, mainly providing oversight and coordination to Streetscapes and Bushland Management outcomes.

Management and restoration of natural values:

- Bushland management work focuses on 31 Core Bushland sites with additional and substantial native plant restoration programs at Alexandra Parade (0.78Ha) , Burnley Golf Course (12Ha) and the Burnley Circus Site (1.5Ha) to name a few.
- The City of Yarra's reserves that are primarily native vegetation cover an extent of 33.6 hectares with another 4.4Ha indirectly managed through a Parks Victoria and Merri Creek Management Committee partnership.
- The 38Ha bushland management program is delivered by a team of professional bushland management contractors via a structured program of management.
- Each of the reserves with bushland values have been mapped, and bushland areas allocated into a series of management categories that align with an adapted version of the *Society for Ecological Restoration Australasia (SERA) National Standards for Ecological Restoration*.
    - The bushland management team are employed on a long-term contract. This requires that they meet set KPIs associated with monitoring data linked to the adapted SERA standards including: percentage cover for weeds and native vegetation; including grasses, herbs, shrubs and trees – that are monitored via regular transects
    - Bushland management work includes weed management, vegetation planting, mulching, slashing, rubbish removal and other miscellaneous tasks.
    - An annual audit that appraises the site condition of habitat zones with reference to the relevant vegetation community (EVC), management standard required and species diversity
- A monitoring program is completed by a separately contracted ecological consultant to measure progress towards long and short-term management goals, which mainly focus on seeking improvements in native vegetation cover and reduction in weed cover.
- A program of revegetation work is completed annually and this is largely targeted towards areas of existing vegetation, as well as extending patches of native vegetation, and filling gaps. An average of 15,000 – 20,000 indigenous ground cover, understory and trees are planted annually.
- The City of Yarra is a member body of the Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC) and the Darebin Creek Management Committee (DCMC) and contributes financially towards supporting these two organisations in areas of Planning and Coordination, Ecological Restoration and National Tree Day, Community Education and Waterwatch.
- City of Yarra also partners with Parks Victoria to deliver bushland restoration work in Yarra Bend Park to achieve biodiversity outcomes across boundaries.
- An annual grant is received from Melbourne Water through the 'Corridors of Green' Grants program, to deliver the Yarra River Escarpment Remnant EVC Restoration Project. This is an ongoing project that aims to reinstate the Yarra River riparian corridor.
- Additional funding is offered by Melbourne Water through their 'Corridors of Green' Grants program for which council is a regular successful applicant. The Yarra River Loy's Paddock Escarpment EVC Restoration Project is one such ongoing project that aims to reinstate the Yarra River riparian corridor.
- In its own projects in council managed land, the City of Yarra engages suitably qualified consultants to inspect trees/vegetation for wildlife prior to tree removal. If wildlife is identified, the consultant will minimise stress and ensure the safety of wildlife that are displaced during tree removal in line with the Governor in Council Order (2003), under the Wildlife Act 1975.

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- The City of Yarra has implemented a range local and regional fox control programs to comply with the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP) noting the Red Fox is declared as an "Established Pest Animal" in Victoria.
- Council provides advice on techniques to exclude exotic birds from resident's gardens such as the Common or Indian Myna.
- In addition to activities associated with the direct removal of red foxes, reduction in habitat disturbance and fragmentation is likely to reduce predatory-prey interactions. The Bushland maintenance program will continue to improve the coverage of indigenous vegetation to support those species predisposed to fox predation.

Water management:

Council has installed and maintains 58 raingardens (Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)) features in council managed land. These assist in delivering:

- Reduced volume of stormwater entering the Yarra River and Merri Creek, leading to an improved aquatic environment
- Improved stormwater quality, leading to improved water quality in the Yarra River and Merri Creek, and Port Phillip Bay
- Flood mitigation by intercepting stormwater flows
- Improved biodiversity as a result of the green space provided by raingardens, especially where local native plants are used
- Decreased urban heat island effect as a result of increased green space

There is a suite of direct and indirect actions/approaches that Council implements that have positive impacts on nature conservation. For example:

Streetscape management:

Council manages over 2200 (approx. 34,000m^2) traffic garden beds under contract. Many traffic garden beds are managed for biodiversity outcomes through planting of indigenous and native ground covers and shrubs to provide foreign food sources for birds and insects. Traffic gardens beds are also used as seed banks when planted with local provenance plant species.

Creating an Urban Forest:

The vision for the Urban Forest Strategy is for: a more liveable city supported by a healthy and growing urban forest.

Objectives of the Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) include:

- To enhance Yarra's healthy and growing urban forest, improving liveability and mitigating the impacts of the urban heat island effect
- To manage current and future tree-stock through best practice urban tree management using evidence-based planning and decision making, together with cross-organisational implementation and innovation
- To engage and support community involvement in the development of a flourishing and unique urban forest

Implementation of the UFS intends to include the development of a 10-year Priority Plan. In this plan, planting locations will be decided based on primary drivers including areas of biodiversity need or significance and areas identified as important linkages for fauna, including corridors and understorey linkages.

Another action associated with the Urban Forest program will be to develop support materials to embed urban forest principals into capital works and open space programs to realise outcomes that benefit natural-values.

Council plants between 800-1000 trees per annum in streetscapes.

Urban Agriculture:

The City of Yarra Urban Agriculture Strategy 2018 – 2023 helps promote sustainable local food systems and build community resilience. Sustainable local food systems improve the management of the food cycle from production through processing, distribution, access, consumption and resource and waste recovery. Whether it be growing a few herbs on a balcony, a roof top farm, developing a market garden or

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contributing to a thriving community growing space, urban agriculture is becoming increasingly popular. On a systems level, urban agriculture adds to the multifunctionality of the urban fabric, by facilitating a wide range of benefits to urban communities, including recreational social and cultural benefits as well as environmental (urban greening, climate regulation, biodiversity, nutrient recycling).

A key urban agriculture action is to develop educational material with partners to enhance community understanding of traditional foods and agricultural practices.

Urban Agriculture (UA) systems have the ability to increase the biodiversity of urban landscapes. UA systems offer an extensive, varied, and undervalued resource for enhancing urban biodiversity and improving connectivity across the larger landscape. Furthermore, biodiversity supported by UA can increase the quality and quantity of ecosystem services delivered across the urban sphere. (The future of urban agriculture and biodiversity-ecosystem services: Challenges and next steps: Brenda B. Lina, Stacy M. Philpottb, Shalene J. hac, 8/1/2015)

OS Design (YOSS - Open Space Design and Management Guidelines):

These guidelines aim to support the core guiding principles and directions for open space as set out in the Yarra Open Space Strategy (in prep.) Existing Council policies and best practice inform these guidelines. The guidelines are to be referred to in relation to the future design and management for all open space in the City of Yarra.

Guidelines related to nature/biodiversity are principally addressed in:

6.2 Climate change/urban greening

- 6.2.1 Protecting mature canopy trees
- 6.2.3 Vegetation selection

6.3 Biodiversity values and natural character in open space

- 6.3.1 Open space with nature conservation values
- 6.3.2 Biodiversity values in other areas of open space

Embedding Green Infrastructure Guidelines:

The Embedding Green Infrastructure Best Practice Toolkit has been developed by the City of Yarra with input from multiple councils to create a tool applicable for all Victorian Local Government.
This toolkit will help Council's assess their own practices against best practice green infrastructure guidance. It also provides a resource manual to help the implementation of green infrastructure become streamlined, cost effective, and business as usual.

Green infrastructure refers to trees, shrubs, grasses and Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) in urban environments. Green infrastructure addresses a direct and important link between greening and water management. Healthy trees and vegetation rely on the provision of soil moisture to thrive and flourish, while vegetated areas play a key role in absorbing, treating and controlling stormwater runoff in urban areas.

Green infrastructure improves the environmental and social quality of an area and contributes to improving the long-term liveability of our cities and communities. Our cities face a number of pressures including population **growths,** increased urban development, and the effects of climate change, such as rising temperatures and extreme weather. Creating green, cool, climate adapted spaces will be key to responding to these pressures and emphasises the importance of local governments embedding green infrastructure into the planning, design and function of our cities.

The Toolkit consists of:

- Best Practice Review
- Case Studies
- Self Assessment Tool
- Economic Framework
- Design Guidelines

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'Embedding Green Infrastructure Best Practice Toolkit' is the result of the Victorian Climate Change Grant from the Department of the Environment, Water, and Planning (DELWP).

The City of Yarra is the lead Partner in this project, with other Project Partners being Cities of Melbourne, Brimbank and Moreland, the Green Infrastructure Research Group, and the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action.

Yarra Community Grants:

The City of Yarra annual grants provide financial and in-kind support for community initiatives and projects.

In 2020 this program will invest over $900,000 in programs which support and enrich the Yarra community. The funded programs will address a wide variety of local needs and promote connectedness and well-being across Yarra. The Annual Grants are split into a number of different streams. Some of these streams also have sub-categories. These are:

Arts and Culture , Community Development, Community Housing Family, Youth and Children, Sports and Recreation, Sustainability and Youth-Led Grants

Sustainability Stream
The Sustainability Stream seeks to support initiatives that engage and empower the community to take environmental action at a local level. This is in line with Council's Yarra Environment Strategy and other sustainability commitments.
Council encourages grant applications that seek to address these climate, waste and resource use priorities. Council also has commitments and programs to enhance urban agriculture, sustainable transport and biodiversity and welcomes applications that respond to these areas.
There are two project categories: Partnering for Sustainability and General Sustainability Grant.

General Sustainability Grant
The General Sustainability Grant supports a diverse range of smaller projects to deliver sustainability outcomes. Projects may be broad and holistic or may focus on any particular aspect of environmental sustainability. Project management, promotional, on-ground and capacity building activities are all eligible. Infrastructure and equipment may be funded as long as they are part of a holistic project that benefits and engages the community.

Partnering for Sustainability
This category seeks to support community projects that are larger and more complex in nature, the priorities for this funding stream are:

- Partnerships
- Legacy
- Reach
- Innovation

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Opportunities and challenges for nature

In developing this strategy, a stakeholder engagement process involving community experts in land management, flora, fauna and policy, City of Yarra staff and adjoining land managers, was undertaken. This process identified the following opportunities and challenges that informed the strategy:

Biodiversity values

- The Yarra River and its parklands form a substantial and significant base of critical habitat along the eastern border of the municipality upon which to build further biodiversity values.
- The Merri and Darebin Creeks provide two important northern habitat links, which link to the Yarra. These waterways are well loved, accessible and comprise a myriad of natural values. These areas can be strengthened, connected and form the anchor points for terrestrial links.
- The Biodiversity Health Survey, completed in 2016 provides a solid resource to base future work on and the ecosystem model is useful from an ecological perspective. However, there is more information that is known by local experts (land managers, Wurundjeri Council, community groups, indigenous nurseries and academics) that needs to be considered. Examples include: locations of high small bird diversity known only to long-term bird observers; locally rare plants that may become lost; and culturally significant areas for the Wurundjeri.
- Recognising and surveying for other species such as echidnas or sugar gliders; that have been recognised as 'urban significant' species, as they have niche habitat requirements, that are not identified as having high biodiversity values via scientific measures. These species may be useful for engaging the community with nature-based programs, as they are 'furry critters' that are easier for the community to identify with than more obscure bird species.

Council

- Within council, natural affinity exists between the conservation of and engagement with nature and the areas of Open Space, Environment and Sustainability, Urban Forestry, Heritage, Water Management, Planning and Urban Agriculture. There would be a benefit to seeing each of these teams better linked and interacting to achieve better outcomes for nature in the City of Yarra. The Nature Strategy will need to acknowledge and interact with the strategies and objectives of these other teams, seeking synergies and opportunities for positive outcomes.
- The impacts associated with new development and higher density urban areas has been emphasised as both an opportunity and a threat. There are biodiversity opportunities that have been identified via use of the planning scheme as well as supporting guidance for planners and applicants to see better outcomes in the private realm. Additionally the possibility of introducing a development levy for nature has also been suggested more than once during stakeholder engagement.

Water management

- Water quality and water infrastructure, including stormwater management are integral to ensuring the health of natural systems in the City of Yarra. Waterways and wetlands are also indicated as being of cultural importance to the Wurundjeri. This needs to be reflected back through all areas of council and via partnerships with other relevant agencies, i.e. Melbourne Water, Wurundjeri Council and water service providers.

Wurundjeri

- The Wurundjeri Council are key partners in the management and appreciation of natural values in the City of Yarra, as many or all of the natural values are also cultural values. Engagement and involvement of the Wurundjeri Council to ensure their values and stories are honoured and conserved is integral to this Nature Strategy. This Strategy includes actions that seek opportunities to work with the Wurundjeri in recognition of their heritage and custodianship of the land. This may be done in partnership with other areas of council, for example Urban Agriculture or Community Partnerships.

Community

- The community (residents and visitors) of the CoY can take action and contribute, and will also benefit via higher quality natural values in all areas of the municipality. Council has been relatively silent in engaging the community with nature in recent years. Community groups are currently acting as a conduit for community engagement. This could be built on but should be complimented by investment in staff resources as well as

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augmenting relationships with existing community groups, recognising the work that they currently do and assisting them to build on that.

- The community has emphasised the importance of ongoing ecological knowledge, innovation and trials in implementing more sophisticated approaches to on-ground biodiversity management. This could involve:
    - annual review of elements of ecological function
    - planning for ecological outcomes based on natural systems, species outcomes and corridors rather than by park/reserve
    - consideration of senescent (aging) vegetation and on ground management techniques to replace vegetation, possibly through natural recruitment
    - provision for trials and innovation in on-ground management and reintroductions
    - continuity in management and preserving/documenting ecological knowledge
    - coordination of land management across all land managers i.e. Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water
- The Yarra Environment Strategy community engagement process has demonstrated that there is an appetite for integrating nature-focussed elements and habitat features into the private, streetscape and neighbourhood-scale realm. Community members believe this will result in benefits for health, wellbeing and amenity over and above the ecological benefits.
    - Priority 1. Everyday nature / greenscaping
    - Priority 2. Community engagement and capacity building, education and youth
    - Priority 3. Thriving neighbourhoods
    - Priority 4. Take urgent action towards climate neutrality and zero waste
    - Priority 5. Council leadership
    - Priority 6. Support business sustainability
- Urban Agriculture programs and activities which are already well established in the City of Yarra contributes to positive natural values outcomes and there are natural synergies which should be explored and strengthened through both this strategy and the Urban Agriculture strategy. Good working relationships will see improved outcomes in each complimentary area.

Communication

- A dedicated communication program for nature-focussed news, initiatives and interactions is required. This would also serve to build trust with the community, that council are managing natural values in an informed and timely way. In particular the community were interested to see greater transparency around what is being done/where/why? One suggestion was for council to develop a semi-accessible online platform for the community to observe progress/logic of land management and to contribute to it.

Adjacent councils

- Other councils have implemented initiatives and set standards that can be adopted by the City of Yarra. Many examples exist that could be easily adopted, thereby enabling council to benefit from the learnings of others. One example is City of Melbourne's native street garden planting palate and urban nature planting guide that is available on the City of Melbourne's website.
- There is goodwill and enthusiasm for cooperation between staff from adjoining municipalities to work across-borders on projects that will benefit all.

Relationships with other institutions

- The City of Yarra is very well placed to engage with academic institutions who are actively involved in urban ecology research. Melbourne University's Burnley Campus lies within the municipality and already completes projects within council reserves. Other institutions like RMIT also have an interest in urban ecology and could assist with collaborative research and other initiatives as they have with other urban municipalities.

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Extinction crisis – an opportunity for action

Biological diversity is messy. It walks, it crawls, it swims, it swoops, it buzzes. But extinction is silent, and it has no voice other than our own. Paul Hawken, journalist, philanthropist.

In May, 2019, the United Nations Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) panel released the most comprehensive report yet on the state of global ecosystems, highlighting that up to one million plant and animal species face extinction, many within decades, because of human activities.

Without drastic action to conserve habitats, the rate of species extinction — already tens to hundreds of times higher than the average across the past ten million years — will only increase, says the analysis.

The loss of species and habitats poses as much a danger to life on Earth as climate change does, stated a summary of the work, released on 6 May 2019.

Anne Larigauderie, IPBES executive secretary stated that "Biodiversity should be at the top of the global agenda alongside climate. We can no longer say that we did not know".

Along with the Climate Emergency, this extinction crisis presents a real challenge for every person and particularly every organisation in a place of influence, such as the City of Yarra. It also provides a compelling reason to act.

The way forward

This Nature Strategy is being developed at a time when the value of nature is being recognised; and as the effects of increasing urbanisation and climate change are hitting urban environments and an awareness of the plight of nature is becoming heightened.

This is the first Nature Strategy for the City of Yarra and while it includes a strong focus on the conservation of nature and on engaging the community with natural values, importantly, it also seeks to strengthen internal processes and resources to ensure that natural values are considered as core council business. This is being undertaken with the overall aim that the City of Yarra will lead via its nature conservation activities, like Yarra has for many years on other important issues like sustainability and climate action.

Conservation of nature

In 1982 the *World Charter for Nature* was adopted by United Nations member nation-states. It proclaims five "principles of conservation by which all human conduct affecting nature is to be guided and judged."

1. Nature shall be respected and its essential processes shall not be impaired.
2. The genetic viability on the earth shall not be compromised; the population levels of all life forms, wild and domesticated, must be at least sufficient for their survival, and to this end necessary habitats shall be safeguarded.
3. All areas of the earth, both land and sea, shall be subject to these principles of conservation; special protection shall be given to unique areas, to representative samples of all the different types of ecosystems, and to the habitats of rare or endangered species.
4. Ecosystems and organisms, as well as the land, marine and atmospheric resources that are utilized by man, shall be managed to achieve and maintain optimum sustainable productivity, but not in such a way as to endanger the integrity of those other ecosystems or species with which they coexist.
5. Nature shall be secured against degradation caused by warfare or other hostile activities.[1]

Yarra's role in valuing and conserving nature

In recognition of themes that are associated with the UN Charter for Nature and similar agreements, the City of Yarra's key roles in conserving and improving nature are:

- To ensure that the City of Yarra actively seeks the conservation of its natural values through its own management and leadership.
- To ensure Wurundjeri values and interests are included and integrated in nature conservation and engagement activities, seeking methods to involve Wurundjeri in decisions and custodial activities.
- To work with local, municipal and regional networks to promote natural values and to seek methods to progress positive outcomes for nature.
- To provide education, support and engagement opportunities to residents and visitors through a dedicated engagement and communications program.

Limitations of this strategy

This strategy is designed to be focused and realistic with clear aims and objectives. As the first Nature Strategy for the City of Yarra, there are many items that are new for council, requiring leadership and commitment of new resources.

This strategy also focuses on building networks and processes in recognition that the governing processes for natural values sit across many different council teams. Indeed, most council teams will be relevant to seeing the success of this strategy. Similarly, collaboration will also need to extend to all neighbouring municipalities and land managers.

This strategy is a stepping stone, it aims to build the foundations of processes and programs to see better outcomes for the natural values in the City of Yarra while maintaining some flexibility to be responsive to any future/new opportunities that may arise.

The timeframe of four years applied to the strategy is intentionally short in recognition that this policy area is rapidly evolving and that regular revision will ensure it stays relevant.

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Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring will be integral to ensuring the success of the strategy. It will be required at various levels and for a variety of purposes. These include:

- Progress against management priorities and actions. This includes reporting annually across all relevant teams on key implementation actions, particularly those which have short or ongoing timeframes.
- Onsite results in bushland and weed management against current or revised standards.

To maintain the relevance of this strategy: priority actions, resources and training requirements will be determined annually, following a review of the following performance measures towards achieving its objectives:

- Reports on actions outlined in this Strategy will be provided to council annually.
- This strategy includes provisions for periodic review and adjustment.
- This will occur via annual internal and external progress reviews. These review processes will be informed by consultation with other stakeholders and the community.
- A detailed report and review will take place at the end of the four year period.

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Nature Action Plan 2020-2024

This action plan provides a summary of the actions and targets that are proposed to meet each of the four goals. Details are provided on proposed timing, internal collaboration and external partnership opportunities and what level of impact action delivery will have on the business. For example, actions will be delivered through business as usual processes, capital works, new initiative bids/business case and/or external funding. All actions are subject to the Council annual budget cycle, and approval process and service delivery priorities. Unless otherwise stated, the Streetscapes and Natural Values Team, City Works Branch will be responsible for delivery of the Nature Action Plan 2020-24.

*Its envisaged the delivery of the Nature Action Plan will commence in early 2020. The Action Plan will be delivered by existing resources until the completion of the 2019/20 financial year. New initiative and capital bids will be submitted for additional resources and project funding to deliver the remaining actions.

Further detail for each of these actions is provided in Appendix 3

Nature Action Plan - Context.

Goal 1: A more diverse, connected and resilient natural environment

Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
1.1 Consolidate and grow areas of high quality, diverse habitat	Consolidate and increase the condition of all patches of current native vegetation.	Native vegetation understorey score in all mapped current native vegetation patches increased by 20% by Year 3.	Medium Year 1 – 3	Contractors, community groups and Universities	BAU – Existing Budget Allocation
	Review all native vegetation patches in the context of their role as habitat within a corridor and their contribution to ecological function. Adjust management approach accordingly.	Management planning for bushland areas includes consideration of ecological function for key indicator species and consideration of threatening processes by end of Year 2. This is documented and monitored.	Medium Year 2	Ecological consultants, and contractors, community groups and Universities	Year 1 new initiative bid (engage an ecological consultant to map and develop ' change in condition' monitoring protocol)
	Prioritise some areas for enhancement and identify locations for linking.	Increase native vegetation understorey extent (at >25% cover) within Open Space by 0.5 ha annually	High Year 1 - 4	Open Space Planning, Open Space Maintenance. Community Groups, General Community, Parks Victoria, Local	BAU – Existing Budget Allocation and External Grant Application (Yarra River Strategic Plan

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Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
				Government, Melbourne Water and Wurundjeri Council Narrap Team	Collaborative Linking Projects).
1.2 Increase flora and fauna diversity	Establish monitoring locations targeting higher quality habitat and also low-quality areas for key indicator fauna groups. Fauna recommended to include: • Pollinator insects, butterflies • Birds (diverse range of guilds) • Micro-bats	Net positive flora and fauna diversity by end Year 3 resulting in an appropriate increase in each of the faunal groups listed.	Medium Year 2 - 3	Community Groups, Universities, Ecological Consultants, Local Government, DELWP, Conservation Groups (FNVC), Bird Australia, Wurundjeri Council Narrap Team	New initiative bids/business (funding for establishing locations)
	Design and deliver a monitoring program that measures diversity in fauna focussing on key indicator fauna groups (above). Involve public/citizen science where possible.	Monitoring conducted at relevant intervals (as determined by method). Data is useful, interpreted and made publicly available in an engaging way.	Medium Year 2 - 4	Communications and engagement, City Works Lab. Community Groups, Universities, Ecological Consultants, Local Government, DELWP, Conservation Groups (FNVC), Bird Australia, Wurundjeri Council Narrap Team	New initiative bids/business (funding for establishing a monitoring protocol)
	Where deemed appropriate, initiate re-introductions, particularly for flora in key locations.	Optional target: a 5% increase in indigenous flora diversity within bushland reserves.	Low Year 2 - 4	VINC, Ecological contractors, Wurundjeri Narrap Team	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation

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Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
1.3 Protect and celebrate significant habitat trees and their values	Building on the trees documented via the Biodiversity Health Survey, document and map all large old trees and others that provide significant habitat. Include a description of their habitat values, including hollows.	Maintain the number of hollow bearing trees. Implement programs to see an increase of 5% annually including planting of indigenous trees, creating artificial hollows and retaining dead trees where it is safe to do so. All significant habitat trees added to the Significant Tree register.	High Year 1	GIS/Spatial Unit. Ecological/Arboriculture Consultant, Wurundjeri Council	New initiative bids/business (mid – year, 20/21 Fin Yr)
	Engage with Wurundjeri Council to ensure Large Old tree values that are culturally significant are adequately considered in the City of Yarra (and its land management partners) policy and practice. This action may align with the Heritage Strategy which aims to engage the community in identifying areas of Natural Heritage value.	All trees identified by Wurundjeri Council protected via a formal planning mechanism if/where this is culturally appropriate and sensitive. Procedures and training in cultural heritage awareness and practice are up to date for all relevant staff.	High Year 1	Statutory and Strategic Planning, City Heritage, Community Partnerships. Wurundjeri Council.	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation. New initiative bids/business (mid – year, 20/21 Fin Yr for review of existing planning mechanisms)
	Ensure local laws protocols are in place to protect all significant habitat trees.	No significant habitat trees removed on streets or open space that is managed by the City of Yarra.	Medium Year 2	Open Space Maintenance, Statutory, Planning, Compliance and Parks Services.	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
	Promote significant habitat trees, and their values in an online forum. Encourage public interaction.	The City of Yarra resident's survey indicates increased awareness of significant habitat trees and their values.	Medium Year 2	Communications and engagement.	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
1.4 Understand and conserve habitat refuge areas for plants and animals	Commission a project in recognition of Yarra's Climate Emergency Plan to advise on council's role in providing nature refuge areas (for species affected by climate change) and actions that it can implement.	Climate refuge study complete by end Year 2. Any resulting recommendations funded in Year 3.	Medium Year 1 -3	Sustainability Unit. Ecological Consultant	New initiative bids/business (study and funding of recommendations) Year 1 and 3.

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Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
1.5 Conserve locally rare or threatened flora and fauna	Establish a 'local legends' working and networking group. Key stakeholders include VINC, Parks Victoria, Wurundjeri Council and staff from adjoining councils and land managers e.g. MCMC, DCMC.	No new local extinctions in flora or fauna	High Year 1	VINC, Parks Victoria, Wurundjeri Council, Local Government and staff and land managers	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
	Invest in a project that focuses on the long-term sustainability of locally rare flora and fauna. For example flora seed conservation, seed orchards and plantings with the option to encourage residents to grow a seed orchard for a rare plant at their home.		Low Year 1 - 4 (a four year project)	In House Horticulture Team. VINC, Community Groups, Local Community	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
	Investigate and document locally rare plants and animals. Promote this information via online opportunities and seek engagement from the community.		Low Year 2 - 4	Communication and Engagement. Universities, Community Groups, Ecological Contractors	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
1.6 Conserve state and federally significant flora and fauna	Collaborate with other land and water managers on projects to actively enhance habitat and conservation values for all confirmed State and Nationally-threatened flora or fauna.	No local extinctions of state or nationally threatened fauna in the City of Yarra.	Medium Year 2	Land and Waterway Managers, Community Groups, Universities, local community, Conversation Groups	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
	Conduct targeted fauna surveys that build on the Biodiversity Health Survey work to confirm a baseline level for threatened fauna within the municipality. Collaborate with other land managers as required, e.g. Melbourne Water for aquatic	Extent of state or nationally threatened fauna is known and documented. By Year 2.	Medium Year 2	Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, DELWP, FNCV, Birdlife Australia, Universities	New initiative bids/business (engage consultant to deliver targeted fauna surveys)

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Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
	animals. Parks Victoria and Birdlife Australia (Swift Parrot) as necessary.				
	Complete further research to confirm or otherwise, the occurrence of state or Nationally-threatened flora.	Extent of state or nationally threatened flora is known and documented. By Year 2.	Medium Year 2	Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, DELWP, Universities	New initiative bids/business (engage consultant to deliver flora research)
1.7 Increase habitat connectivity	Research and develop connectivity plans for keystone or character species for at least 3 habitat links with at least one being a new terrestrial link.	At least 3 connectivity projects delivered in 4 years, focussing on waterways (2) and terrestrial priorities (1). Utilise the priorities established in the **City of Yarra Integrated Waterways Plan (see Action 1.9)** to align with the objectives of the YRSP.	Medium Year 1 - 4	Strategic Planning, Open Space Planning. Adjacent Land Managers, Wurundjeri Council, Community Groups, Local Community, Land and Waterway Managers	Capital Works Bid – Fin yrs 20/21 – 23/24. Potential for funding through Yarra River Strategic Plan Initiatives
	Involve community in the planning of each connectivity project.	At least 3 connectivity projects delivered in 4 years, focussing on waterways (2) and terrestrial priorities (1). Utilise the priorities established in the **City of Yarra Integrated Waterways Plan (see Action 1.9)** to align with the objectives of the YRSP.	Medium Year 2	Communications and Engagement. Adjacent Land Managers, Wurundjeri Council, Community Groups, Local Community	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
1.8 Increase integrity and innovation in biodiversity management.	Establish a working group of bushland management experts to inform council on its on-ground management and associated programs. Also to collaborate on cross-tenure projects. Include experts such as Merri Creek Management Committee, Darebin Creek Management Committee, VINC, the Narrap team, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, land managers from adjoining councils	Working group established by end Year 1 and meeting 6 monthly thereafter.	High Year 1	Merri Creek Management Committee, Darebin Creek Management Committee, VINC, the Narrap team, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, land managers from adjoining councils and council contractors.	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation

Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
	and council contractors. This group may be best implemented as a larger inner-Melbourne working group allowing for information sharing and time efficiencies.				
1.9 City of Yarra Integrated Waterway Corridors Plan	Contribute to the preparation of a specific integrated waterway corridors plan for Yarra that brings together all the strategic directions and provides an overall single coordinating plan of action	To acknowledge the Yarra River Strategic Plan (YRSP) objectives and the need to assess the opportunities locally and across boundaries with partners to deliver the YRSP commitments and to generate plausible strategic waterways restoration projects to access available funding.	High Year 1	Strategic Planning, and Open Space Planning	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation

Goal 2: People appreciate and seek to enhance the natural values of the Yarra landscape

Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
2.1 Encourage and support 'nature-focussed' initiatives on private land and throughout streetscapes at the neighbourhood-scale	Establish a 'nature in the neighbourhood' reference group. Consider if/where it is possible to combine with Urban Agriculture and/or Environment Advisory Committee where relevant.	'Nature in the neighbourhood' Action Plan developed in consultation with reference group by the end of Year 1.	High Year 1	Sustainability Unit, Urban Agriculture, Waste Management, Communications and Engagement, Community partnerships, YAC, RMIT, Wurundjeri Council, Local Community, Community Groups, Local Government, Gardens for Wildlife Victoria	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
	Work with the reference group to plan initiatives that include a focus on increasing nature in the private and streetscape realm. This may		High Year 1	Sustainability Unit, Urban Agriculture, Waste Management, Communications and Engagement, Community partnerships, YAC,	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation

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Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
	include integration with Urban Agriculture and indigenous cultural initiatives.			RMIT, Wurundjeri Council, Local Community, Community Groups, Local Government, Gardens for Wildlife Victoria	
	Fund and implement the abovementioned action plan.	500 households in the City of Yarra participating in a nature in the neighbourhood initiative by end of Year 4. One streetscape initiative implemented by the end of Year 4 that aims to introduce nature-focussed elements into a neighbourhood, resulting in wellbeing and community benefits.	Medium Year 2 - 4		New initiative bid (Implementation Funding) Year 2 and 3.
2.2 Invest in nature engagement	Employ a nature engagement officer	Nature engagement officer employed by end Year 1.	High Year 1	Human Resources	New initiative bid for 20/21.
	Scope and deliver a number of nature engagement initiatives. Seek to collaborate with other councils that have run successful programs.	Nature engagement program involving at least two new initiatives in place by end Year 2, with one of the programs being Gardens for Wildlife. Engagement program including Actions 2.1, 2.3 implemented by end Year 2.	High Year 1 - 2	Communications and Engagement, Urban Agriculture, Sustainability Unit. Gardens for Wildlife Victoria, Local Government, VINC, Local Community, Community Groups, Wurundjeri Council, Parks Victoria	New initiative bid (Implementation Funding) Year 2 & 3
2.3 Establish a nature in Yarra communications program	Design and implement online communication program for nature-focussed news, initiatives and interactions. Seek to integrate with existing communication mechanisms such as environment,	Engaging nature-based content on the City of Yarra website and other council communications channels throughout the year from when new program commences. Regular engagement via social media.	High Year 1	Communications and Engagement, Urban Agriculture, Sustainability Unit. Communications Consultant, Universities	New initiative bid (Online Program Design and Content Development) Year 2 & 3

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Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
	sustainability and urban agriculture.				
	Trial an online program which allows the City of Yarra to share information about its on-ground management activities and allows the community to assist/contribute to it.	Trial completed by end Year 2.	Low Year 2	Communications and Engagement, Urban Agriculture, Sustainability Unit	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation

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Goal 3: Nature is considered core council business

Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
3.1 Ensure nature is considered as core council business.	Councillor planning and reporting to consider and address natural values.	City of Yarra's processes explicitly recognise nature as a component of Environment in the quadruple bottom line approach. Nature is one of the 'implications' to be considered within Council Reports. Annual plan includes a dedicated budget line for biodiversity or nature-focussed programs and projects. Ensure Yarra Annual Grants has a separate for category for Nature/Biodiversity enhancement projects.	High Year 1	Governance, Community Grants	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
3.2 The impacts of development on local natural values are offset.	Scope options for sourcing a minimal allocation of capital funding annually or from amenity loss from developments that is allocated towards nature-focussed projects. E.g. tree planting and biodiversity enhancement projects	Scoping completed by Year 2. Preferred option(s) for dedicated nature-focussed projects capital funding is introduced and active by Year 3. Funds gained from developers for amenity loss of trees to be allocated to a fund for tree planting and biodiversity enhancement projects.	Medium Year 2	Statutory Planning	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation Year 2. New initiative bid for Year 3 to implement Nature Levy
3.3 Encourage more natural spaces in the private realm via planning mechanisms.	Create a Natural Values Planner staff position	Natural Values Planner employed by end Year 2.	Medium Year 2	Human Resources, Statutory Planning	New initiative bid for 21/22.
	Implement requirement for landscaping plans for permit applications for 2+ lot subdivisions and above.	Increased incidence of indigenous landscaping and habitat components in developments. Shown in Landscaping Plans and monitored by audit of 10%.	Low Year 2	Statutory Planning, Open Space Planning, Urban Design	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
	Develop pre-application information for planning permits that includes preferences around use of		Low Year 2	Statutory Planning, Open Space Planning, Urban Design	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation

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Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnerships	Business Impact
	indigenous plants and habitat components.				
3.4 Consider options for new planning tools to see more nature-focussed outcomes.	Scope and work up options for one or more overlays that seek to see ecological benefits in the future.	One or more planning scheme tools are introduced to assist in: • Delivering more habitat value such as green roofs • Protecting and encouraging habitat elements for a specific species or group of species; • Recognition and conservation of areas of natural heritage.	Low Year 3	Strategic Planning, Statutory Planning, City Heritage	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
3.5 The City of Yarra leads by example	In order to meet the multiple objectives associated with Environment, Sustainability, Nature and Water Infrastructure, support the creation a senior expert role to advise on and approve all in-house projects for their 'green infrastructure' credentials, including nature-focussed elements.	All council-led projects to include green infrastructure and demonstrably consider nature and habitat elements in their design and implementation by end Year 2.	High Year 2 - 3	Lead Sustainability Unit, supported by City Works Branch	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
	The City of Yarra recognises that green infrastructure includes nature-focussed elements and updates process and design practice accordingly.		Medium Year 2	Sustainability Unit	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation (additional costs with embedding nature to be included in unit capital works estimates)

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Goal 4: Innovation, communication and collaboration are the cornerstones of the City of Yarra's nature-focused programs

Management Principle	Actions	Target	Priority/Timeframe	Collaboration/Partnership	Business Impact
4.1 Collaborate with others who share common goals.	Participate in networks with other municipalities, organisations and institutions who are working on similar issues around urban ecology.	Staff role descriptions and time allocations provided to relevant staff for participation in relevant networks.	High Year 1 - 4	Local and State Government, Community Groups, Universities, Wurundjeri Council	BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
	Support partnership projects that result in mutual benefits for nature.	Council management acknowledges optional funding for partnership projects as relevant.	Medium Year 1 - 4		BAU - Existing Budget Allocation
4.2 Develop working partnerships with academic institutions	Actively collaborate with an academic institution on at least one new project each year.	At least one project per year is implemented in partnership with an academic institution.	Medium Year 1- 4	Education Providers – Melb. Unit, RMIT, TAFE,	New initiative bid for each year 20/21 – 23/24
	Develop a 'wish list' for a series of projects that include student monitoring of council reserves or encourage teaching and learning in these reserves. The results of which will be fed back to the City of Yarra.	A working partnership to encourage student field studies in council reserves is established by end Year 1 and active by Year 2. Results are useful for all parties involved.	High Year 1	Education Providers – Melb. Unit, RMIT, TAFE,	New initiative bid for each year 20/21 – 23/24
4.3 Use the Smart City technology to assist in conserving natural values	Scope one project for the Smart City team to deliver annually with relevance to nature in the City of Yarra. Option to work collaboratively with other urban councils.	One project is scoped and delivered annually beginning Year 2.	Low Year 2 - 4	Sustainability, Communications and Engagement	New initiative bid for each year 21/22 – 23/24

Glossary

Alien (species): Not native (also referred to as exotic).

Anthropogenic: Resulting from or produced by human beings.

Biodiversity: A word derived from biological diversity. The variety of all life forms: the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, their genes, and the communities and ecosystems of which they are part. Biodiversity is usually recognised at three levels: genetic diversity, species diversity and ecosystem diversity.

Bioregion: A landscape-scale approach to classifying the environment using a range of attributes such as climate, geomorphology, geology, soils and vegetation. There are 28 bioregions identified within Victoria.

Biosphere: The part of the Earth system comprising all ecosystems and living organisms in the atmosphere, on land (terrestrial biosphere) and in the oceans (marine biosphere). It includes derived dead organic matter, such as litter, soil organic matter and oceanic detritus.

Biota: All the plants, animals and micro-organisms of a particular region.

Canopy: Layer of vegetation elevated above the ground, usually of tree branches and epiphytes. In tropical forests, the canopy may be more than 100 feet above the ground.

Canopy tree: A mature tree (i.e. it is able to flower) that is greater than 3 metres in height and is normally found in the upper layer of the relevant vegetation type.

Climate: The average weather in a region over a long period of time. Average weather may include average temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, ultraviolet (UV) levels and other physical measurements.

Climate change: Any long-term significant change in the 'average weather' that a given region experiences. In recent usage, the term 'climate change' often refers to changes in modern climate due to global warming.

Community or Ecological community: A naturally co-occurring biological assemblage of species that occurs in a particular type of habitat.

Connectivity: The extent to which particular ecosystems are joined with others of similar kind; the ease with which organisms can move across the landscape. Also applies to the extent to which populations of a species are able to interact with each other through gene flow (interbreeding.)

Corridor (for wildlife): A strip of habitat of varying width that facilitates animal movement between otherwise isolated patches of habitat.

Diameter at Breast Height (DBH): The diameter of the main trunk of a tree measured over bark at 1.3 metres above ground level. The diameter is the circumference (in centimetres) of the tree divided by π (3.14).

Dispersal: The movement of organisms from one place to another. This differs from migration, which is a cyclical event due to seasonal changes in resources.

Disturbance (ecological): A temporary change in average environmental conditions that causes a pronounced change in an ecosystem. Outside disturbance forces often act quickly and with great effect, sometimes resulting in the removal of large amounts of biomass. Ecological disturbances include fires, flooding, windstorm, insect outbreaks, as well as anthropogenic disturbances such as forest clearing and the introduction of exotic species. Disturbances can have profound immediate effects on ecosystems and can, accordingly, greatly alter the natural community. Because of these and the impacts on populations, these effects can continue for an extended period of time.

Driver: A process that changes the trajectory of a species or ecosystem. Most ultimate drivers of biodiversity loss in Australia are human activities associated with consumption or development.

Ecological community: see Community.

Ecological processes: Actions or events that shape ecosystems. Understanding ecological processes – whether they are natural disturbances like fire, or ongoing processes like nutrient cycling or carbon sequestration – is the key to the development and implementation of sustainable ecological management.

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Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC): A native vegetation type classified on the basis of a combination of its floristics, lifeforms, and ecological characteristics. Ecology: The scientific study of the distribution and abundance of life on Earth, and the interactions between organisms and their environment.

Ecosystem: An ecosystem is a dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities, and the non-living (abiotic) environment (water, soil, climate, etc.), interacting as a functional unit. Humans can be an integral part of ecosystems. Ecosystem processes: The physical, chemical and biological actions or events that link organisms and their environment. They include decomposition, production (of plant matter), nutrient cycling, and fluxes of nutrients and energy.

Ecosystem services: The benefits people obtain from ecosystems (e.g. food, renewable resources, water supply, recreational opportunities, oxygen, carbon sequestration, erosion control).

Endemic (noun: endemism): Occurring only in the stated area.

Environment: The place in which an organism lives, and the circumstances under which it lives. Environment includes measures like moisture and temperature, as much as it refers to the actual physical place where an organism is found.

Exotic (species): Introduced (see alien).

Extinction: The global disappearance of an entire species (as distinguished from extirpation).

Extinction debt: Describes the condition where a threatening process, e.g. fragmentation or climate change, leads to environmental conditions in which certain species will inevitably become extinct.

Extirpation: Local extinction.

Fire regime: The combination of fire frequency, intensity, interval and season. Different fire regimes can have different effects on ecosystems, e.g. frequent, low-intensity, cool-season fires can result in different combinations and abundances of plants and animals compared with infrequent, high-intensity, summer fires.

Flora and Fauna Assessment – is an assessment of the flora and fauna recorded during the field site surveys as well as background searches for any rare or threatened species.

Food chain: The feeding relationships between species within an ecosystem. Organisms in a food chain are grouped into trophic levels based on how many links they are removed from the primary producers (plants). The pathways of the food and/or energy within the whole system are called a food chain or a food web.

Fragmentation: Removal (usually by land clearing) of large parts of a natural area, resulting in the retention of only small fragments (or remnants).

Genera: See genus.

Genus (plural genera): A taxonomic category ranking below a family and above a species, and generally consisting of a group of species exhibiting similar characteristics. In taxonomic nomenclature the genus name is used – either alone or followed by a Latin adjective or epithet – to form the name of a species. The scientific name of a species is usually written 'genus name' then 'species name', e.g. the scientific name for humans is Homo sapiens; Homo is the name of the genus and sapiens is the specific epithet, i.e. it describes the species within that genus. There is only one living species of Homo (although some scientists have suggested that chimpanzees and bonobo should be included in Homo), while Eucalyptus includes several hundred species.

Global warming: The increase in the average temperature of the Earth's near-surface air and oceans since the mid-20th century, and its projected continuation. The Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded: 'Warming of the climate system is unequivocal.' 'Most of the observed increase in globally averaged temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations' ('very likely' in IPCC terminology means 'the assessed likelihood, using expert judgment, is over 90%').

Guild: A functional group of species that exploit the same class of environmental resources in a similar way and between which competition can be expected.

Habitat: The locality or natural home in which a particular plant, animal or group of closely associated organisms lives.

Habitat hectare assessment: is an assessment of native vegetation to determine its condition, extent (in hectares) and EVC. The assessment must be completed by an accredited native vegetation assessor following methodology described in Native vegetation: sustaining a living landscape.

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Habitat hectares: A site-based measure of biodiversity value that is calculated by multiplying the extent of native vegetation by its condition score. Habitat hectares = extent × condition score.

Indigenous: Originating or occurring naturally in a particular locality; not introduced; native.

Large tree: A native canopy tree with a Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) greater than or equal to the large tree benchmark for the relevant bioregional EVC. A large tree can be either a large scattered tree or a large tree contained within a patch.

Litter: Leaf litter, or forest litter, is the detritus of fallen leaves and bark which accumulate in forests.

Monitoring: Sampling and analysis designed to ascertain the extent of change from an expected or defined norm, or from past conditions.

Monotremes: One of three groups of living mammals, monotremes lay eggs rather than giving birth to live young. While fossil evidence suggests that the group was once more common and widespread, only five species exist today: two species in Australia (platypus and short-beaked echidna) and three species of long-beaked echidnas in New Guinea.

Native vegetation: Native vegetation is defined in Clause 72 of the Victoria Planning Provisions and all local planning schemes as 'plants that are indigenous to Victoria, including trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses.

Natural selection: The process by which heritable traits that are favourable in a particular environment become more common in successive generations of a population of reproducing organisms, and unfavourable heritable traits become less common. Over time, this process can result in adaptations that specialise organisms for particular ecological niches and may eventually result in the emergence of new species (see fitness).

Naturalised: An alien (introduced) species that has become established in the wild.

Nocturnal: Active only at night.

Niche: The total range of conditions within which a species can survive, grow and produce viable offspring. The 'fundamental niche' defines the potential distribution of a species without any interactions with other organisms, while the 'realised niche' is the area actually occupied because of limitations due to other organisms such as competitors, predators, etc.

Nutrient: Any element or simple compound necessary for the health and survival of an organism. This includes air and water, as well as food.

Organism: An individual form of life, such as a plant, animal, bacterium, protist or fungus.

Patch: A patch of native vegetation is an area of vegetation where at least 25 per cent of the total perennial understorey plant cover is native, or any area with three or more native canopy trees where the drip line of each tree touches the drip line of at least one other tree, forming a continuous canopy, or any mapped wetland included in the Current wetlands map, available in DELWP systems and tools.

Phytophthora: A genus of water moulds, many species of which damage plants. Phytophthora infestans was the infective agent of the potato blight that caused the Great Irish Famine (1845–1849). Several species of Phytophthora have been introduced to Australia, the most damaging of which is P. cinnamomi, which causes root rot and which may cause the death of the plant due to water stress (the disease is sometimes referred to as dieback).

Placental (mammals): A derivation of 'placenta', an organ of the foetus of most mammals that attaches to the wall of the mother's uterus (womb), and provides for foetal nourishment and elimination of waste products. The other groups of mammals –monotremes (e.g. echidna, platypus) and marsupials – do not have a placenta.

Pollinator: Animal which carries pollen from one seed plant to another, unwittingly aiding the plant in its reproduction. Common pollinators include insects, especially bees, butterflies, and moths, birds, and bats.

Population (biological): The collection of individuals of a particular species in a stated area; they may or may not interact with other populations (see gene flow). Refugium (plural: refugia): An area that has escaped or will escape changes occurring elsewhere and so provides a suitable habitat for relict species. Resistance: The degree to which a system does not respond to a shock (as opposed to resilience, which describes the extent to which it changes).

Predator: Organism which hunts and eats other organisms. This includes both carnivores, which eat animals, and herbivores, which eat plants.

Prey: Organism hunted and eaten by a predator.

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Restoration: renewing a degraded, damaged or destroyed ecosystem through active human intervention.

Riparian: Having to do with the edges of streams or rivers.

Salinity: A measure of the salt concentration of water. Higher salinity means more dissolved salts.

Scattered tree – A native canopy tree that does not form part of a patch. Scattered trees are considered lost if construction encroaches more than 10% in the Tree Protection Zone. In this instance, the tree must be offset.

Seed bank: The collective name for seeds, often dormant, that are stored within the soil of many terrestrial ecosystems. Spatial/Spatially (scale): Pertaining to area.

Species: A species is usually defined as a group of organisms capable of interbreeding and producing fertile offspring. While in many cases this definition is adequate, more precise or differing measures are often used, such as those based on similarity of morphology or DNA. Presence of locally adapted traits may further subdivide species into subspecies.

Stress (ecological): Factor(s) that reduce ability of an organism or ecosystem to thrive, e.g. drought, lack of nutrients, high temperature.

Substrate: "Supporting surface" on which an organism grows. The substrate may simply provide structural support, or may provide water and nutrients. A substrate may be inorganic, such as rock or soil, or it may be organic, such as wood.

Symbiotic: A situation where two organisms (symbionts) live together in a close, mutually beneficial relationship. Taxa: See taxon.

Taxon (plural: taxa): A taxonomic category or group, such as a phylum, order, family, genus, species or subspecies.

Temperate: Region in which the climate undergoes seasonal change in temperature and moisture. Temperate regions of the earth lie primarily between 30 and 60 degrees latitude in both hemispheres.

Temporal (scale): Pertaining to time.

Threatened (species): Likely to become extinct, threatened with extinction. A threatened ecological community is one that is likely to be destroyed. In the IUCNRed List of Threatened Species, threatened is a collective term including, from most to least threatened with extinction: critically endangered, endangered and vulnerable. This terminology is widely used in Australia.

Threatening process: Actions, either human or otherwise induced, that threaten the survival, abundance or evolutionary development of a species, population or ecological community, e.g. land clearing, introduced predators, weeds, pollution, fishing bycatch.

Traits: Characteristics or properties of an entity. In biology it refers to a distinct phenotypic character of an organism that may be inherited, environmentally determined or somewhere in between. Transformation: See resilience.

Tree Protection Zones: Diameter at Breast Height multiplied by 12 (measured in metres). The minimum that a TPZ can be is 2 metres and the maximum is 15 metres.

Vertebrate: An animal with a backbone (spinal column). A member of the subphylum Vertebrata of the phylum Chordata. Vertebrates comprise sharks and rays, bony fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals (including humans).

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Attachment 1 - Final Draft Yarra Nature Strategy 2020-2024

Attachment 1 - Final Draft Yarra Nature Strategy 2020-2024

Appendix 1

Summary of council and state policies and strategies related to Nature

Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
Council plans, policies and strategies		
Council Plan	Two key objectives are directly relevant to the Nature Strategy: • Key objective 1. Community health, safety and wellbeing are a focus in everything we do • Key objective 3. Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances its natural environment And two are relevant to the goals of the Nature Strategy: • Key objective 4. Development and growth are managed to maintain and enhance the character and heritage of the city • Key objective 7. Transparency, performance and community participation drive the way we operate Council's Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan is now expressed through the Council Plan and there are themes for the Nature Strategy which result from requirements such as: Open space that meets community requirements; community resilience and connection; mental and physical health and wellbeing; opportunities for connection with their community.	The Council Plan provides high level guidance in the areas of protection and enhancement of natural environment; and community health and wellbeing. The Nature Strategy is an action from Key Objective 3 and will be a vehicle for the City of Yarra to 'protect and enhance its natural environment'.
Yarra Environment Strategy (YES)	The Yarra Environment Strategy (draft) community engagement process has shown that natural values and greening the city were the highest priority The Yarra Environment Strategy 2013-17 provided direction and actions required to integrate sustainable practices into council's operations. Its	Pathway 2, Urban Ecology and Natural Environment from the former Yarra Environment Strategy is now addressed in detail via the Nature Strategy. The Nature Strategy has considered the community's input

Attachment 1 - Final Draft Yarra Nature Strategy 2020-2024

Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
	themes included urban greening, climate adaptation, climate mitigation, and stormwater and water quality. In particular, Pathway 2 (Urban Ecology and Natural Environment) aimed to improve biodiversity and ecosystem health in parks, waterways and open spaces.	to the YES renewal process and taken them onboard, aiming to reflect their intent. The Nature Strategy will function under the umbrella of the Yarra Environment Strategy but will deliver on its own vision and goals independently, contributing to Yarra's wider Environment and Sustainability charter.
Climate Emergency Action Plan	Yarra's first Climate Emergency Plan (2020-2024) is the initial phase of a longer journey. It provides strategic direction to influence and reduce municipal-wide emissions and set us on track to create a healthier, cleaner, more resilient and liveable Yarra that we can all enjoy. The first iteration of this Plan (2020-2024) will help us accelerate emission reduction throughout Yarra's focus areas and set the foundations for responding to the climate emergency over the next 10 years. With this Plan we cement our commitment to urgent action, map a shared journey and take the first step in meeting our 10-year overarching goals. Councils overarching climate emergency goals will help anchor our actions through the delivery of the Plan toward shared way journey of climate emergency response and reflect key principles of how we will work towards this. Our 10-year overarching goals are: - To lead by example - Achieve zero-net emissions as soon as possible - Take bold action together - Advocate to others - Build a strong, resilient future - Achieve transformational change through an embedded response	To strive for our 10 year overarching goals, the first iteration of the Climate Emergency Plan identifies 5 strategic priorities best placed to accelerate climate emergency response in Yarra and create a solid foundation for further change in future editions of the Plan. Each of the strategic priorities is anchored by a future vision to collectively work towards, and identifies focus areas for action within the first 4 years. The delivery plan sets actions in response to the focus. The strategic priorities that provide direction for the Nature Strategy include: 1. Mobilising a climate emergency response Vision: The Yarra community and Council are engaged and active in creating local solutions as part of a global climate movement. Vision: Responding to this climate emergency is recognised as fundamental to how Council operates and is embedding into all services and operations. 5. A resilient Yarra Vision: Yarra's natural environment and community are thriving in a climate impacted world Looking forward, Council will increase its resilience efforts with a particular focus on enhancing blue (sustainable water solutions) and green (nature and parks) infrastructure to protect against flooding, drought and to cool the city. This includes creating a more diverse, connected and resilient natural environment, to support ecosystem health and biodiversity in climate impacted future. In support of the municipality's intention to take urgent action on the climate emergency, there are many actions outlined in the draft Yarra Nature Strategy that the City of Yarra could undertake in

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Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
		recognition of its stewardship of areas that can provide natural refuges for flora and fauna.
Aboriginal Partnerships Plan	Council's Aboriginal Partnerships Plan 2015–2018 is guided by five priority areas, which will determine council's ongoing work with the community. These priorities include: 1. Community connection - Council will support Aboriginal community connection to Fitzroy and other historically significant places in Yarra, and continue to develop its own connection to the Aboriginal community. 2. Culture - Council will promote Aboriginal culture to ensure a greater understanding of and respect for Aboriginal people, culture, traditions and history in Yarra. 3. Employment - Council will increase employment opportunities for Aboriginal people at council and broker Aboriginal employment opportunities in the broader community. 4. Events -Council will promote Aboriginal calendar events and other significant Aboriginal community events. 5. Advocacy and Responsiveness -Council will promote relevant policy changes and emerging issues to the Aboriginal community and respond, with permission from the community, on behalf of the community	Priority 1 aims to see more community connection to Fitzroy and other historically significant places in Yarra, and continue to develop its own connection to the Aboriginal community. While most annual action plans do not make specific mention of the natural values of Yarra that are also culturally significant, particularly to the Wurundjeri people, this is an area that will be recognised via the Nature Strategy. It is recommended that recognition of community connection to the natural values in Yarra is included in future years of the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan. Other priorities in the APP have relevance. The Nature Strategy can seek to involve the Aboriginal community in any resulting actions, events, employment opportunities and also to seek partnership projects.
Yarra Open Space Strategy	The Technical Report that will form the basis of the Open Space Strategy (in draft) provides in-depth analysis of background information to support the future direction for open space strategy. Analysis of current demographics and predicted changes indicates a strong need for more open space, especially in areas that have under-representation and will experience growth. Options for acquisition of new open space areas are a focus for implementation of the Open Space Strategy. This includes options for reviewing portions of currently inaccessible land such as the Burnley Golf Course.	The Biodiversity Health Survey identified that there is opportunity within Yarra's open space for increased areas for nature, including along waterways, within parkland of all types and throughout streetscapes. The former and new Open Space Strategy identify that the community of Yarra will require more open space in the coming decades. In the decade of the former OSS, a number of new open spaces have been created, but the new OSS identifies the need for many more, especially in areas that have gaps and will see increased population density.

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Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
	Many of the objectives from the Yarra Open Space Strategy, 2006 are likely to be reflected in the revised strategy. Objectives of particular relevance to the Nature Strategy are: • Continue to protect and improve the diversity of indigenous vegetation values in open space reserves adjoining the waterways. • Incorporate best practice principles in the ongoing management and design of open space including water use, energy use and waste management practices. • Increase the provision of indigenous vegetation in the linear open space reserves (additional to the waterway corridors) including the former Outer Circle Railway reserve and, where appropriate, along the railway corridors. Including: improving ecological values of other reserves; improving ecological values in the links between open space reserves • Manage open space that adjoins the waterway to protect and, where appropriate, improve native fauna habitat values • Protect and enhance both the environmental values and cultural heritage values in open space • Improve access to open space in the City to overcome some inherent inequity in open space distribution across Yarra. • Understand, protect and improve, where appropriate, both indigenous and nonindigenous cultural heritage values.	While the detail around how this will best occur is to be confirmed, new open space provides opportunities to incorporate more natural features and habitat value than has traditionally been seen in Yarra. There are also many opportunities to see improved outcomes in streetscapes and existing open spaces as opportunities for enhancement or renewal plantings arise. The OSS objectives have included many of the same objectives as the Nature Strategy including protecting, enhancing and linking environmental values in open space, including cultural heritage values. This objective also aligns with the Nature Strategy, particularly the conservation of indigenous cultural heritage values.
Yarra Urban Forest Strategy, 2017	The vision for the Urban Forest Strategy is for: a more liveable city supported by a healthy and growing urban forest. Objectives of the Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) include: • To enhance Yarra's healthy and growing urban forest, improving liveability and mitigating the impacts of the urban heat island effect • To manage current and future tree-stock through best practice urban tree management using evidence-based planning and decision making, together with cross-organisational implementation and innovation • To engage and support community involvement in the development of a flourishing and unique urban forest	Implementation of the UFS intends to include the development of a 10-year Priority Plan. In this plan, planting locations will be decided based on primary drivers including areas of biodiversity need or significance and areas identified as important linkages for fauna, including corridors and understorey linkages. Another action associated with the Urban Forest program will be to develop support materials to embed urban forest principals into capital works and open space programs to realise outcomes that benefit natural-values.

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Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
	The UFS highlights opportunities to increase biodiversity through new management protocols for street and park vegetation that prioritises habitat value. Emphasis is given to a strategic approach to minimise the impact of tree and canopy loss at one point in time. It recommended that council's street and park tree planting program carefully consider species selection and placement of trees in connecting streets to improve biodiversity and connectivity outcomes. Aligned with the UFS, the *Inner Melbourne Action Plan* (IMAP) is a collaboration between the Cities of Melbourne, Yarra, Maribyrnong, Port Phillip and Stonnington. Yarra's UFS directly aligns with Strategy 4.2 of the IMAP Action Plan (2006): *We will work together to integrate water sensitive landscapes, substantial tree canopies, biodiversity and habitat into the design of all parks and public space (i.e. streets) areas right across Inner Melbourne.*	

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Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
City of Yarra Urban Wildlife Management Plan 2009	This plan identifies areas of fauna habitat, addresses threats to fauna, identifies opportunities for habitat improvement and reviews control methods for pest animal species. The plan made several recommendations, many of which include measures to identify, protect, enhance and connect fauna habitat. In addition, an emphasis was placed on protecting waterway fauna habitat, and to improve water quality in whole catchment. Strategically, the plan recommended improving connectivity throughout the municipality, and retaining hollow bearing trees and stags, as well as terrestrial and in-stream habitat with large woody debris.	Some of the recommendations from the UWMP are taken on board in the Nature Strategy, particularly around connectivity and habitat for fauna adjoining waterways and inland. Other initiatives that can be pursued through activity associated with the Nature Strategy include: • Permanently fence areas of fauna habitat such as wetlands and temporarily fence those areas of rehabilitation and revegetation; • Undertake control and monitor for pest animals in conjunction with other stakeholders; • Create dog-exclusion zones around fauna habitat, such as wetlands. All other areas of fauna habitat dogs 'on-leash' only; • Promote and encourage environmental awareness through education campaigns; and • Install fauna friendly lighting in and adjacent to all areas of fauna habitat.
Yarra Waste Minimisation and Resource Recovery Strategy 2018-2022	The long-term ambition of the Waste Minimisation and Resource Recovery Strategy is to move the community towards zero waste to landfill. It will be delivered through a large suite of actions around five priority objectives: 1. Valuing our resources 2. Delivering high quality, accessible services and programs 3. Encouraging community pride through clean public spaces 4. Ensuring Yarra has access to the programs, infrastructure and technology to meet its targets 5. Collaborate, partner and advocate for better outcomes	Objective 3 that focusses on reducing litter in public spaces will have a direct impact on Yarra's habitat, especially via reductions in litter entering waterways. All other elements of the strategy will benefit the natural world in less direct ways and some, such as objective 5 offer opportunity for collaboration, possibly leading to dual messaging around issues of mutual interest. For example, banning plastic straws to assist the waterway and marine fauna.
Urban Design Strategy	Future developments in Yarra reinforce a coherent, harmonious and appealing urban environment with an opportunity for continuity and change, focusing on achieving design excellence and a high-quality public domain. Key Objectives	

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Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
	The key objectives of the Urban Design Strategy to achieve this vision are: 1. Enhanced quality of Yarra's urban form and character 2. Effective management of growth and change 3. Design excellence in new developments 4. Quality public domain and public spaces in Yarra 5. Processes and practices that promote good design	
Yarra Heritage Strategy	The Heritage Strategy (under review) has traditionally focussed largely on the built environment and the cultural environment (non-indigenous and indigenous). The 2015-18 Heritage Strategy focussed on four strategic directions: 1. Knowing our heritage 2. Protecting and managing our heritage 3. Supporting our heritage, and 4. Promoting and celebrating our heritage. The first strategy associated with Strategic Direction 2, states: *focus on conserving the identity and uniqueness of Yarra that includes ..., natural assets such as the Yarra River and the extensive parklands that border it.* The draft Heritage Strategy will focus on similar themes but seeks to formally include and address 'natural heritage' in the revised strategy. Two key actions are planned: Strategy Action No. 8: Introduce a process/project for public to identify areas of natural heritage in the city for potential listing on appropriate lists. Measure: Places of natural heritage significance identified, mapped and listed on an appropriate register - to be determined. Strategy Action No. 30: Achieve recognition of heritage value within other strategies dealing with the natural environment. Measure: All related strategies recognise human attachment to the natural environment and cross-reference to the heritage strategy.	Opportunity to define and develop Natural Heritage values will receive a stronger focus in the revised Heritage Strategy. Actions 8 and 30 set direction for the identification of natural heritage values, establishment of a register and potentially for their formal recognition via an appropriate planning mechanism. Action 30 asks for each relevant Strategy to reference the abovementioned process. This Nature Strategy does so here and also in reference to Management Action 1.3.

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Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
	Note: Recognise that this is the 'people' value of natural heritage – not 'nature for nature's sake' (as managed under other strategies).	
Water Management	Yarra is also considering developing a water management strategy that will cover the following topics: • Environmental benefits of water • Water use by council for buildings, open space and for marquis locations • Improving water quality for the Yarra • WSUD, Rain Gardens and Stormwater harvesting; • Other infrastructure i.e. Gross Pollutant Traps; • Technology to improve water quality • Education and awareness	The management of water is imperative to maintaining natural values, especially throughout the waterways. The Nature Strategy recognises this and supports the development of a Water Strategy that addresses the breadth of water-related issues and opportunities. It recommends that the water strategy consider natural values associated with the waterways and beyond as a priority.
Yarra Planning Scheme (review in progress, almost complete)	MSS, policies, planning tools (Zones, overlays, local policy) and provisions. Provided in more detail in Appendix 2 Legislative context.	The revision of the Planning Scheme has occurred recently. There has been limited update of the scheme in relation to nature-related themes. The creation of this Nature Strategy aims to raise the profile of natural values within council and in the future see this reflected through greater and stronger representation within formal planning structures.

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Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
State or regional plans, policies and strategies		
State Biodiversity Plan	Protecting Victoria's Environment - Biodiversity 2037 is Victoria's plan to address the decline of biodiversity and achieve overall biodiversity improvement over 20 years. The Plan presents a long-term vision supported by two general principles. These being: • Victorians value nature; and • Victoria's natural environment is healthy In its implementation to date, the State Government has developed the following: • A Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework to track the progress of achieving the plan's goals and targets. • An Implementation Framework which identifies 20 Priority areas and 83 corresponding actions for the first 4 years of the Plan. The priorities and actions are varied and include some that will be of relevance to the City of Yarra. • State Biodiversity Grants that target a range of community-based and regional, strategic projects and programs. • Some new online tools for purposes such as identifying what the state government considers to be Strategic Management Prospects, i.e. locations supporting natural values that provide a good case for investment.	There is the potential for local government to contribute to delivery of the Plan and vice versa. Preliminary discussions have been held regarding options for this. The Nature Strategy has taken direction from the State Biodiversity Plan, considered stakeholder engagement with Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning staff and aims to align with the vision, principles and priorities of the Plan.
Yarra Strategy (draft) and Yarra River Action Plan (2017)	In 2017, the *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murron) Act* (the Act) passed through the Victorian Parliament, enshrining in law the protection of the Yarra River. The Act identifies the Yarra River and its corridor as 'one living, integrated natural entity for protection and improvement' and recognises Traditional Owners' custodianship and intrinsic connection to the river. The Yarra River Action Plan was launched in February 2017. Key actions of most relevance include:	The Draft Yarra Strategy identifies a suite of actions for the Lower Yarra section that include focus on habitat links along the Yarra waterway and extending this focus into adjoining private land. Habitat corridors are also mooted for a terrestrial link that may be similar in its intent to corridors that are proposed within the Nature Strategy. Involvement of the Wurundjeri Council in the development and governance of the Yarra Strategy aligns with the objectives of the City of Yarra and of the Nature Strategy.

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Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
	• Melbourne Water is assigned as the lead agency and tasked with more responsibilities including recommending referral authority for amenity issues along the Yarra and delivering the Yarra Strategy • Greater Yarra Urban Parklands (one living and integrated natural entity) • Establishment of the Birrarung Council • the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability to report on the condition of Yarra River land In early 2018, the Wurundjeri developed their vision for the Birrarung in a policy titled *Nhanbu narrun ba ngargunin twarn Birrarung* (Ancient Spirit and Lore of the Yarra). This policy defines the Wurundjeri's aspirations for planning, policy and decision-making to enhance the integrity of the Yarra Strategic Plan.	
Melbourne Water, Healthy Waterways Strategy (2018-2028)	Melbourne Water is responsible for the waterways within the municipality and has responsibilities associated with stormwater, water quality and drainage. Melbourne Water has priority work areas and operations that are directed by its Healthy Waterway Strategy and Capital Investment Plan and operations plans. It provides grants for waterway related activities and is an active partner in weed-related management for the City of Yarra.	A collaborative relationship is integral to management of adjoining areas of land along waterways for the benefit of the entire ecosystem and for residents. The City of Yarra has responsibility for some of the infrastructure and landscape within the urban environment which influences stormwater quality and quantity. Priority areas of focus in the Healthy Waterways Strategy and Capital Investment Plan would ideally align with City of Yarra's natural values priorities. An example being Dights Falls where updates to the fish ladder are a current priority project.
Resilient Melbourne	Melbourne is one of the first 32 cities to become a member of the 100 Resilient Cities network. Resilient Melbourne, a joint project of 32 metropolitan Melbourne councils, Melbourne's academic, business and community sectors, and the Victorian Government sets out the first resilience strategy for Greater Melbourne. This strategy seeks to respond to future challenges associated with climate change and its impacts amongst other challenges. One of the first flagship actions, the delivery of a Metropolitan Melbourne Urban Forest Strategy, *Living Melbourne, Our Metropolitan Urban Forest* was delivered in March 2019, with the primary aim to "Extend and link existing urban greening, reforestation and nature initiatives across Melbourne, to	*Living Melbourne, Our Metropolitan Urban Forest* strongly links together nature and urban forest outcomes. Its eight actions strongly align with the goals and many of the actions of the Nature Strategy.

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Related strategy/policy	Connection to Yarra Nature Strategy (YNS)	Direction for the Nature Strategy
	improve wellbeing and reduce our exposure to hazards such as heatwaves and flooding".	
Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, Regional Catchment Strategy	The Regional Catchment Strategy sets targets for environmental assets that are identified as being of particular importance to the ecological health and resilience in the Port Phillip and Western Port region – native vegetation, native animals, waterways and wetlands, hinterland, coasts and the bays. For each of these 'environmental assets' it assigns objectives, priorities and management measures. Of most relevance to the City of Yarra are the objectives for native vegetation, native animals, waterways and wetlands.	The RCS sets targets for animal diversity and other measures such as key indicator species which may be of interest to the City of Yarra. It provides an umbrella strategy which may be useful to use as an opportunity to collaborate with other land managers on partnership projects.

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Appendix 2

Legislative context

Environmental Protection and Biodiversity (EPBC) Act 1999

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) applies to sites where proposed developments or projects may have a significant impact on matters of National Environmental Significance.

There are currently seven matters of National Environmental Significance, which include nationally listed threatened species; including the Matted Flax-lily, and listed fauna includes the Swift Parrot, Macquarie Perch, Grey-headed Flying-fox and Australian Grayling; ecological communities (*Grassy Eucalypt Woodland of the Victorian Volcanic Plains* being the most likely), and listed migratory species.

Under the EPBC Act, any action that may have a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance must involve a referral to the Australian Government to seek approval.

The removal or modification of habitat on private or public land for these species may trigger requirements under the EPBC Act. However, careful planning to avoid development or activities from occurring within areas of critical habitat for these species (including movement corridors), could remove the need to refer any council actions or future developments to the Minister.

Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murron) Act 2017

In 2017, the *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murron) Act* (the Act) passed through the Victorian Parliament, enshrining in law the protection of the Yarra River. The Act identifies the Yarra River and its corridor as 'one living, integrated natural entity for protection and improvement' and recognises Traditional Owners' custodianship and intrinsic connection to the river.

The Act, provides for the preparation of an unprecedented, holistic Yarra River Strategic Plan (YRSP) to coordinate 15 public entities that operate along the river corridor, to guide future use and development and identify areas for protection within the Yarra corridor. Objectives for the first 10 years of the YRSP:

YRSP (in preparation), driven by a Yarra River 50 Year Community Vision, responds to the Act and will enable responsible agencies to protect the Birrarung, Yarra River

As one of the 15 managing authorities that has statutory obligations to deliver the objectives of the YRSP over the first 10 year period, the City of Yarra is committed to complying with the YRSP plan objectives and actions.

This YRSP will set out the first 10 years of action to contribute to the delivery of the Yarra River 50 Year Community Vision.

1. A healthy river and lands - YRSP will improve the water quality of the Birrarung and protect its land, floodplains and billabongs to achieve greater biodiversity.
2. Greater Yarra Urban Parkland - YRSP will seek to protect and improve the river's parklands in order to support the Yarra River 50 Year Community Vision.
3. A culturally diverse river corridor - YRSP will acknowledge, protect and commemorate the rich heritage of the Birrarung.
4. Protecting the natural beauty of the Birrarung - YRSP will seek to respect the significance of the Birrarung's landscapes. Where we build, we will protect and celebrate the river's natural beauty, landscapes and views.

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Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) Act 1988

The *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act) was legislated to ensure the continued survival of all Victorian species of flora and fauna. The FFG Act lists threatened taxa, communities of flora or fauna and potentially threatening processes. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is the referral authority for matters under the FFG Act. Public authorities have a responsibility to ensure that their operations have regard to the objectives of the Act. Species listed under the FFG Act that have been recorded in the City of Yarra and that have the potential to occur include a suite of waterbirds and wetland-dependent species and one bat species. Potential impacts to these species should be considered early in the planning phase of any development.

Catchment and Land Protection (CaLP) Act 1997

The CaLP Act provides clear provisions relating to spread of noxious weeds on private and public land. Under section 20 of the CaLP Act, all land owners, including public authorities, must, in relation to their land, take all reasonable steps to avoid causing or contributing to land degradation, eradicate regionally prohibited weeds, prevent the growth and spread of regionally controlled weeds on their land, and prevent the spread of, and as far as possible, eradicate established pest animals.

Wildlife Act 1975 and Wildlife Regulations 2013

There may be an avenue to achieve greater protection of significant habitat trees in the City of Yarra by invoking the *Wildlife Act 1975* (the Act), as there is the potential for fauna to be harmed when large trees are removed. The Act provides for the protection and conservation of native wildlife (fauna) within Victoria. Under the Act a person must not hunt, take or destroy endangered, notable or protected wildlife; this includes all native vertebrate animals. Applying the principles of the Act to protect fauna using large trees may overcome any existing limitations in tree protection under the current local laws of the City of Yarra or under other State regulations.

The Wildlife Regulations 2013 provide further detail relating to the Act, including that a person not to damage, disturb or destroy any wildlife habitat, although this does not apply if the person is authorised to do so under any other Act such as the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Planning and Environment Act 1987

The Planning and Environment Act 1987 establishes the framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria in the present and long-term interests of all Victorians. This includes providing the structure for and administering the implementation of Planning Schemes in each municipality through the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPPs). Planning Schemes are legal instruments outlining provisions for land use, development and protection. They are constructed and sourced from the VPPs.

State Planning Policy Framework

Clause 12 Environmental and Landscape Values - recognises that planning:

- should help to protect the health of ecological systems and the biodiversity they support (including ecosystems, habitats, species and genetic diversity) and conserve areas with identified environmental and landscape values.
- must implement environmental principles for ecologically sustainable development that have been established by international and national agreements.
- should protect sites and features of nature conservation, biodiversity, geological or landscape value.

Clauses of particular relevance include:

- Clause 12.01-1 Protection of biodiversity
- Clause 12.01-2 Native vegetation management
- Clause 12.05 'Yarra River Protection' requires that that building height is below the natural tree canopy and all development is set back a minimum of 30 metres, or greater, from the banks of the river;
- Clause 14.02-1 'Catchment planning & management' stipulates the need to retain natural drainage corridors with vegetated buffer zones at least 30 metres wide along each side of a waterway to maintain the natural

drainage function, stream habitat and wildlife corridors and landscape values, to minimise erosion of stream banks and verges and to reduce polluted surface runoff from adjacent land uses.

- Clause 52.17 Victoria's Native Vegetation Management, A Framework for Action

  Under Clause 52.17 a permit is required to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation on land which together with all contiguous land in one ownership, has an area of at least 0.4 hectares (exemptions apply). Clause 52.17 requires a planning permit for the removal of native vegetation (exemptions apply). The purpose of the clause (amongst others) is to minimise impacts on Victoria's biodiversity from the removal of native vegetation and to manage native vegetation to minimise land and water degradation. Referral to DELWP under Clause 66.02 may be required for an application to remove native vegetation; e.g. if clearing is greater than 0.5 ha or the application follows the high-risk pathway. Exemptions apply on land less than 0.4 hectares to remove native vegetation, and so significant habitat trees will not be protected under Clause 52.17.

  Given that there are few sites in the City of Yarra that would support >0.4 ha of native vegetation, Clause 52.17 is unlikely to be invoked when assessing new developments within the municipality. However, under Clause 52.17, scattered indigenous trees also require protection and offsetting if proposed to be removed. The removal of significant trees is also regulated by council exercising its local law for significant tree protection. That is, any tree >40 cm diameter at breast height has to be inspected by a qualified arborist before removal. This provision is likely to protect large trees that are more likely to contain hollows and high canopy cover; that is, important fauna habitat.

- Clause 53.18 Stormwater management in urban development. Provides stormwater management requirements for new developments.
- Clause 58.03 Site layout for apartments. Includes a series of requirements for new apartment developments including considerations for layout of communal space. Objectives for landscaping include:
  - To encourage development that respects the landscape character of the area.
  - To encourage development that maintains and enhances habitat for plants and animals in locations of habitat importance.
  - To encourage appropriate landscaping.
  - To encourage the retention of mature vegetation on the site.
  - To promote climate responsive landscape design and water management in developments that support thermal comfort and reduces the urban heat island effect.

Zoning and Overlays

Several planning instruments and mechanisms exist to protect and enhance biodiversity within the City of Yarra.

Zoning: The most appropriate way to secure fauna habitat in the long term is through zoning and/or the use of overlays. All publicly managed open space in the municipality is zoned as Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ), except for Alphington Wetlands which is zoned as Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ). Land zoned as Public Park and Recreation Zone does not have a primary focus of conservation and consideration in the long-term could be given to rezoning areas of high biodiversity value to Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) to give a higher level of security and protection to these sites. This measure would apply to areas identified as critical habitat and movement corridors in the City of Yarra (see Map 3).

Overlays:

Significant Landscape Overlay and Environmental Significance Overlay

The Yarra River Corridor is covered by a Significant Landscape Overlay while Merri and Darebin Creeks are covered by an Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2 and ESO3, respectively).

These overlays consider a broad-scale vision for the landscape's vegetation and character, with aspirations for biodiversity protection. Environmental Significance Overlays are applied to areas on the basis of the location and type of remnant riparian and other indigenous vegetation, which in these tributaries to Yarra River may include biodiversity and habitat values. The application of the ESO's in this instance is strategically applied to capture an appropriate area where ecological values have been identified and require ongoing protection, such as critical habitat or movement

corridors. In the Yarra Planning Scheme, under ESO2 and ESO3 it is policy that areas of remnant vegetation are not disturbed and disturbance to non-remnant vegetation minimised. The protection of ecological values along the Yarra River is provided by SLO1. Under the SLO1 a Landscape Plan is required that includes details around design features that are compatible with the landscape; vegetation to be planted and protected; weed and erosion management; stormwater management.

Additionally, an application to remove, destroy or lop vegetation must be accompanied by a written explanation justifying the removal of the vegetation supported by a suitably qualified arborist.

- A description and accurate site plan denoting the position, height, number, trunk circumference, branch spread, slope of land and species of any vegetation to be removed.
- Plan details of the location of proposed replanting.

For instance, consideration could be given to applying an ESO over the Park Street Linear Reserve, which encompasses both critical habitat and an ecological corridor.

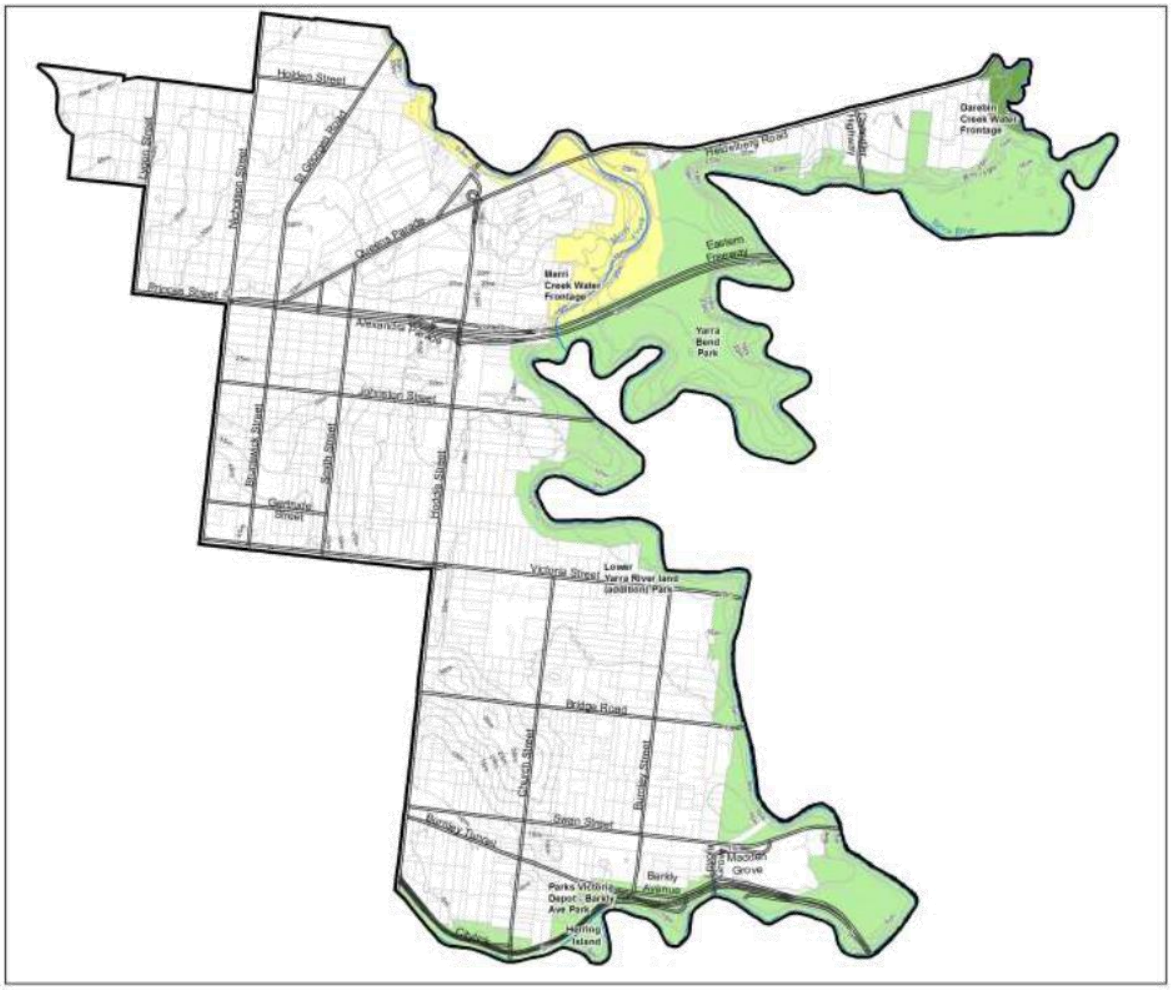

Figure 20. Location of the Environment Significance Overlay and Significant Landscape Overlay in Yarra

Design and Development Overlay (DDO-Schedule1) - applies to the Yarra River corridor, Merri and Darebin Creeks and some adjoining land. Links to the Yarra River Corridor Urban Design Guidelines Local Planning Policy.

This DDO will be updated when Amendment C66 is included in the Yarra Planning Scheme.

The new overlay recognises four sub-areas of the River Corridor and there are specific Design Objectives and buildings and works provisions for the whole corridor and for each sub-area. For some of the sub-areas the buildings and works provisions nominate heights and setbacks for new development.

Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO2) - the overlay indicates the intention of the State Government to acquire land to create a continuous linear park/trail system adjacent to waterways. Sections of this overlay are present along the Yarra River (south of Gipps Street) and the lower section of the Darebin Creek.

Environmentally Sustainable Development – Local Policy in Yarra Planning Scheme (22.17) Planning Permit Considerations. Under this local policy, Clause 22.17-2 includes objectives that support the protection of urban biodiversity:

- To protect and enhance biodiversity within the municipality.
- To provide environmentally sustainable landscapes and natural habitats, and minimise the urban heat island effect.
- To encourage the retention of significant trees.
- To encourage the planting of indigenous vegetation.
- To encourage the provision of space for productive gardens, particularly in larger residential developments.

Sustainable Management Plans are detailed sustainability assessments of a proposed building design required with planning permit applications. Within the City of Yarra, there are ten key sustainable building categories that must be addressed in applications for large buildings, comprising of 10 or more residential dwellings or more than 1000m2 of non-residential Gross Floor Area (GFA). Two categories that apply to biodiversity include Urban Ecology (see objectives listed above), and stormwater management, which aims to reduce the impact of stormwater runoff by improving water quality, by implementing water sensitive urban design principles. Implementing Melbourne Water storm water management best practice around wetland sites may achieve this.

City of Yarra Street Tree Policy

Council supports an increase in the quality and quantity of trees in its streets and is committed to the prioritisation of street trees through integrated streetscape design. Council recognises the benefits of healthy and diverse street trees and promotes biodiversity values across the Municipality. Native and indigenous species are preferred as street trees to build on their ecological value and provide valuable habitat that accommodates a range of wildlife. The aim of the policy is to provide a policy framework to guide street tree planning, planting, maintenance removal and replacement in the City of Yarra that will increase the benefits provided by trees in the urban landscape. Specific objectives of the policy relating to biodiversity include a net increase in the number of street trees and overall street tree canopy, improvements in the quality of street trees, and to increase the diversity of street tree species

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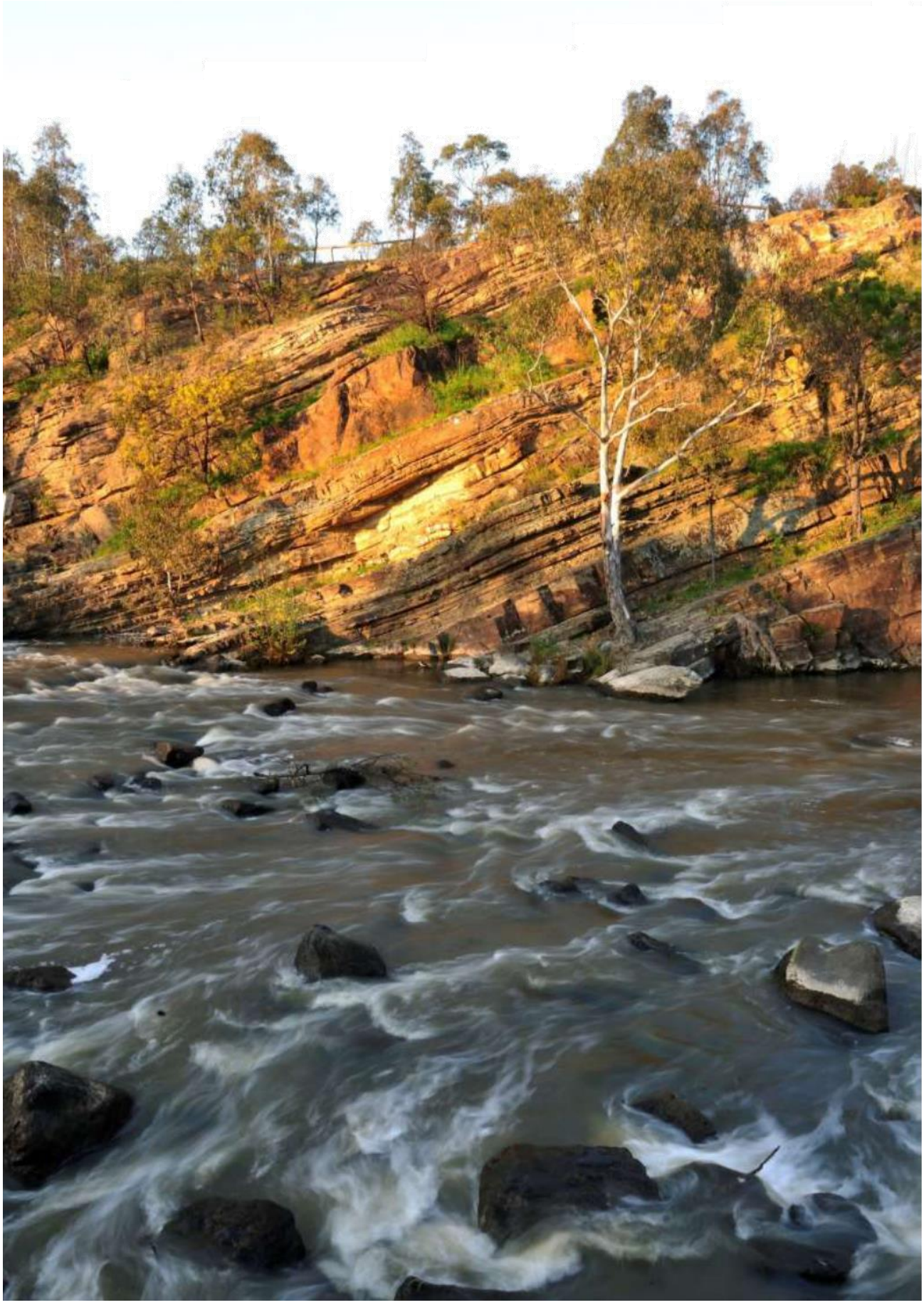
Attachment 1 - Final Draft Yarra Nature Strategy 2020-2024



Appendix 3

Nature Action Plan - Context

Goal 1: A more diverse, connected and resilient natural environment

Management Principle 1.1. Consolidate and grow areas of high quality, diverse habitat

Actions:

- ***Consolidate and increase the condition of all patches of current native vegetation.***
- ***Review all native vegetation patches in the context of their role as habitat within a corridor and their contribution to ecological function. Adjust management approach accordingly.***
- ***Prioritise some areas for enhancement and identify locations for linking.***

Targets:

- **Native vegetation understorey score in all mapped current native vegetation patches increased by 20% by Year 3.**
- **Management planning for bushland areas includes consideration of ecological function for key indicator species and consideration of threatening processes by end of Year 2. This is documented and monitored.**
- **Increase native vegetation understorey extent (at >25% cover) within Open Space by 0.5 ha annually**

Context:

The Biodiversity Health Survey assessed open space reserves to identify and map patches of native vegetation. A *habitat hectare* assessment was undertaken to determine the condition of areas of native vegetation, including areas of planted vegetation. This methodology is outlined in *Vegetation Quality Assessment Manual-Guidelines for Applying the Habitat Hectares Scoring Method* (DSE 2004). The habitat hectare method involves making visual and quantitative assessments on various characteristics of native vegetation according to established criteria that are set against an optimum benchmark. Using this method, patches of native vegetation are mapped as 'habitat zones'.

Figure 21 shows the average score for habitat attributes across council reserves using the Habitat Hectare method. The 'Landscape Context' score was also determined as part of assessments and represents a combined assessment of the habitat zone 'patch' size, the proximity to large 'core' habitat patches (>50 ha in size), and amount of bushland within the immediate surrounding landscape. Greater values represent higher quality vegetation. The maximum score (pristine bushland) for each category is also shown for comparison (lighter green bars).

Compared to pristine bushland the average habitat zone scored particularly poorly in the categories of Large Old Trees (LOTs), weed cover, recruitment, and logs. Understorey, organic litter, and canopy cover scores are what would be expected levels of condition within urban bushland remnants while the 'Landscape Context' reflects the urban nature of the study area.

The mapped habitat zones and EVC distribution is shown in Figure 22. It can be seen that the patches of native vegetation are relatively fragmented; and especially along the waterway corridor and linear trail that extends along Park Street, there are ample opportunities to extend existing patches and to link between patches, providing a much more continuous habitat corridor.

Additionally, the results from the habitat hectare assessment for vegetation quality show that there is ample opportunity for improving the condition of the current native vegetation within the reserve system.

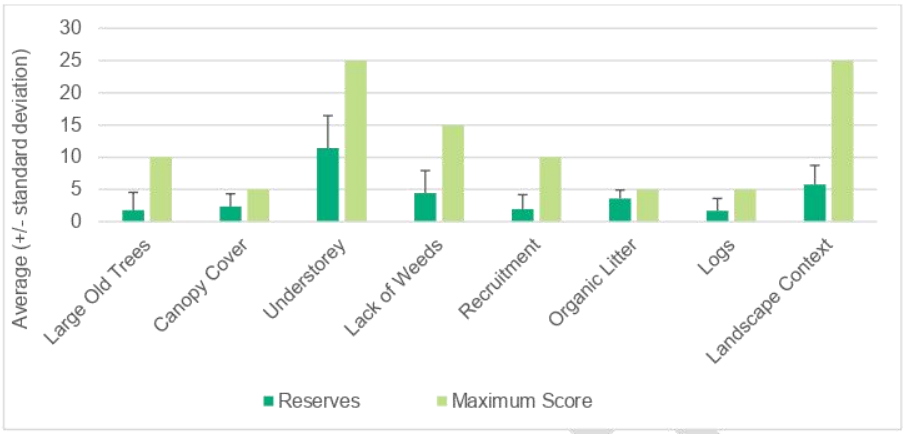


Figure 21. Average 'Site Condition' and 'Landscape Context' scores across all habitat zones

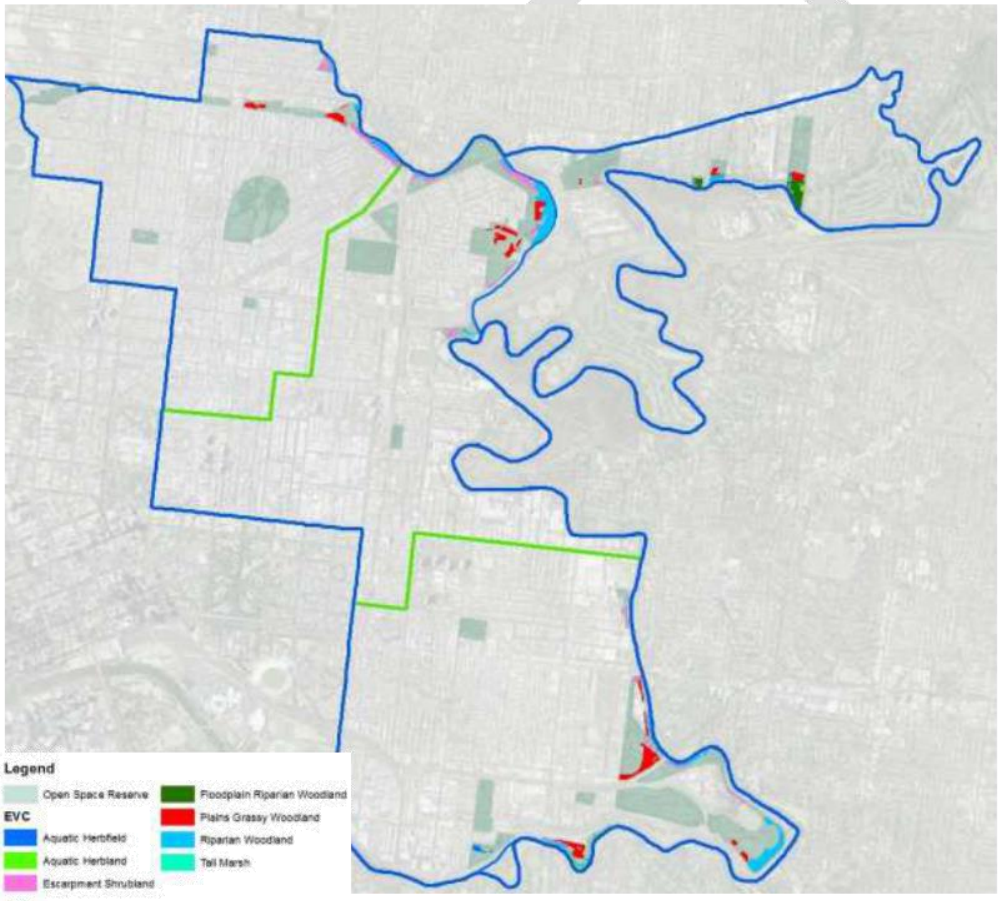


Figure 22. Ecological Vegetation Community distribution across the City of Yarra

Management Principle 1.2. Increase flora and fauna diversity

Actions:

- ***Establish monitoring locations targeting higher quality habitat and also low-quality areas for key indicator fauna groups.***

  Fauna recommended to include:

  - ***Pollinator insects, butterflies***
  - ***Birds (diverse range of guilds)***
  - ***Bats***
- ***Design and deliver a monitoring program that measures diversity in fauna focussing on key indicator fauna groups (above). Involve public/citizen science where possible.***
- ***Where deemed appropriate, initiate re-introductions, particularly for flora in key locations.***

Targets:

- **Net positive flora and fauna diversity by end Year 3 resulting in an appropriate increase in each of the faunal groups listed above.**
- **Monitoring conducted at relevant intervals (as determined by method).**
- **Data is useful, interpreted and made publicly available in an engaging way.**
- **Optional target: a 5% increase in indigenous flora diversity within bushland reserves.**

Context:

The Biodiversity Health Survey included a comprehensive fauna census in 2014-2016 utilising a range of survey techniques to detect vertebrate fauna species.

In total, 953 new fauna observations were made over the course of the Biodiversity Health Survey.

The majority of records were for bird and mammals species, with smaller numbers of records for reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, and fish (Figure 23).

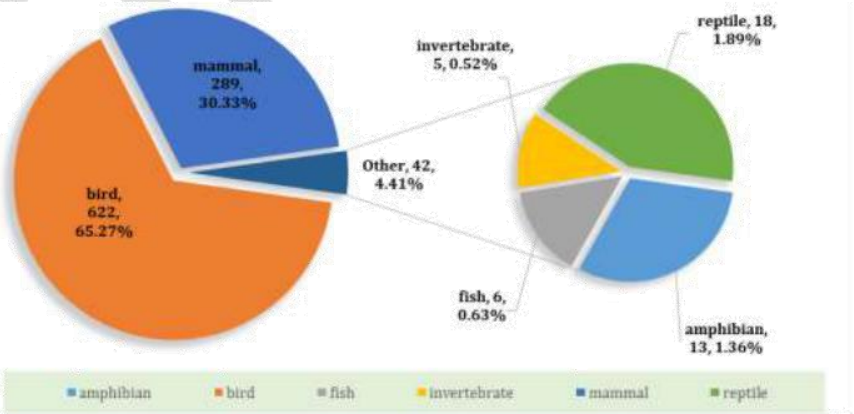


Figure 23. Fauna taxon composition across all 2014-2016 BHS observations

Bird species abundance and diversity across council land varied across the surveyed reserves. The common native species included the Australian Magpie, Noisy Miner, Red Wattlebird, Rainbow Lorikeet, Silver Gull, Magpie-lark, and Galah. Common introduced bird species included Spotted Turtle-dove*, Common Myna*, Rock Dove*, and Common Starling*. The Common Myna* and Rock Dove* accounted for a large number of individual bird species observed, while the Rainbow Lorikeet was the most abundant native bird species by a considerable margin.

Fauna monitoring opportunities:

The BHS established a series of fauna census areas for a number of fauna groups. This allows future surveys to occur which can be compared to the current results for tracking the progress in biodiversity improvement programs and general biodiversity values across the municipality. A number of councils (e.g. City of Whitehorse) undertake regular annual bird surveys in nominated bushland reserves in an effort to monitor biodiversity health across the municipality.

Regular monitoring is important to provide a reliable picture of the fauna diversity within an area and can provide key insights into the health of ecological systems. Key insights can allow for adaptive management actions to be implemented, to reduce declines in fauna populations. However they can also be utilised to observe positive outcomes for fauna and ecosystems, through biodiversity improvement works. Bird and microbat surveys are probably the best indicators fauna groups for achieving these insights, as they utilise and respond to a wide range of habitat resources and attributes and play important roles in ecosystems function such as pollination, seed dispersal, and regulation of insect populations (lerps, scales, mosquitos etc.). Both species can also utilise both bushland habitat and scattered significant tree 'stepping stone' habitat.

Insects likely comprise a significant proportion of the fauna diversity with the City of Yarra. This fauna group can be used as indicators of general ecosystem health, particularly of soil and microhabitat health as they respond strongly to the diversity, structure, and health of the groundstorey vegetation.

Flora

The Biodiversity Health Survey contributed a significant amount of data to the knowledge base for the City of Yarra. Prior to this survey; 961 flora taxa had been recorded from 5374 records. During the survey, new flora species records were compiled during the completion of habitat zone flora lists for each of the 59 mapped habitat zones and in establishing 16 flora quadrats across several council reserves. Accordingly, the survey resulted in a total of 3174 new flora records.

As database searches revealed only 498 flora records existed for council reserves, this amounts to a substantial increase in flora records for the council reserve system. New records included 211 introduced flora species, 209 indigenous, and 20 naturalised native species. The proportions recorded in these surveys reflect the results and proportions of indigenous versus exotic and introduced flora species in the wider council area and surrounds. It should be noted that of the flora species observed, the diversity was relatively low, which reflects the surrounding urban environment, and the history of land modification.

On this basis, there is significant opportunity for improving plant diversity, particularly focussing on higher quality locations as a first priority. The locations of the ten quadrats that were established during the Biodiversity Health Survey would provide a good first batch of sites and quadrat monitoring would then assist in gauging the success of improving plant diversity.

Figure 24. Chocolate lilies observed during the Biodiversity Health Survey

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Management Principle 1.3 Protect and celebrate significant habitat trees and their values

Action: Building on the trees documented via the Biodiversity Health Survey, document and map all large old trees and others that provide significant habitat. Requires a description of their habitat values, including hollows.

Targets:

- **Maintain the number of hollow bearing trees. Implement programs to see an increase of 5% annually including planting of indigenous trees, creating artificial hollows and retaining dead trees where it is safe to do so.**
- **All significant habitat trees added to the Significant Tree register.**

Action: Engage with Wurundjeri Council to ensure Large Old tree values that are culturally significant are adequately considered in the City of Yarra (and its land management partners) policy and practice.

Note: This action may align with the Heritage Strategy which aims to engage the community in identifying areas of Natural Heritage value.

Targets:

- **All trees identified by Wurundjeri Council protected via a formal planning mechanism if/where this is culturally appropriate and sensitive.**
- **Procedures and training in cultural heritage awareness and practice are up to date for all relevant staff.**

Action: Ensure local laws protocols are in place to protect all significant habitat trees.

Target: No significant habitat trees removed on streets or open space that is managed by the City of Yarra.

Action: Promote significant habitat trees, and their values in an online forum. Encourage public interaction.

Target: The City of Yarra resident's survey indicates increased awareness of significant habitat trees and their values.

Context:

Large indigenous trees are keystone structures for birds and arboreal mammals in urban parks (Stagoll et al. 2012), and contribute to overall biodiversity. Large old trees need to be managed for long-term sustainability and it is vital they are retained in new developments (Ikin et al. 2015). Increasing the cover of flowering eucalypt trees to at least 40% of the total extent in the municipality would significantly increase the probability of foraging occupancy by the Rainbow Lorikeet, although nesting occupancy would be reliant on the availability of tree hollows (Shukuroglou and McCarthy 2006).

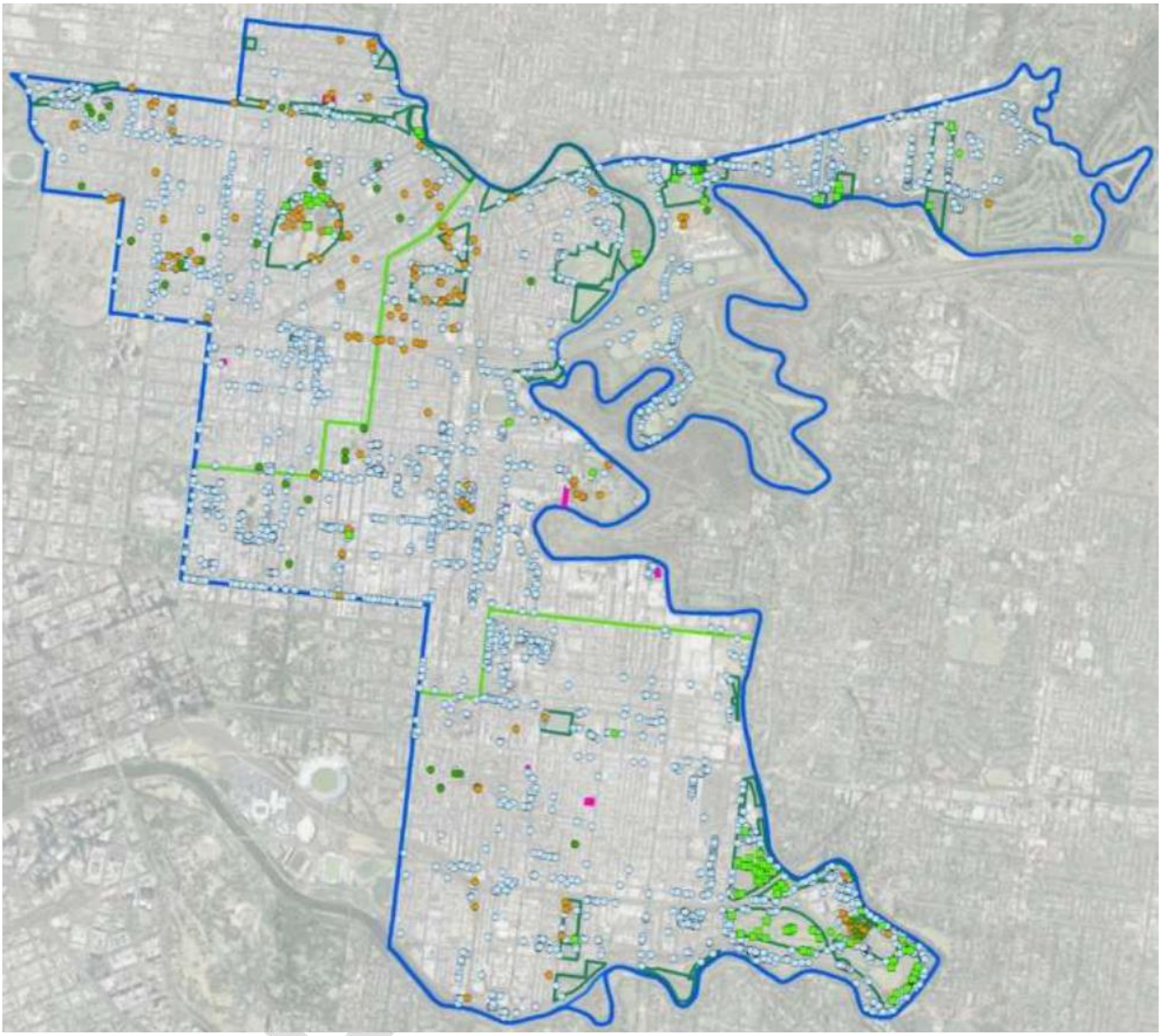
An indication of where other significant trees may be present was investigated during the BHS using remote sensing LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) imaging which uses light from a pulsed laser on an aircraft to measure the height of vegetation. Using this technique, point locations of trees estimated to be greater than 15 m in height were identified to infer the potential location of additional significant trees across both public and private land in the City of Yarra.

Analysis of Lidar Images

Collectively, all trees are important within a landscape through their contribution to total canopy cover. Total landscape habitat cover has been shown to have a strong influence on bird abundance, diversity, and species composition. The relative cover of eucalypt and exotic trees also influences bird community structure, with eucalyptus forest birds more likely to persist where a eucalypt canopy is present, and a unique urban bird community where exotic trees dominate. Gaps in forest canopy and habitat connectivity can also have a strong influence of fauna persistence within an urban matrix (Chace and Walsh 2006: Fischer and Lindenmayer 2007: Radford et al. 2005: Tremblay and St Clair 2011).

Some large trees across open space reserves and council land are captured within the City of Yarra Significant Tree Register, but not all. The Large Old Trees that were identified during the BHS would be added as a first step (shown as

green squares in Map 4). Further investigation should include engagement with the Wurundjeri Council, as well as survey of the other trees recorded in open spaces (small blue circles in Map 4).



Map 4. Habitat trees observed and inferred via LIDAR mapping

Figure 25. Large Manna Gum on private land in Princes Hill. Photograph: Y. Kelsall

Figure 26. Eucalypt with a native understorey planting provides a contrast to Plane Trees on a street in Fitzroy. Photograph: Y. Kelsall

1.4 Understand and conserve habitat refuge areas for plants and animals

Action: Commission a project in recognition of Yarra's Climate Emergency Plan to advise on council's role in providing nature refuge areas (for species affected by climate change) and actions that it can implement.

Target: Climate refuge study complete by end Year 2. Any resulting recommendations funded in Year 3.

Context:

The City of Yarra has joined hundreds of organisations across the world in recognising the serious threat of climate change by declaring a climate emergency and accordingly, developing a Climate Emergency Plan.

The myriad effects of climate change are expressing themselves locally through altered weather, rainfall and effects on plants and animals. These effects have been recognised locally by naturalists and land managers, expressed in the form of new weed species emerging; altered flowering and fruiting cycles for well-known species such as Blackberry; new fauna movement patterns and some fauna species now residing permanently outside of their former range (Red-rumped Parrots, Cormorants, even Eastern Koels); loss of local flora; and increasingly stressed flora and fauna.

The VicNature2050 alliance brings together Victoria's universities in combination with government departments and Non-government organisations; working to explore and address the impacts of climate change upon Victoria's nature. A document resulting from a symposium in 2017 (Jordan, R. & Hoffman, A. 2017), summarised the threat to Victorian nature:

Climate change is currently one of the greatest emerging threats to our natural systems. Ongoing climate change in combination with other stressors that are degrading landscapes is expected to create stressful environments for biota across Australia. These stressful conditions threaten natural processes and are expected to drive major losses in biodiversity in the next few decades (Dunlop, M. et. Al. 2012; 2017). In Victoria, the past century has seen conditions become hotter and drier (CSIRO and Bureau of Meteorology, Australia: 2016), a trend that is projected to continue together with increases in the incidence of extreme weather events involving heat, drought, fire and flooding. Climate change in combination with landscape fragmentation and land use change is already impacting natural systems (Scheffers, B. R. et al. 2016). A range of ecological processes are being affected including species distributions contracting in some areas and expanding in others, and flowering and migration times shifting in response to recent climate change (Scheffers, B. R. et al. 2017; Parmesan, C. 2016; Moritz, C. & Agudo, R. 2013).

The need to promote adaptability within our natural systems is now recognised (Victoria's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2020; Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2036 (Todd, J. 2017)).

The City of Yarra has many landscape features that make it a natural 'hub for nature' and recommend its waterways and near-waterway environments as places that can provide features that may assist as refuges for plants and animals, especially in times of higher temperatures and lower rainfall. The municipality sits at the confluence of four waterways, and it includes the meeting of two geology types. Other natural features include its habitat trees, wetlands and relatively large areas of open space adjoining the waterways.

In support of the municipality's intention to take urgent action on the climate emergency, there are many actions (outlined in this Strategy) that the City of Yarra could undertake in recognition of its stewardship of areas that can provide natural refuges for flora and fauna.

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Figure 27. Red-rumped Parrot, a species that has moved to the city in recent decades. Image: Getty Images

1.5 Conserve locally rare or threatened flora and fauna

Actions:

- ***Establish a 'local legends' working and networking group. Key stakeholders include Victorian Indigenous Nurseries Co-op, Parks Victoria, Wurundjeri Council and staff from adjoining councils and land managers e.g. Merri Creek Management Committee, Darebin Creek Management Committee.***
- ***Invest in a project that focusses on the long-term sustainability of locally rare flora and fauna. For example flora seed conservation, seed orchards and plantings with the option to encourage residents to grow a seed orchard for a rare plant at their home.***
- ***Investigate and document locally rare plants and animals. Promote this information via online opportunities and seek engagement from the community.***

Target:

- **No new local extinctions in flora or fauna.**

Context:

While there is a duty of care and legislative requirement to conserve state or nationally threatened flora and fauna, it is also important to also recognise and conserve plants and animals that are locally rare or threatened.

Some of those reasons outlined by Lorimer (2010) in his report on locally threatened plants in Manningham include:

- As the number of species in any domain of interest reduces, the ecological system loses complexity and the web of interactions weakens;
- The extinction of a species from a jurisdiction represents a contraction of that species' range and thereby contributes to the extinction process at the global scale;
- Some species possess important genetic variation between jurisdictions, and it is desirable to conserve the full range of genetic variability;

- There is a philosophical viewpoint that we, as individuals, communities, organisations or governments, have a duty of care to do what is within our own sphere of influence to look after the environment, and not rely on others (such as another state) to compensate for environmental deterioration in our own jurisdiction.

Lorimer states that 'each of these principles applies to local government as much as to states or nations. Indeed, the first of the three concerns listed above becomes more serious as one focuses on smaller areas. The loss of even a small number of species from a municipality or district can have significant consequences and lead to a cascade of adverse flow-on effects. For example, the collapse of mistletoe numbers in Melbourne's eastern fringe over the past five years due to drought has led to a collapse in dependent species such as the Mistletoe bird and Imperial White Butterfly, and flow-on effects such as reduced pollination by butterflies and reduced pest control by Mistletoe birds. It is impossible to know to what extent the consequences have spread through the web of interactions that maintains the ecosystem in a productive and dynamically stable state.

Some species play more important or fundamental ecological roles than others, but in general, the greater the diversity of species that can be retained at the local or municipal scale, the better.

Sadly, the importance of this is rarely recognised and it has been generally overlooked by governments at all levels.

In Victoria, state government policies, legislation and regulation related to protection of native flora and fauna recognise species that are threatened with extinction throughout the state but not at smaller scales'.

In the City of Yarra there are a number of plants that were formerly common that are now noted to be 'disappearing'. These have been noted by the local indigenous plant nursery, Victorian Indigenous Nurseries Co-operative (VINC), who have developed specialised 'seed production areas' with the aim of propagating plants from some of the last locally available seed.

Figure 28. Running Postman, a plant that is now locally rare. Photograph: C. McGrath

1.6 Management Principle: Conserve state and federally significant flora and fauna

Actions:

- ***Collaborate with other land and water managers on projects to actively enhance habitat and conservation values for all State and Nationally-threatened flora or fauna.***
- ***Conduct targeted fauna surveys that build on the Biodiversity Health Survey work to confirm a baseline level for threatened fauna within the municipality. Collaborate with other land managers as required, e.g. Melbourne Water for aquatic animals. Parks Victoria and Birdlife Australia (Swift Parrot) as necessary.***
- ***Complete further research to confirm or otherwise, the occurrence of state or Nationally-threatened flora.***

Target:

- **Extent of state or nationally threatened fauna is known and documented. By Year 2.**
- **Extent of state or nationally threatened flora is known and documented. By Year 2.**
- **No local extinctions of state or nationally threatened fauna in the City of Yarra.**

Context:

The Biodiversity Health Survey while ambitious was not designed for the purpose of confirming or providing a baseline status for species which are recognised as being rare or threatened at the state or national level.

A sound understanding of threatened species distributions, movements, and habitat use across the City of Yarra is crucial to managing threatening processes such as predation by foxes and cats, disturbance by domestic dogs, weed invasion, loss of hollow bearing trees, and other threatening processes as listed the Victorian *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act) and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999*.

The BHS involved extensive searches of relevant flora and fauna databases and a shortlist was created of significant flora and fauna that were determined to have a medium or high likelihood of persisting in the City of Yarra based on habitat availability, years since the last record, and total number of records within the surrounding landscape.

This shortlist includes 9 flora and 20 fauna species.

Flora:

- Austral Tobacco
- Fragrant Saltbush (likely only planted specimens)
- Rosemary Grevillea (likely only planted specimens)
- Matted Flax-lily
- Native Peppercress
- Leafy Twig-sedge
- Slender Bindweed
- Studley Park Gum
- Melbourne Yellow-Gum

The Matted Flax-lily is the only EPBC-listed species with potential to occur. The remaining species are state-significant and listed either under the FFG Act or the *Advisory List of Rare or Threatened Plants in Victoria* (DELWP 2014).

The Leafy Twig-sedge was recorded in McConchie Reserve during the BHS flora surveys, although this species was planted during habitat restoration at the site. Eucalypts that were unconfirmed as Melbourne Yellow Gum were observed in Coate Park in Alphington and Studley Park Gum is recorded locally.

There is also an unconfirmed sighting of Austral Tobacco from McConchie Reserve in 1987. Native Peppercress was recorded in Alphington Park Wetland in 2003. There is little potential for isolated remnant plants or populations of Fragrant Saltbush or Rosemary Grevillea and recent records are likely to be planted specimens.

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Undetected remnant threatened flora populations are most likely to occur along the Yarra River and Merri Creek corridors, especially where remnants (EVCs) of indigenous vegetation occur around the escarpment (e.g. Escarpment Shrubland) or within off-stream wetlands (e.g. Aquatic Herbland).

Fauna:

Five nationally threatened species are likely to make use of habitat within the City of Yarra and immediately adjoining waterways and bushland. These species include the Critically Endangered Swift Parrot, the Endangered Macquarie Perch and Regent Honeyeater, and the Vulnerable Grey-headed Flying-fox and Australian Grayling.

A further fifteen state-threatened species are considered likely to make regular use of habitat within or immediately adjoining the City of Yarra. These include the Eastern Great Egret, Azure Kingfisher, Nankeen Night Heron, Pied Cormorant, Hardhead, Clamorous Reed Warbler, Rufous Fantail, Powerful Owl and Golden Perch. Other threatened or migratory species recorded within the City of Yarra may also make some sporadic use of habitat for migration, dispersal, and foraging.

Most of these species are restricted to aquatic environments or adjacent riparian habitats; and all are likely to depend on riparian and aquatic habitats along the Yarra River and the Merri, and Darebin Creek corridors for foraging, dispersal, and/or migration. Stands of Yellow Gum, Yellow Box, and Mugga Ironbark within the City of Yarra and adjoining areas (Yarra Bend Parklands) could provide occasional food resources for the Swift Parrot during its summer and winter migrations between its breeding habitat with Tasmania and summer foraging areas in south-eastern Australia.

The Grey-headed Flying-fox has a large established population within the City of Yarra and adjoining areas, and likely makes significant us of habitat resources across the council reserve system and urban environments including flowering eucalypts and fruit trees. The Nankeen Night Heron is resident at a number of locations along the Yarra River and observed on a number of occasions during the 2014-2016 census.

Further targeted surveys for significant fauna should focus on species likely to be resident or make significant use of the study area such as: the Nankeen Night Heron, Eastern Great Egret, and Azure Kingfisher. Many of the threatened fauna species within the City of Yarra are aquatic or aquatic-dependent fauna, meaning they could be targeted together as a group.

Future microbat monitoring would provide verification of Yellow-bellied Sheathtail Bat records made in this study and provide a better understanding of the species distribution and use of habitat across the City of Yarra.

Other species may require further research to determine their presence or otherwise within the municipality.

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1.7 Increase habitat connectivity

Actions:

- ***Research and develop connectivity plans for keystone or character species for at least 3 habitat links with at least one being a new terrestrial link.***
- ***Involve community in the planning of each connectivity project.***

Target:

- **At least 3 connectivity projects delivered in 5 years, focussing on waterways (2) and terrestrial priorities (1)**

Context:

Maintaining and enhancing habitat connectivity is key to improving and safeguarding the flora and fauna within the City of Yarra and its environs. The majority of current habitat value is provided along the Merri Creek and Yarra River corridors, but other large reserves such as the Edinburgh Gardens play a key role as 'stepping stones' for birds, bats and other fauna across inner northern Melbourne. Large significant canopy trees also play an important role in the movement of fauna and providing food and shelter resources.

Habitat links

Habitat corridors or links differ from critical habitat in that they provide fewer habitat resources for fauna to complete their life cycle. Corridors provide the basic habitat elements to enable animals to move safely across the landscape, sometimes between two or more areas of critical habitat. There are several important corridors for fauna movement present within the municipality:

Waterway corridors:

- The Yarra River corridor, considered to be of National and International Treaty Significance (Brereton et al. 2004). Provides a link between significant areas of critical habitat including in the east, around Yarra Bend Park, Dights Falls and Burnley Park.

  Key linkages for focus along the Yarra include between Alphington and Yarra Bend area, and from Dights Falls to Burnley.

- Merri Creek corridor - provides a link for the movement of terrestrial and aquatic fauna between habitat patches to the north, and south to the Yarra River corridor.

  The Merri Creek Corridor provides a great opportunity as a high priority habitat corridor project.

- Darebin Creek corridor – provides another north-south habitat link to the Yarra River.

Terrestrial corridors:

- Park Street Linear Reserve - provides an east-west habitat corridor, comprised mainly of ground and shrub cover, and some habitat trees, potentially linking the Merri Creek corridor with Royal Park, Princes Park and Moonee Ponds Creek.

  This corridor, already partly established requires further enhancement and strengthening, particularly in the west.

- Terrestrial link(s) from the Yarra to large habitat patches in the west such as Royal Park.

  There is ample opportunity for the provision of fauna habitat corridors across the landscape away from the waterways. These corridors would focus on indigenous canopy species, supplemented by small plantings of mid and groundstorey. Opportunities such as replacement of street trees, new street tree plantings, new or refurbished parkland and private land should all be investigated.

  A number of options, based on some preliminary analysis of landscape and strategic opportunities are provided in Map 3. These would require a full scoping study to confirm one or two key corridors for implementation; and would involve collaboration and close alignment with Urban Forest and Open Space priorities.

  Terrestrial corridors provide a great opportunity to also link with the community of Yarra and inspirational ideas and messaging will be important elements of successful implementation. On this basis the Sugar Glider

is promoted as the focal species for planning and implementing terrestrial corridors. Secondary species include birds, butterflies, microbats and pollinators.

Adjoining areas:

- The locations next to any area of fauna habitat, including locations of critical habitat or corridors are important to include in an overall plan for enhancing and linking for natural values in the City of Yarra.
- Indicative locations to target for education and programs that encourage habitat creation for nature are shown in Map 3, as a 200 metre buffer along all waterways. Additional areas would include a similar buffer applied to any overland or terrestrial fauna links including the Park Street Linear Park.

  Within the waterway buffer areas, species such as Pobblebonk Frogs and small woodland birds including Brown Thornbill could be used as focal species to include in engagement programs.

  Terrestrial areas that form a buffer to terrestrial corridors, could create habitat for the same species associated with the terrestrial corridors themselves, i.e. Sugar Gliders and birds, butterflies, microbats and pollinators.

Opportunities to Reconnect the Landscape

The reserve system within the City of Yarra provides an opportunity to sustain important flora and fauna populations and this could be greatly enhanced with some key additions via extra habitat introduced within the urban matrix either via parkland, streetscapes or on private land.

In all cases it is recommended that the vegetation used for revegetation aim to recreate the former vegetation type as closely as possible.

The City of Yarra could create some planting guides for common vegetation types that can be easily accessed and used by both the community, internal staff and contractors. The City of Melbourne's Urban Nature Planting Guide could form a useful base.

There are several areas that are strategically positioned within or close to potential corridors, that are presently unvegetated (no EVCs), have overstorey but no shrub layer, or offer little fauna habitat. Revegetation via plantings of canopy (trees, tall shrubs), mid-storey (medium and small shrubs, climbers) and groundstorey plants (grasses, wildflowers and herbs) would promote connectivity especially for birds, pollinators including butterflies; and would be valuable 'stepping stones' to assist these animals to move across the landscape. These locations include smaller parks and reserves that contain canopy cover but do not presently support much understorey cover.

Figure 29. Small parks like Cambridge Park, Fitzroy could benefit from plantings of a greater diversity of vegetation providing more structure beneath canopy trees. Photograph: Y. Kelsall

1.8 Increase integrity and innovation in biodiversity management.

Actions:

- ***Establish a working group of bushland management experts to inform council on its on-ground management and associated programs. Also, to collaborate on cross-tenure projects.***
- ***Include experts such as Merri Creek Management Committee, Darebin Creek Management Committee, VINC, the Narrap team, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, land managers from adjoining councils and City of Yarra contractors. This group may be best implemented as a larger inner-Melbourne working group allowing for information sharing and time efficiencies.***

Target:

- **Working group established by end Year 1 and meeting 6 monthly thereafter.**

Context:

The stakeholder engagement process for the development of this Strategy involved a workshop of technical experts, where the value of bringing this group of experienced bushland managers to discuss on-ground management issues, achievements and challenges was evident. Therefore, the creation of future opportunities for this group to meet is recommended, to promote discussion that will ideally result in better on-ground outcomes, shared project ideas and new learnings.

While there is no key action relating to the City of Yarra supporting or delivering any project ideas, trials or education materials that resulted from the discussions, should be encouraged, and it is anticipated that once the group is operational there will be more clarity around its purpose, areas of interest and likely outcomes.

1.9 City of Yarra Integrated Waterway Corridors

Actions:

- ***Contribute to the preparation of a specific integrated waterway corridors plan for Yarra that brings together all the strategic directions and provides an overall single coordinating plan of action***

Target:

- **To acknowledge the Yarra River Strategic Plan (YRSP) objectives and the need to assess the opportunities locally and across boundaries with partners to deliver the YRSP commitments and to generate plausible strategic waterways restoration projects to access available funding.**

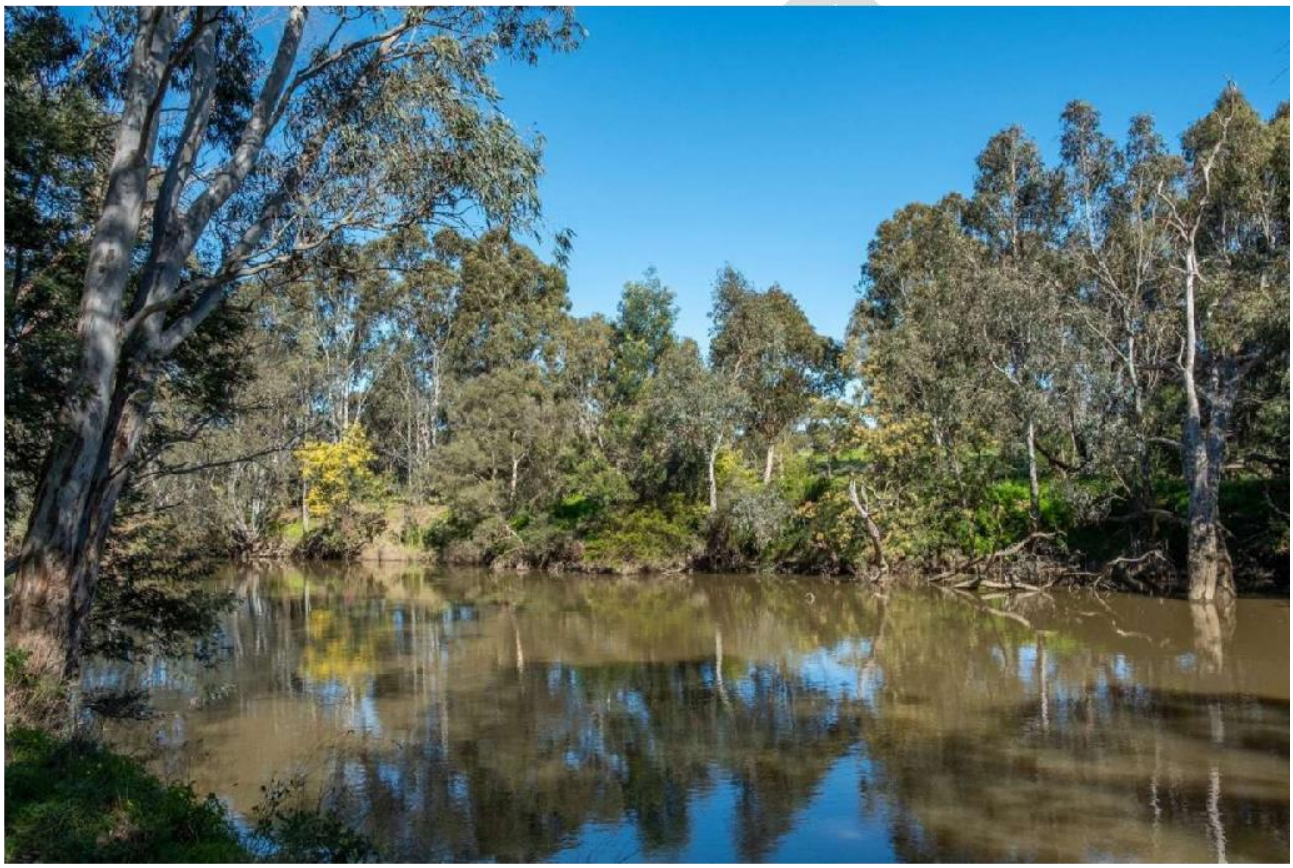
Context:

In 2017, the *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murron) Act (the Act)* passed through the Victorian Parliament, enshrining in law the protection of the Yarra River. The Act identifies the Yarra River and its corridor as 'one living, integrated natural entity for protection and improvement' and recognises Traditional Owners' custodianship and intrinsic connection to the river.

In early 2018, the Wurundjeri developed their vision for the Birrarung in a policy titled Nhanbu narrun ba ngargunin twarn Birrarung (Ancient Spirit and Lore of the Yarra). This policy defines the Wurundjeri's aspirations for planning, policy and decision-making to enhance the integrity of the Yarra Strategic Plan.

The Draft Yarra Strategy identifies a suite of actions for the Lower Yarra section that include focus on habitat links along the Yarra waterway and extending this focus into adjoining private land. Habitat corridors are also mooted for a terrestrial link that may be similar in its intent to corridors that are proposed within the Nature Strategy

To acknowledge the Yarra River Strategic Plan (YRSP) objectives and the need to assess the opportunities locally and across boundaries with partners to deliver the YRSP commitments and to generate plausible strategic waterways restoration projects to access available funding, it is proposed that internally Council prepares a specific integrated waterway corridors plan for Yarra that brings together all the strategic directions and provides an overall single coordinating plan of action. Strategic Planning would lead the development of the City of Yarra Integrated Waterway Corridors Plan.



Goal 2: People appreciate and seek to enhance the natural values of the Yarra landscape

2.1 Encourage and support 'nature-focussed' initiatives on private land and throughout streetscapes at the neighbourhood-scale

Actions:

- **Establish a 'nature in the neighbourhood' reference group. Consider if/where it is possible to combine with Urban Agriculture and/or Environment Advisory Committee where relevant.**
- **Work with the reference group to plan initiatives that include a focus on increasing nature in the private and streetscape realm. This may include integration with Urban Agriculture and indigenous cultural initiatives.**
- **Fund and implement the abovementioned action plan.**

Target:

- **'Nature in the neighbourhood' Action Plan developed in consultation with reference group by the end of Year 1.**
- **500 households in Yarra participating in a 'nature in the neighbourhood' initiative by end of Year 3.**
- **One streetscape initiative implemented by the end of Year 3 that aims to introduce nature-focussed elements into a neighbourhood, resulting in wellbeing and community benefits.**

Context:

The City of Yarra has a diverse community and an equally diverse urban matrix. All areas are seeing significant amounts of change and in general trajectories are for more population and higher density living. The Open Space Strategy has identified that based on these trajectories, there is a need for increased access to open space to address a variety of needs including contact with natural areas. As well as the creation of greener, more natural areas in the public realm; there are opportunities that council can support to increase nature and natural areas in the private realm, and within streetscapes and other community spaces that make up the various neighbourhoods within Yarra.

Dr Sarah Bekessy, a Professor of Design and Social Context at RMIT, encouraged Melbourne to think big during Sustainable Design week, 2019 and take on board ideas that could see the greater Melbourne region follow in the footsteps of London, in declaring itself a national park city. Ideas that could see this achieved would include a suite of activities on private and public land with objectives including:

- Increase the canopy cover of Melbourne by 20 per cent in the next ten years.
- Create habitat in Melbourne's private and public spaces for 10 native species, and literally bring them back into the city.
- Ensure that every single resident of Melbourne has within 200 metres, a rich biodiversity experience.

Dr Bekessy said "It's about rewilding the very urban fabric, using streetscapes and roundabouts and green walls and green roofs and courtyards in the city, school yards ... [and] having core areas of green, where you can have connected pathways for native plants and animals to exist and to come back into the city."

Figure 30. [Placeholder Image] **Seeking confirmation of use.** Photo: Plant-covered walls and roofs can lower a building's internal temperature by ten degrees. Image: RMIT

Support and opportunities:

Community representatives have expressed a desire for more urban greening within the fabric of the community. This has included participants in the engagement process for the revised Yarra Environment Strategy identifying nature as the highest priority for focus. The priorities identified were:

Priority 1. Everyday nature / greenscaping

Priority 2. Community engagement and capacity building, education and youth

Priority 3. Thriving neighbourhoods

Priority 4. Take urgent action towards climate neutrality and zero waste

Priority 5. Council leadership

Priority 6. Support business sustainability

Involvement of the community in nature-focussed initiatives will assist the City of Yarra in meeting its wider environmental goals around climate action, sustainability, water management, urban agriculture, waste management and community engagement and wellbeing as well as improving natural values.

Urban Agriculture and other Sustainability and Environmental initiatives have already achieved much via engaging the community resulting in visible benefits to the community themselves as well as for the environment and natural world. There are many initiatives that each of these areas are already undertaking that would the inclusion of natural values and habitat elements would complement.

For example, Urban Agriculture - encouraging people to engage in their own food growing activities - encourages more urban greening and more conscious use of resources, nutrient and water management. All plants provide habitat for native animals and insects including birds, bats and butterflies. And there are some native and indigenous plants that are also food, fibre and medicine plants. Urban Agriculture systems can offer opportunities for enhancing urban nature and improving connectivity. Varied vegetative structure, increased plant diversity, and increased permeability of

surfaces are key features of Urban Agriculture (UA) systems that contribute to natural systems, supporting ecosystem services such as pollination, pest control, and climate resilience.

Within the municipality there are already many examples of the community integrating food growing combined with habitat creation and there could be plenty more. Including:

- Community engagement work (events, social media, newsletters etc.)
- Behaviour change (influencing land management practices on private land)
- Educational programs (workshops etc.)
- Partnerships (i.e. the Wurundjeri Council, the Collingwood Children's Farm, Neighbourhood Houses etc.)
- Shared advocacy

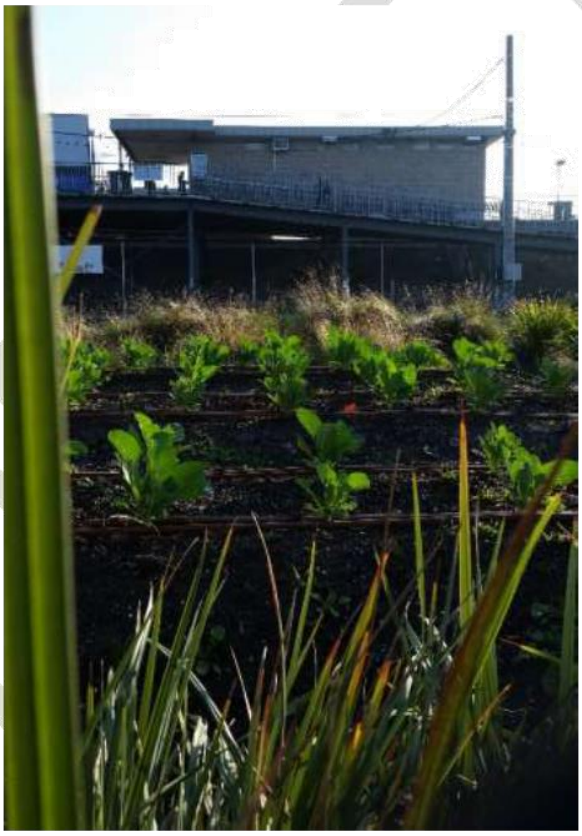


Figure 31. Indigenous habitat provided by Flax-lillies, Tussock-grasses and Spiny-headed Flax-lily shares the space in a community food garden in Collingwood

2.2 Invest in nature engagement

Actions:

- ***Employ a nature engagement office.***
- ***Scope and deliver a number of nature engagement initiatives. Seek to collaborate with other councils that have run successful programs.***

Target:

- **Nature engagement officer employed by end Year 1**
- **Nature engagement program involving at least two new initiatives in place by end Year 2.**
- **Engagement program including Actions 2.1, 2.3 and 2.4 partially implemented by end Year 1.**

Context:

There is a demonstrated appetite for urban greening and nature engagement that has been clearly expressed by the community.

Providing opportunities for the community to participate in nature-based activities will assist the City of Yarra to meet many of its own objectives relating to habitat creation, plant and animal monitoring, community connectedness, wellbeing and health.

Other municipalities and organisations have established programs for their residents that encourage them to become more involved in nature-based activity with some success, including:

- Gardens for Wildlife Program – now implemented by five other Victorian municipalities and with over 20 affiliate councils and organisations, this program, pioneered in Victoria by Knox City Council provides support, information and resources for local residents to introduce more habitat features into their own space.
- Backyard Biodiversity Program – run by the City of Boroondara, an annual learning and incentive program that targets key neighbourhoods that sit closer to priority areas for natural values.
- Incentives program for residents, schools and other organisations – this could include plant vouchers at a local indigenous nursery, such as the City of Boroondara's buy 1 get one free offer, garden planning assistance from a landscape architect, provision of other expert advice or inspiration such as, or volunteer labour.

Others encourage more activity and engagement via learning or creative means. These include:

- Education programs and opportunities - the Merri Creek Management Committee are currently engaged by the City of Yarra to deliver some education and engagement programs particularly to local schools. Other programs that exist locally include a Nature Stewards program, launched in 2018 which provides a structured training course for participants to develop their skills as naturalists, leading to application of these skills in the future.
- Environmental leadership programs - other municipalities run programs that combine environmental, sustainability and nature-focussed learning with a resulting project or program that is delivered by the participants. An example is the Hume Enviro Champions program.
- Competitions and awards – a dedicated award or suite of awards could be developed to raise awareness of nature and the activities that are being undertaken in the municipality. Competitions could also be run annually that are nature-focussed. For example, an art competition.
- Citizen Science - there are many opportunities for linking to existing citizen science programs or creating a new one. Some existing opportunities include:
  - Aussie Backyard Bird Count – an annual event run by Birdlife Australia that encourages participants to observe and record birds during the month of October.
  - Wild Pollinator Count – run twice a year (Autumn and Spring) by a small group of volunteers, it encourages the community to observe and record insects and their behaviour.

- The City of Melbourne has held its own citizen science projects including BioBlitz, Waterbug Blitz and Urban Forester Program. These initiatives can provide learnings and also opportunities to even team up or support these programs in the neighbouring municipality.

Figure 32. Backyard bird species include Eastern Spinebill (left) and Spotted Pardalote (right). Photographs: Getty Images

2.3 Establish a nature in Yarra communications program

Action: Design and implement online communication program for nature-focussed news, initiatives and interactions. Seek to integrate with existing communication mechanisms such as environment, sustainability and urban agriculture.

Targets:

- **Engaging nature-based content on the City of Yarra website and other council communications channels throughout the year from when new program commences.**
- **Regular engagement via social media.**

Action: Trial an online program which allows the City of Yarra to share information about its on-ground management activities and allows the community to assist/contribute to it.

Target:

- **Trial completed by end Year 2.**

Context:

A dedicated communication and engagement program that is focussed on nature and nature-focussed initiatives is envisaged to energise an interest in the community that is as yet largely untapped. The success of similar programs for sustainability and urban agriculture has been demonstrated; and a similar focus for nature will result in higher levels of awareness and involvement that have been achieved in these complementary areas.

To this end, it is envisaged that regular communication on nature-related news will become a regular feature of council communications, largely via existing channels such as Yarra Environment e-news and council's social media. Additionally, a dedicated webpage for Nature in Yarra will be developed.

The development of this web and social-media based communications program could take direction from similar initiatives by other municipalities and although modest targets are proposed, this should not preclude a higher level of activity if possible. Other options include the creation of education or engagement materials either in hardcopy or online; partnership projects with creatives; films; podcasts or apps.

Interactive online engagement option:

- Community feedback during the development of this strategy indicated an appetite to know more about what the City of Yarra is doing towards caring for nature and its rationale for doing so. Melbourne Water have shared that they now enjoy improved interaction with the community. They have an interactive map on their website showing 'local projects' and also encourage more interaction via Facebook and social media.
- There are many options that exist for enabling online community engagement, particularly using a map as the basis for this. A recent example being during the development of the Yarra Action Plan, an online engagement mapping tool was utilised to gather input from the community on a number of issues that were of importance to them.
- This style of online mapping engagement tool could be one method for sharing information with the community regarding works of any kind that the City of Yarra is undertaking, and to receive information back from the community. This could have wider applicability than only to share information on nature-related work or observations.

Figure 33. [PLACEHOLDER IMAGE] Example: Online mapping tool used in the 'Reimagine the Yarra' engagement process. Source: https://the-hive.com.au/features/participation-apps/social-map. **Seeking permission for use.**

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Goal 3: Nature is considered core council business

3.1 Management Principle: Ensure nature is considered as core council business.

Action: Councillor planning and reporting to consider and address natural values.

Targets:

- **City of Yarra's processes explicitly recognise nature as a component of Environment in the quadruple bottom line approach.**
- **Nature is one of the 'implications' to be considered within council reports.**
- **Annual plan includes a dedicated budget line for biodiversity or nature-focussed programs and projects.**
- **Ensure Yarra Annual Grants has a separate for category for Nature/Biodiversity enhancement projects.**

Context:

It is important that council process reflects the objectives and direction of its plan. Conservation of natural values is explicitly identified in Key Objective 3 of the Council Plan and directly contributes to elements of Health and Wellbeing.

With the development of the Nature Strategy clearly providing clear direction in the form of Goals, Management Principles, Actions and Targets requiring increased resources, the need for more formal accountability and recognition is required via the Council Action Plan and for Councillor awareness and accountability.

3.2 Management Principle: The impacts of development on local natural values are offset.

Action: Scope options for sourcing a minimal allocation of capital funding annually that is clearly allocated towards nature-focussed projects.

Targets:

- **Scoping completed by Year 2.**
- **Preferred option(s) for dedicated nature focussed projects capital funding is introduced and active by Year 3.**
- **Funds gained from developers for amenity loss of trees to be allocated to a fund for tree planting and biodiversity enhancement projects.**

Context:

There are a range of options for how a natural values levy could be realised. Either in its own right or via including a specific requirement and allocation via an existing City of Yarra 'contribution plan' for development. It is proposed that a suitable scoping process determine the preferred method and it may be that more than one method is appropriate. For example, the City of Melbourne implements its Urban Forest Fund which is used to subsidise green infrastructure initiatives. Natural values outcomes are also funded by a fee that is paid for from a levy that is collected for the removal of municipal trees.

The types of natural values outcomes that are required will form part of the scoping exercise and may determine the source of funding that is most appropriate.

The City of Yarra currently implements two developer contribution plans. The:

- Open Space Contributions Plan: introduced in June, 2016, this developer contribution is dedicated to the provision of Open Space in recognition of the impact of increasing development in order to provide for increased population in the municipality. The Yarra Planning Scheme prescribes developers contribute 4.5% of the value of the land that is being developed to council , or pay the equivalent amount in dollars to the council for either purchase of land for open space or capital improvements of existing open space. These

monetary contributions are held in the Open Space Reserve in council's financial accounts, which are then used for:

- the creation of new open space and recreational facilities
- upgrading of open space and recreational facilities
- the renewal or improvement of open space and recreational facilities

- Developer Contributions Plan:

The purpose of the DCP is to 'ensure that the cost of providing new infrastructure and upgrading existing infrastructure is shared between developers and the wider community on a fair and reasonable basis'.

Figure 34. [Placeholder Image] Example: Greening Howlett Street – a green infrastructure retrofit that will include a wildflower garden communal meeting space. AKAS Architects, c/o City of Melbourne, 2019. **Seeing permission for use.**

3.3 Management Principle: Encourage more natural spaces in the private realm via planning mechanisms.

Action:

- ***Create a Natural Values Planner staff position to work with the teams***
- ***Implement requirement for landscaping plans for permit applications for 2+ lot subdivisions and above.***
- ***Develop pre-application information for planning permits that includes preferences around use of indigenous plants and habitat components.***

Targets:

- **Natural Values Planner employed by end Year 1.**
- **Increased incidence of indigenous landscaping and habitat components in developments. Shown in Landscaping Plans and monitored by audit of 10%.**

Context:

The City of Yarra, like many other urban municipalities is experiencing increased levels of growth and development, placing further demands on its staff, management and governance teams to ensure a diversity of issues and community expectations are met.

Planning expertise relevant to natural values is required in many areas of council. This includes expert response and oversight, sometimes requiring specialist subcontractor involvement. To date there has been limited in-house capacity to adequately meet requirements which include:

- Reviewing and responding to planning permit applications, particularly in locations affected by ESO and SLOs;
- Advising and reviewing landscape plans;
- Ensuring the City of Yarra meets its legislative and planning scheme requirements, particularly those associated with significant species and communities, but also associated with weed management and wildlife welfare issues amongst others;
- Participating in processes involving new large high-density developments or precincts;
- Advising on nature-related matters relevant to city works, infrastructure planning and implementation;
- Advising on and in some cases, directly contributing to strategic planning processes;
- Auditing compliance with planning permit conditions and internal capital project delivery that relate to natural values; and
- Grant application assistance.

Dedicated in-house capacity to deliver on these requirements has to date amounted to approximately 0.2 FTE and in light of this, other areas of council have aimed to cover these areas, sometimes with limited information.

The City of Yarra would benefit from improved processes and resources in the form of decision-making guidelines and information as well as increased, dedicated expert staff to support planning decisions.

Examples of guidelines that have been developed by other municipalities include:

- City of Manningham Landscape Plan Guidelines (March 2010). This booklet provides advice for applicants who need to develop a landscape plan as a requirement of their planning permit. It includes a flow chart of the process, a tick-list to make sure their plan contains everything and also provides examples of suitable landscape plans for higher density scenarios including townhouses and units.

In-house support documents would include:

- Species and planting lists for the most common types of native vegetation (Ecological Vegetation Classes) that are normally encountered in the City of Yarra in its development areas. Such as Plains Grassy Woodland

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outside of the waterway corridors. This would include examples drawn by landscape architects and designers that demonstrate how these plants could be used in common urban landscape scenarios. For example: single-fronted home front yard / courtyard; townhouse; apartment common area/green roof/wall/balcony; laneway; carpark; café or warehouse.

- Information on common weed species that shouldn't ever form part of a landscape plan.
- Information for staff that summarises council's requirements to ensure that any in-house projects or works follow processes that ensure all legislative requirements regarding natural values (threatened species, ecological communities, wildlife and cultural heritage values) are met.
- A summary lookup document that provides common responses to planning permit queries.

Figure 35. Habitat creation in urban areas including laneways and via a rooftop garden in a private residence. Photographs: © Coolth Inc. **Seeking permission for use.**

Figure 36. Habitat creation exhibit at the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, 2019. Photograph: © Coolth Inc. **Seeking permission for use.**

3.4 Management Principle: Consider options for new planning tools to see more nature-focussed outcomes.

Actions:

- ***Scope and work up options for one or more overlays that seek to see ecological benefits in the future.***
- ***Instigate a project to investigate and document Natural Heritage values within the municipality in line with Actions from the Heritage Strategy.***

One or more planning scheme tools are introduced to assist in:

- **Delivering more habitat value such as green roofs**
- **Protecting and encouraging habitat elements for a specific species or group of species;**
- **Recognition and conservation of areas of natural heritage.**

Context:

Overlays: The Yarra River Corridor is covered by a Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO1) while Merri and Darebin Creeks are covered by an Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2 and ESO3, respectively).

The application of the ESO's in this instance is strategically applied to capture an appropriate area where ecological values have been identified and require ongoing protection, such as critical habitat or movement corridors.

Consideration should be given to applying an ESO over any other significant habitat or fauna movement corridors. The Park Street Linear Reserve is an example, which encompasses both critical habitat and an ecological corridor.

Possible overlay considerations include:

- A Design and Development Overlay that requires new developments to include green roofs and vertical gardens.
- An ESO that is developed to recognise habitat values for certain species including fauna movement corridors.
- An ESO that protects locations of locally significant species.
- A suitable planning tool, possibly a Heritage Overlay that protects areas of indigenous cultural heritage significance.

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3.5 Management Principle: The City of Yarra leads by example in its own projects.

Actions:

- ***In order to meet the multiple objectives associated with Environment, Sustainability, Nature and Water Infrastructure, support the creation of a senior expert role to advise on and approve all in-house projects for their 'green infrastructure' credentials, including nature-focussed elements.***
- ***City of Yarra recognises that green infrastructure includes nature-focussed elements and updates process and design practice accordingly.***

- **Target: All council-led projects to include green infrastructure and demonstrably consider nature and habitat elements in their design and implementation by end Year 2.**

Context:

The Sustainability and Environment team have developed an 'Embed Green' framework and process which is designed to enable any council to better include green infrastructure planning and implementation into all of their in-house projects. Broadly speaking green infrastructure would generally consider reducing impacts on natural values and also to innovation that would benefit nature, for example Water Sensitive Urban Design such as rain gardens or pollutant treatments, have dual benefits for nature by reducing nutrients and pollutants to waterways.

However, the 'embed green' framework should be updated to include specific consideration of habitat values and ensuring green infrastructure considers impacts to nature.

In recognition of the importance that the City of Yarra is placing on its sustainability initiatives; climate response; water management; and valuing nature, it is proposed that the most efficient way to ensure accountability around delivering these objectives in-house is via creation of a role that would oversee and provide accreditation for all in-house projects. Note: In recognition of its direct relevance, the position is flagged in this Nature Strategy, but it is recognised that it will be requested via the Yarra Environment Strategy

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Goal 4: Innovation, communication and collaboration are the cornerstones of the City of Yarra's nature-focused programs

4.1 Collaborate with others who share common goals.

Actions:

- ***Participate in networks with other municipalities, organisations and institutions who are working on similar issues around urban ecology.***
- ***Support partnership projects that result in mutual benefits for nature.***

Targets:

- **Staff role descriptions and time allocations provided to relevant staff for participation in relevant networks.**
- **Council management acknowledges optional funding for partnership projects as relevant.**

Context:

There are a range of networks and forums that would be beneficial for the City of Yarra to participate in, to see better nature-focussed outcomes within the municipality and beyond its boundaries. Examples of other inner-urban local government networks focussed on nature-based outcomes:

- The City of Yarra participates in multi-organisational networks on a range of issues including Urban Forestry (Inner Melbourne Action Plan); Climate Resilience (Resilient Melbourne and more); Yarra River Strategy and the Biodiversity Planners Network among others.
- Particularly amongst inner-urban and neighbouring municipalities there is an interest in sharing experiences, learnings and opportunities that are common to each relevant to nature conservation.

Network of land-management policy staff:

In recognition that the City of Yarra sits at a pivotal location in the landscape, as a hub for waterway values, large areas of parkland and important indigenous cultural heritage with many neighbouring land managers to liaise with, a regular forum for policy staff land managers relevant to the City of Yarra and its neighbours and partners is recommended.

This would include but not be limited to policy staff from all adjoining municipalities; Parks Victoria; Melbourne Water; Wurundjeri Council; Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority and possibly others. Discussion could centre on sharing and alignment of relevant policy, strategy and programs. It could provide options for shared projects and grants, and the sharing of ideas and learnings.

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4.2 Develop working partnerships with academic institutions

Actions:

- ***Participate in networks with other municipalities, organisations and institutions who are working on similar issues around urban ecology.***
- ***Support partnership projects that result in mutual benefits for nature.***
- ***Actively collaborate with an academic institution on at least one new project each year.***
- ***Develop a 'wish list' for a series of projects that include student monitoring of council reserves or encourage teaching and learning in these reserves. The results of which will be fed back to the City of Yarra***

Targets:

- **At least one project per year is implemented in partnership with an academic institution.**
- **A working partnership to encourage student field studies in council reserves is established by end Year 1 and active by Year 2. Results are useful for all parties involved.**

Context:

The City of Yarra is very well placed to engage with academic institutions who are actively involved in urban ecology research. Melbourne University's Burnley Campus lies within the municipality and already completes projects within council reserves. Other institutions like RMIT also have an interest in urban ecology and could assist with collaborative research and other initiatives as they have with other urban municipalities.

- An early example may be to work with Melbourne University to adopt the streetscapes project, first piloted in the City of Melbourne.
- Other options include trials of green roofs and green walls; or sponsoring a design for a large urban development that includes habitat features.

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4.3 Use the Smart City technology to assist in conserving natural values

Actions:

- ***Scope one project for the Smart City team to deliver annually with relevance to nature in the City of Yarra. Option to work collaboratively with other urban councils.***

Targets:

- **One project is scoped and delivered annually beginning Year 2.**

Context:

The City of Yarra is implementing a smart monitoring network to better monitor and manage its assets and services. This is in-line with international and national approaches to management of urban environments and services.

Current examples of its capacity include monitoring air quality and requirements around rubbish collection. There are other opportunities to ensure that the current plans for this technology best works to support the natural values within the landscape.

Examples include: smart lighting that is wildlife friendly, i.e. in parkland that is particularly good habitat for wildlife, or lights are fitted with motion sensors to reduce 'light pollution' that is known to affect the natural behaviour and navigation of some wildlife.

Other options to consider include:

- Aiming to reduce noise pollution adjoining natural areas and open space through increased use by council of electric vehicles and other electric powered machinery.
- Wildlife monitoring options using remote cameras that could stream and automatically process imagery.
- Use of drones or other technology for wildlife or plant monitoring and perhaps in the future for more intricate activities.
- Use of soil moisture detectors to monitor revegetation and identify if any irrigation is required. Particularly for any high priority plantings.

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11.5 Draft Social Justice Charter for Yarra

Reference: D19/190383
Authoriser: Group Manager People, Culture and Community

Purpose

1. To seek Council endorsement for the draft Social Justice Charter, so it can go to public exhibition.

Background

2. Community Partnerships have been tasked with developing a Social Justice Charter (the Charter), which has been committed to in the Council Plan 2017-2021.
3. The Charter will be a tool to guide Council's plans and strategies, and will clearly articulate Yarra's position in relation to human rights and social justice.
4. Other Councils which also have Social Justice Charters include Port Phillip and Hume, with several Councils having policies based on Human Rights. The rationale for developing a Social Justice Charter is because it is seen as a practical way of protecting human rights.
5. The Social Justice Charter is also a way to articulate the work already being undertaken by numerous areas of Council, further consolidating Yarra's stance in this area.
6. Social Justice is based on the concept of human rights and equality and can be defined as the way in which human rights are manifested in the everyday lives of people at every level of society.
7. The key guiding principles of the Social Justice Charter were identified as: *Access, Equity, Participation and Rights*. A draft Social Justice Charter was developed around these principles, and then reviewed by the internal stakeholders. The draft Charter was further modified after discussion and feedback from this internal group, and is found at **Attachment 1**.
8. The intent of the Social Justice Charter is its use as a lens to guide and assist in formulating policies and programs at Council.

External Consultation

9. Consultation information from the community was gathered (regarding social justice issues) from previous consultations recently undertaken including:
    (a) The Community Partnerships Summary Report (**Attachment 2**), which provides a summary analysis of consultations undertaken for the Active Healthy Ageing Strategy 2018 – 2024 (Aged & Disability Services), Access and Inclusion Strategy 2018 – 2024 (Aged & Disability Services), 0-25 Plan (Family, Youth and Children's Services), and the Council Plan 2017 – 2021 (including the Municipal Public Health Plan); and
    (b) Council Plan consultation raw data.
10. It is envisaged that the public exhibition phase of the consultation on the Draft will garner further and the most current feedback from external stakeholders.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

11. Officers met with an internal stakeholders group from Social Policy, Diversity & Inclusion, Aged & Disability and Children's Services in April 2019 to get feedback on the *Social Justice Charter -Context, Issues & Best Practice* paper (**Attachment 3**). This group has set the context and provided guidance on the development of the Charter, due to their roles in Council and commitment to issues of human rights and social justice.

12. The internal stakeholders group agreed that there is a need to have conversations across Council regarding development of the Charter, in particular with areas which generally may not engage with this type of work.

13. Workshops were held with Council staff to discuss how the Charter relates to existing social justice commitments, as well as what should be the guiding principles of the Charter, and how it would be practical for staff.

14. It was requested that attendees to the workshops included managers (or their delegates) and front line staff. All areas of Council were targeted to ensure engagement with areas not traditionally seen to be working in this space.

Financial Implications

15. The Charter will be further developed and promoted as part of the Community Partnerships current existing budget.

Economic Implications

16. Council recognises that certain groups in the community face various and sometimes intersecting barriers, and the development of a Social Justice Charter will outline ways in which these barriers can be understood and ultimately addressed. The Social Justice Charter focuses on principles which encourage all members of the community to participate in community life, including employment, education and volunteering. This provides opportunities for self-determination and community engagement, which ultimately contributes to a richer and more diverse participation in the economic life of Yarra. The municipality can only benefit with a diverse and engaged workforce.

17. The Social Justice Charter can also be used to guide program planning including fee policies at Council. For example, fees for Council services can be formulated with consideration for families on low incomes. This practice will contribute to increased participation in services for vulnerable sectors of the community.

Sustainability Implications

18. An engaged and informed community that participates in sustainability projects such as community education and awareness, community gardens and urban agriculture, delivers positive sustainability outcomes for the municipality. Opportunities for linking in staff from Sustainability and Urban Agriculture with disadvantaged communities will be increased with the promotion of the Social Justice Charter.

Social Implications

19. The Social Justice Charter plays a key role in breaking barriers to access, participation and inclusion for the whole community, recognising that certain groups have intersecting and more complex barriers to overcome. These principles are aligned with social inclusion principles which encourage building relationships and developing skills which in turn nurture a more engaged and resilient community.

Human Rights Implications

20. It can be argued that human rights and social justice are complimentary concepts. While human rights are concerned with restraints on the exercise of power, whereas social justice is concerned with the redistribution of resources in order to protect human rights.

21. Social justice principles work together to manage inequities based on cultural, social, economic and political factors. As a result, social justice principles aim to provide a fair allocation of resources and entitlements without discrimination.

22. Social justice is based on the concepts of human rights and equality, and can be defined as the way in which human rights are manifested in the everyday lives of community members. Therefore, this Charter's main focus is on the practical ways human rights can be protected and nurtured for Yarra's diverse community, recognising the complex interplay of barriers and inequities. The Charter is a tool which aids Council to adhere to its obligation to uphold human rights.

23. It is envisaged that the Charter can assist in Council's annual reporting on its performance based on the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

24. Communities from diverse cultural and language backgrounds are one of the areas highlighted in the Charter as a priority area for Council in considering issues of access and participation. It is recognised that language and cultural background can be a barrier to community members fully participating in community life. The Charter's aim is to raise awareness of this while also providing practical examples of how to overcome these barriers.

25. Once the Draft Social Justice Charter is approved for public exhibition, communities with low English literacy will be assisted to provide feedback via translated copies and focus groups with interpreters, in order to facilitate participation in the process.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

26. The Council Plan 2017-2021 gives direction to the Social Justice Charter through the following strategic objectives:

    (a) Objective 1 – A healthy Yarra, a place where community, health, safety and well-being are a focus in everything we do;

    (b) Objective 2 – An inclusive Yarra, a place where inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated; and

    (c) Objective 7 – A leading Yarra, a place where transparency, performance and community participation drive the way we operate.

27. Specifically, as part of Objective 2, the Council Plan clearly states at (2.2.2) to "investigate developing a social justice / human rights charter to better articulate council's commitment".

Legal Implications

28. Some of the legislation related to this area include:

    (a) Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948;

    (b) Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986;

    (c) Racial Discrimination Act 1975;

    (d) Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic); and

    (e) Local Government Act 1989 (Vic).

29. The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) requires local Councils to act compatibly with human rights and to consider human rights when developing policies, making laws, delivering services and making decisions. The Social Justice Charter aims to act as a guide to assist with this obligation.

Other Issues

30. Certain sectors of the community may question Council's involvement in this area, and that the role of Council should be in the traditional areas of "roads, rates and rubbish". Information to the public should include Council's legislated obligations to consider human rights when developing policies, making laws, delivering services and making decisions, as stated in 2.3 of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic).

31. With regard to the Right to Freedom of Expression it should also be noted that laws around "hate speech" in Victoria are covered by legislation known as the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act*. The legal definition of vilification in this Act is conduct that 'incites hatred, serious contempt, revulsion or severe ridicule' on the grounds of another person's race or religious belief or activity. This includes (according to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission) speaking about a person's race or religion in a way that could make other people hate or ridicule them.

Options

32. There are no options.

Conclusion

33. The development of a Social Justice Charter for Yarra is a commitment in the Council Plan 2017-2021, and has involved consultation with internal stakeholders as well as a review of recent external-facing consultations.

34. The Social Justice Charter aims to set a clear statement of Council's commitment to upholding and nurturing human rights of its diverse community, while also providing practical examples of ways to accomplish this.

35. The Draft Social Justice Charter will be open for public exhibition and feedback to further shaping before final adoption early next year.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council:

    (a) endorse the Draft Social Justice Charter to be released for public exhibition.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Cristina Del Frate**
TITLE: **Unit Manager Community Partnerships**
TEL: **9205 5174**

Attachments

1⇩ DRAFT Social Justice Charter V4
2⇩ CPU Policies Community Consultation Report
3⇩ Social Justice Charter - Context, Issues & Best Practice

Attachment 1 - DRAFT Social Justice Charter V4

Social Justice Charter

1. Statement of Commitment

The City of Yarra is a vibrant and diverse municipality. It is the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri, and a place of special significance for the broader Aboriginal community. The City of Yarra is also home to diverse communities, something that Council is proud of and recognises as an asset.

While local government is traditionally seen as concerned with "roads, rates and rubbish", its scope actually goes beyond these areas. Councils are legally mandated to uphold and protect its diverse population's human rights. Council will actively work to reduce barriers so that all residents can participate in community and access services and information regardless of age, gender, sex, sexuality, income, education, cultural background, language skills, religion or disability.

Council also recognises that the community continues to evolve and the strengths and barriers of diverse groups will also continue to change. This Charter is a commitment for Council to continue to understand these changes and to respond accordingly.

Our strong commitment to achieving social justice is articulated by our being signatories to a number of international Human Rights treaties. Further, we are bound by the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) to act compatibly with human rights, and to consider human rights when developing policies, making laws, delivering services and making decisions.

We are proud to be signatories to this Charter which outlines how we will protect our residents' human rights by promoting social justice principles and addressing the social justice issues most associated with, and reflective of, our community.

Signatories MAYOR AND CEO

2. Social Justice – Guiding Principles for Yarra

The Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities 2006 (Vic) sets out 20 human rights under four key areas – Freedom, Respect, Equality and Dignity. Human rights and social justice are complementary concepts. **Social justice** is based on the concepts of **human rights** and equality (equal rights and equal opportunity for all), and can be defined as the way in which human rights are attained and protected.

Human rights are based on dignity, equality and mutual respect – regardless of nationality, religion or beliefs. **Social justice principles** work together to manage inequities in terms of human rights based on cultural, social, economic and political factors. For this reason, social justice principles aim to provide a fair allocation of resources and entitlements without discrimination.

Yarra Council undertook consultations with community, stakeholders and Council staff to gather information about what was important to them. Analysis of responses showed that people in Yarra were passionate about human rights and social justice issues, cited often as a drawcard to this municipality, whether to live, work or play.

The data revealed the following as the most critical social justice principles needed to ensure protection of human rights in Yarra.

The guiding Social Justice principles are:

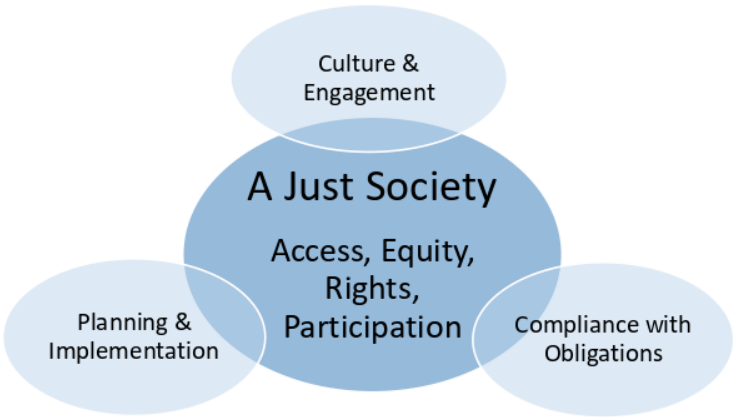
1) **Access** - All services, programs and facilities should be available and usable for all people free from any form of discrimination;
2) **Equity** - Distribution of economic, social and political resources in ways that are not restricted by age, gender, sex, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, or income;
3) **Rights** - Equal effective legal, industrial and political rights; and,
4) **Participation** - Opportunities for real participation by all in the decisions which govern their lives.

Social justice is the underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous communities. By upholding the principles of social justice, we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability. A "just" municipality is by definition an inclusive and diverse municipality.

3. Council Role – Our Framework for Action

Ensuring the human rights of our residents are protected is an ongoing process. Yarra Council commits to work together with community to achieve social justice for all and is legally obliged to uphold and protect those rights.

To sustain the principles of social justice will require a culture where staff are fully engaged with the issues, planning and implementation (day to day actions), and compliance with relevant legislation.



We will create a culture in the City of Yarra where people respect and understand an individual's human rights by **engaging** all (internally at Council/externally with our community) on the principles of social justice and our commitment to them.

We will ensure that social justice principles are embedded in all **planning** processes and in the development of policies, strategies and provision of services. Actions attached to strategies need to **implement** the social justice principles.

Attachment 1 - DRAFT Social Justice Charter V4

The Social Justice Charter acts as an umbrella document for all future plans, policies and frameworks. It is a lens which will guide the development of policies, processes and programs. Yarra currently employs a human rights-based approach in policy development. The Charter will ensure this approach is formalised, is responsive to community needs and has longevity.

We will work continuously to ensure our services, programs, communications, employees, contractors and sub-contractors **comply** with all **obligations** set out in law and by the treaties to which we are signatories.

4. Social Justice in Yarra – Priority Areas

Council has historically been proactive in addressing a number of areas that are high on the national and international human rights agenda – including indigenous rights, the rights of refugees and people seeking asylum, and access and inclusion for people with disability.

Yarra will continue to ensure that its large indigenous community is acknowledged as the Traditional owners, that Yarra is a safe place for refugees and people seeking asylum, and that access and inclusion for all is a Council wide focus. This work is done via policy positions, strategic planning, advocacy and program delivery.

Council remains committed to protecting the rights of our more vulnerable residents, and those more likely to be at risk of discrimination.

Discrimination is not always experienced because of one attribute such as age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or race. Sometimes it is the intersection of attributes that leads to the experience of discrimination.

We need to recognise the intersection – and therefore the complexities – of different components of people's identities, and that discrimination can be multi-layered.

While not an exhaustive list (and recognising the continuing evolution of communities), the following groups have been identified as more likely to face issues related to social justice:

- Indigenous people
- Refugees and people seeking asylum
- People with Disabilities
- People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds
- People of diverse faiths and religions
- People from the LGBTIQ community
- Children and younger people
- Older people
- People experiencing homelessness
- People on low incomes
- People who use drugs
- Women experiencing violence
- People experiencing mental health issues

5. How We Uphold Social Justice Everyday

By understanding and addressing social justice principles, we will build a culture where human rights are a priority in our community. Strategies to allow access for all, equity in provision of services, ensure rights are met, and create an environment where participation is possible are outlined below. Each area has examples of actions (again, not an exhaustive list) which can be considered when developing a policy or plan, or delivering a service or program.

Principle	Examples
Access	• Advisory groups and consultative committees which reflect our diverse community. • Accessible consultation and research programs prior to the development of a program or service. • Accessible communications (i.e. print, audio, simple English, translations etc), including using a diversity of communication channels. • Ensure venues and transport are accessible. • Universal design principle a foundation of planning capital works. • Remove "barriers" to information and services eg over-reliance on web-based interaction precludes many groups in the community.
Equity	• Ensure "Terms of Reference" for committees/ meetings confirm commitment to social justice. • Induction and employee training programs highlight social justice charter. • Use of public spaces (eg. footpaths, parks etc) need to be equitable for *all* to use facilities. • Develop an understanding of the complexities of managing the needs of more than one marginalised group, and the intersectionalities at play. • Look at what institutionalised barriers are in place and what could be done to deconstruct them. • Community grants available and allocated to a diverse representation of our community. • Development of a fee structure for services such as child care etc which acknowledges families on low incomes.
Rights	• Education on human rights for staff, including obligations and requirements. • Advocacy by "calling out" – educate staff on the appropriate way to deal with discriminatory practices at Council. • Develop information / scripts which challenge intolerant attitudes, nurturing more compassion and empathy.

	• Council engages in advocacy programs within the community, "standing up" for vulnerable groups.
Participation	• Partnering with diverse groups to help plan and execute programs and initiatives, especially those involving diverse groups. • Facilitating community members to influence Council strategies and policies. • Develop understanding of who all the relevant groups are, listen to the "unheard" voices, to bring different perspectives to the table. • Utilise existing networks and advisory groups to promote information and to gather information. • Ensure membership on panels, speakers at events etc is a diverse representation.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

SUMMARY REPORT

BRANCH COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

Attachment 2 - CPU Policies Community Consultation Report

PREAMBLE

Council is committed to ensuring that Yarra is a place where everyone can live well. Living well means feeling included and active in the community. It means individuals being able to connect to other people and be able to participate in everyday life. In order to reach this goal Council has key objectives and strategies outlined in its Council Plan.

Two of the key objectives outlined in the Council Plan 2017-2021 are fundamental to the goals of Community Partnerships (CP):

1 Community health, safety and wellbeing are a focus in everything we do.
2 Inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated.

Over the next period of time CP will be updating and/or creating strategies and/or policies which address the best way to ensure inclusion and respectfulness for all members of the Yarra community.

Attachment 2 - CPU Policies Community Consultation Report

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Attachment 2 - CPU Policies Community Consultation Report

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

During the community consultation for the development of the Council Plan, "identity" was a passionate and recurring theme. The Yarra community values its diversity. Creating a safe place where people of all ages, genders, sexualities, abilities, cultures and backgrounds feel welcome and connected is a priority for Council. Council's commitment to Social Justice is also clear:

"Council has a strong commitment to achieving social justice and will continue to work with the community and all levels of government to challenge discrimination and address disadvantage. Council is actively working to reduce barriers so that all residents can participate in community and access services regardless of age, gender, sexuality, income, education, cultural background, language skills or disability". (Yarra Council Plan 2017 – 2021)

Community Partnerships is responsible for developing strategies and policies which will ensure that the commitments identified above are not just words but are actioned through the manner in which Council delivers its services and programs to, and engages with, the Yarra community.

1.2 DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIES/POLICIES

In the next 12 months, CP will be working on strategies in the following areas (various timelines):

- Aboriginal
- Homelessness
- LGBTIQ
- Multicultural
- Social Justice
- Volunteering

Other branches of Council are currently finalizing strategies that have synergies and/or similar stakeholders as the strategies that CP is developing and/or updating. Extensive community consultation has occurred in the last 6-12 months in the development of the following documents:

- Active Healthy Ageing Strategy 2018 – 2024 (Aged & Disability Services)
- Access and Inclusion Strategy 2018 – 2024 (Aged & Disability Services)
- 0-25 Plan (Family, Youth and Children's Services)
- Council Plan 2017 – 2021 (including the Municipal Public Health Plan)

Rather than re-invent the wheel, these branches of Council have shared information from the various consultation processes with CP to ensure that there is a whole of Council approach to responding to the needs of the community.

This report presents a summary of the key findings from the community consultation and engagement processes conducted by other branches that are pertinent to the targeted strategies CP is developing.

Community feedback from older people and people with disabilities that specifically focusses on their needs is documented in the **Community and Internal Consultation & Engagement Report (Aged and Disability Services)**

Similarly, community feedback that specifically focusses on the needs of people 0-25 is documented in the **Yarra 0-25 Plan (Families, Youth & Children's Services).**

Both these documents will be also be reviewed and considered by CP in the development of its strategies.

SECTION 2 COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

Numerous community consultations have occurred over the past 12 months in the development of key strategies in the Aged and Disability Services area, the Family, Youth and Children's branch, and Corporate Planning (overarching Council and Municipal Public Health Plan).

This section summarizes the consultation methodologies utilised by these branches of Council over the last 18 months.

2.1 AGED & DISABILITY SERVICES

In order to develop the Active Healthy Ageing (AHA) Strategy and the Access & Inclusion (A&I) Strategy – Aged & Disability Services asked people who live, work and visit Yarra to complete a survey and/or participate in workshops sessions to share their views on what it means to live 'well'.

On completion of the consultation stage, the following had been undertaken:

- 252 surveys;
- Two (2) forums;
- 12 workshops;
- Seven (7) pop up sessions/on-site visits (distribution of surveys);
- Bi monthly DAC and AAAG committee meeting sessions; and,
- Consultation and survey details distributed to over 20 organisations and networks.

Specific feedback from these consultations are included under the heading "Older People and People with Disabilities" in the following sections.

2.2 FAMILY, YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

During 2017 and early 2018 Family, Youth and Children's Services asked the community what they liked about raising children or growing up in Yarra and how Yarra could be a better community particularly for children, young people and their families.

The Yarra 0 to 25 Plan 2018 -2022 was subsequently developed and will guide Council's priorities and actions over the next 4 years relating to children, young people and their families. It is currently on public exhibition.

Development of our 0-25 Plan was informed by:

- Demographic data – understanding the demographic characteristics of children and young people living in Yarra and how this is changing.
- Evidence and research – understanding what research tells us about how the social and built environment influences children and young people's development.
- Community consultation – listening to the views of children, young people and families about raising children and growing up in Yarra.
- Review of existing plans and strategies – reflecting and building on our achievements and progress of existing strategies for child and youth wellbeing.

Specific feedback from these consultations are included under the heading "Family, Youth and Children" in the following sections.

2.3 COUNCIL PLAN 2017 – 2021 (INCLUDING PUBLIC HEALTH PLAN)

From November 2016 until mid-January 2017, Council engaged over 1100 people across the city, allowing a better understanding of community priorities.

Following a series of Councillor workshops in January and February 2017, a draft Council Plan which includes Yarra's Health Plan was been developed. A report was also written which summarised key engagement outcomes (Council Plan 2017 – 2021 Engagement Outcomes).

Specific feedback from these consultations are included under the heading "General Community Feedback" in the following sections.

2.4 RE-IMAGINING VICTORIA STREET

Consultation was undertaken with traders and the general public who utilize Victoria Street. The majority of feedback focused on crime, safety and drug issues.

Some specific feedback related to homelessness was noted and it has been included under "General Community Feedback" in Section 4.

SECTION 3 ABORIGINAL STRATEGY

This section includes verbatim comments or discussion areas raised during the consultations which referenced or made specific suggestions about the aboriginal community.

3.1 WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - FEEDBACK

- I live in public housing and would love a dance, gardening and art group near me to attend but there aren't any being offered. Neighborhood houses are too far and some days my disability creates too much fatigue so I can't attend and it makes me socially isolated. I asked council to create an Indigenous native garden and I was told only if there is community interest. I was offended as this is Aboriginal country, we live in their community. I would like to have a lot more involvement with the Aboriginal community to learn their culture and ways of living and wellbeing.

FAMILY, YOUTH AND CHILDREN - FEEDBACK

- We need to work with Aboriginal people and acknowledge the injustices of the past & present.
- Homeless Aboriginals need to be supported.

GENERAL COMMUNITY - FEEDBACK

- Treaty with the local indigenous community re: particular Merri Creek issue (having a stronger presence).
- More working with first nations on strengthening activities.
- Partnering with aboriginal community to ensure ongoing and effective community engagement & relationship development.
- An Indigenous women's group - to take people away from the 'bad scene'.
- Dedicated community drop in centre for the Aboriginal community.
- Commitment to the Aboriginal community - including culture and history.
- Indigenous employment and procurement. Increased number of Indigenous people employed across Council and Indigenous service providers used.
- Put on events that might attract people like that e.g. a Koori event in Smith St with live musicians recently attracted a “one mob”, “one community” atmosphere.

3.2 KEY THEMES AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Feedback from these target groups showed an interest in learning about the aboriginal community, perhaps by Council creating more opportunities to engage with their culture and history. Engagement and relationship building through dedicated activities for the aboriginal community, as well as cross cultural events were common themes.

SECTION 4 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

This section includes verbatim comments or discussion areas raised during the consultations which referenced or made specific suggestions about the issue of homelessness.

4.1 WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - FEEDBACK

- Lobby local ministers to discuss more affordable housing in City of Yarra, provide more options for community kitchens and emergency relief.
- Advocate for and provide affordable housing support. Encourage development of small cohousing. Consider future housing needs.
- Possibility for lone householders to be linked with young people needing accommodation - huge issue and tricky, but worth canvassing.
- Investigate developing an Older Women's Housing program similar to the one at Beaconsfield (Jeanette Large- CEO at Women's Property).

FAMILY, YOUTH AND CHILDREN - FEEDBACK

- Support for homeless young people.
- More houses for people or homeless.
- Help homeless people - so many people on the streets.

GENERAL COMMUNITY - FEEDBACK

- Give homeless people somewhere to go so they don't scare people. The further development of housing has stopped along Elizabeth St - a bit of a worry. Feel sorry if person has to be evicted - where will they go?
- Unoccupied buildings Hoddle St - should be used for something useful e.g. short-term accommodation.
- A version of a vacancy tax for properties which are vacant for 12 months. Explore ways to get vacant properties to be used for housing for homeless.
- Peer educators for homeless people - link them into services.
- More facilities for homeless people - showers, dryers, meals etc.
- More toilets blocks near train stations and main roads.
- Mobile clinic that you can attend around Yarra.
- Free access to Ask Izzy (homeless support website).
- Promote and provide free Wi-Fi info points for homeless people. Somewhere to charge a phone.
- Explore storage for homeless people to store gear.
- Free weekly travel for homeless people on Yarra Trams, exemption from fines - heat hard on homeless so PT important way to get what they need. Free day pass available. Fines are a huge impact on homeless.

- Microwaves and team and coffee stations in libraries to get warm food in cold weather.
- Councillors need to focus on engaging with services, actively participate in homelessness with homeless people, meet the PESP team, take homelessness seriously and the people and services that are passionate, don't let them down.
- Stop installing park equipment that excludes homeless people - e.g. park benches with arms 'exclusionary practice' need safe parks for people to sleep, feature close to toilets and water.
- Campaign focused on housing for homeless e.g. house share schemes.
- More free BBQ in safe zones.
- Use unused and vacant spaces in Yarra as a refuge, with conditions of entry, overnight stay like shelters in US advocate more heavily for housing services.
- A 24-hour service should be set up for homeless people to shower in safety and make a cup of tea. It can be unsafe to have a shower in a rooming house. This could be in a building near to a health service.
- Homeless support - Organizing pathway employment with corporate businesses. Council provide subsidised accommodation and rent taken out of wages.
- Facilitate more connections with people - Drop in centre for homeless people (like centre at Hosier Lane).

4.2 KEY THEMES AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

There was an awareness and acknowledgement of the need to address and support homelessness by some of the ADS and FYC stakeholders who participated in the consultation process and significant feedback from the general community.

The feedback focused on both providing short term support and services (e.g. shower facilities, overnight accommodation, meals, WIFI access) and longer (acknowledged more challenging) solutions, including shared housing with older sole residents and other house share schemes, free transport options, and pathways to employment.

SECTION 5 LGBTIQ STRATEGY

This section includes verbatim comments or discussion areas raised during the consultations which referenced or made specific suggestions about the LGBTIQ community.

5.1 WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - FEEDBACK

- No specific Feedback in workshops etc.

However, during 2014 Aged and Disability Service Officers undertook the Val's Café How2 Aged Care training. Val's Cafe is a project that works to improve the health and wellbeing of older Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex (LGBTI) inclusive aged care services. The training provided a range of information, skills, resources and support to implement and improve LGBTI inclusive practice in ADS services.

In 2014 the ADS branch undertook a self-assessment audit/survey, to determine how inclusive their service is of LGBTI residents. The audit was repeated in 2015 to assess how successful training and education (based on the results of the 1st audit) had been.

The 2015 survey results clearly demonstrated how successful the specialized LGBTI training has been. Between 2014 – 2015 staff understanding of the needs of older LGBTI clients had increased by 26%, and the number of staff saying 'it's important that are services are inclusive', increased by 18% between 2014-2015. Staff confidence in providing services to LGBTI clients had increased by 24%, from 22% in 2014 to 46% in 2015.

A third LGBTI Project Plan 2016/2017 has subsequently been implemented to support staff in building further confidence and broadening their knowledge of the lived experience of older LGBTI residents in Yarra.

FAMILY, YOUTH AND CHILDREN - FEEDBACK

- Continuing to make the area inclusive and available for all. More LGBTIQA services.
- Bathrooms for people who are neither a girl or boy. More support for people who are neither girl or boy.
- Gender inclusive toilet blocks.

GENERAL COMMUNITY - FEEDBACK

- Promote gender diversity and transgender rights in schools - Gender inclusive policies in schools.
- Gender neutral toilets.

- Recognition of LGBTIQA community.
- More GLBTI venues.

5.2 KEY THEMES AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

As noted above, the ADS participants did not specifically raise any issues related to the LGBTIQ community, however LGBTIQ people were represented in the ADS survey conducted earlier this year (this was confirmed in the demographic questions).

FYC Services and general community feedback focused on gender inclusive policies and toilet facilities.

SECTION 6 MULTICULTURAL STRATEGY

This section includes verbatim comments or discussion areas raised during the consultations which referenced or made specific suggestions about the multicultural community. It includes the comments from 2 focus groups held respectively with a Greek and an Italian Senior Citizens' Club, a focus group held with the Vietnamese community, and a session with an African Mother's group.

6.1 WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - FEEDBACK

- Difficulty in attending events due to daytime hours as require assistance from my daughter to interpret. My daughter works during the day. We do not receive the local newspaper anymore so not in touch with what is happening on a local level as in previous years when local newspaper was delivered to households.
- I am an elderly person and sometimes I am not able to participate in community activities even though I am invited. Language - my English reading skills are not 100%. It will be more helpful if there are translated reading material available in my language (Singhalese) Sir Lankan. However, this is not a very common language to have printed material translated in Yarra area.
- Don't know who to contact when scared/see drug taking/hear noises at night.
- Allocate outdoor areas to older Chinese Community for exercise.
- Develop a program of community activities that encourages Yarra residents of all ages, cultures and creeds to mix, get to know one another and foster a strong sense of community "belonging". In other words, don't offer activities targeted at age groups.
- Events focusing on different cultures (to teach and involve everyone), providing facilities & services for the elderly.
- Include material in community languages at every opportunity, especially for newer arrivals, at schools, health centres etc.
- Support of the senior citizen clubs, in particular Greek Senior Citizen Club Collingwood.
- Council to assist groups to go and exercise regularly.
- More police on streets …. too many things happen.
- Take drugs away.
- Not allow cars from suburbs to park in local streets when they go to work in the city.
- Stay meeting in Loughnan hall. We want all our members, friends to continue meeting here at LH. We are happy.
- They'd be interested in an outdoor café. Maybe a coffee cart in a park. Happy to mix with other nationalities.
- The Greek club already run 1-2 bus trips annually, but a third would be welcomed. Again, happy to share the bus with other nationalities, or Greeks from other clubs in Yarra.

- One man was upset for his friend who came home from hospital and had daily visits from the nurse, but apparently had to wait 2 weeks for home help.
- One person complained about dog poo and is generally scared of large dogs.
- One person complained about issues with rats in Richmond.
- Not enough police – lots of youth on streets, graffiti, drugs. Lack of sense of safety – need more police on streets.
- Fear – laneway next door- groups of youth (can't speak English and lives alone). Gather, noise, heard gunshots – next to 76 Duke Street Richmond. Kick fences down and pull them apart. Scared to call police – don't speak English – fear of reprisal.
- Parking is an impact (elderly, disabled) streets and neighboring streets around Swan St and Bridge Road – limited taken up with Area 7 - people who work in area. Sometimes car left for 3 days to a week.
- Fix up Loughnan Hall.
- More days of the Greek club – so people whose wives died have company.
- Clean up Streets.
- More police around at night.
- Too much traffic congestion on Coppin Street.
- Some people "ashamed" to be old so don't come out to senior's groups etc.
- Fix toilet at Italian Club (Nth Fitzroy).
- Would like to go on a group trip.
- Reason Italian Club is so important is to stop/avoid social isolation and stay connected to other people – their friends have been coming for 34 years.
- Someone to help me at home – creeper at home – help older residents to keep gardens.
- Footpaths are a problem – paths need to be kept smooth.
- Drains block during heavy rain – someone local needs to notify Council of blockage.
- Need domestic assistance to stay living at home when sick.
- Community transport – would require extra buses to ensure residents attend different community groups/events.
- Could Council assist residents when they need to give a blood sample/test – with providing test at home.
- Meals delivered to homes are tasteless. There needs to be a wider choice of meals and it needs to be culturally specific.
- Reduce the fees for LLLS - $4 is a lot for old people on a pension.
- Extra sessions (for some not others) at the Club.

FAMILY, YOUTH AND CHILDREN - FEEDBACK

- Seeing more people from diverse backgrounds running services and programs for children and families.
- Support for diverse communities, especially recently arrived refugees.
- Make local streets safer for cycling and walking
- More diverse range of programs for kids through the libraries.
- Encouragement of acceptance of different races.
- Wish people were friendlier to each other cultures, nice to each another and work together.

- Discrimination, excluded and able to feel belonging to Australia and the community.
- Generally, feel that the community is not welcoming (African mother).
- More English classes that provide free childcare – Parents need improved English skills to enable further study or to access employment.
- Celebrate other cultures (music, food, learn from each other's languages).
- Help kids understand Australian culture.
- Language classes with good quality childcare.
- Some Religious interpretation (Islam traditionally), dogs are seen as impure and all contact is to be avoided. Further, prayer is compromised (Estate).
- More childcare services so there can be more classes for women to attend and learn.

GENERAL COMMUNITY - FEEDBACK

- More inclusive - multicultural focus.
- End of year celebration with different cultures.
- That people can come and visit and share stuff that they bring from another country.
- The 7-8 Chinese groups should unify into one, then able to use funds more efficiently.
- Would like council staff to visit CALD groups to give information on council services.
- YMAG good to continue - interpreters needed.
- Knowing about all the Yarra events in a coordinated way for languages other than English (in ways other than website e.g. mail etc.).
- More events with music from other countries.
- Promote the ties and engagement between different communities so as to live harmoniously together.

6.2 KEY THEMES AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The feedback from these consultations from (and about) the multicultural community focused on four (4) key themes:

Communication:	Ensuring that information is accessible (i.e. language options/translators) and also offering opportunities and support (e.g. childcare) to learn English.
Safety & Security:	Addressing drug and crime issues, educating older people about who to contact when feeling scared/concerned.
Expanded Programs:	More hours offered at existing clubs, more transport options, introduce new exercise programs/initiatives (or subsidise existing).
Whole of Community:	X (cross) Cultural and X (cross) Generational events. Create a whole of community focus and empower people to learn about others.

SECTION 7 SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

This section includes verbatim comments or discussion areas raised during the consultations which referenced or made specific suggestions regarding social justice issues.

7.1 WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - FEEDBACK

- Yarra has been my home for 20 years. I am a single parent with a child with special needs. I am unable to work full time at the moment. Our rental accommodation is dodgy - insulated, no heater, and the landlord knows he can get away with this because his tenants have no other choice.
- My intellectual disability- part of my disability is that I can't find my way around in the community normally. To be able to go anywhere I firstly have to be travel trained by a worker first in order to get there on my own. Sometimes my mum can't help me with some things because of her health and I cannot always get a worker to help. As I am on a pension I can't access something's if it is too expensive.
- There are not many opportunities for employment of older people in Yarra. I would like to work part-time.
- Door to door house-checks to identify vulnerable and isolated residents - perhaps offering a service such as a spring clean of the front garden, a handyman to fix a front gate or a letterbox. Take this opportunity to offer to send out a Yarra council worker to discuss council services available to residents. Ensure these messages are offered in a wide range of modes - re: CALD community, frail-aged, those living with a disability and other vulnerable residents.
- Have an event in Curtain Square celebrating community diversity.
- Require all new developments to include social housing and purpose designed housing for people with disabilities- + inbuilt parking. Maintain and actively promote a range of housing options, including for low-income people - I don't know what options there are for this, but I want to see Yarra continue to be multicultural/ multiclass/multi-age interesting and vibrant community.

FAMILY, YOUTH AND CHILDREN - FEEDBACK

- Make Yarra a community more accepting of people regardless of race/ religion/ gender/sexual orientation.
- Inclusive and understanding support for people in schools. Queer sex ed.

GENERAL COMMUNITY - FEEDBACK

- Residents are the fundamentals of the municipal government, which should strengthen its leadership to educate people to be aware of the values of justice, equity and impartiality.

The government should organise activities to care and lead community groups so as to avoid corruption of social morals and enhance the integrity and solidarity of different communities.

- Creating a welcome community for all including refugees & LGBTI folks, Aboriginal people and those from CALD backgrounds, and folks of all ages and backgrounds.
- Mobilizing our community creativity on social justice issues e.g. Homelessness agencies.

7.2 KEY THEMES AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The above quotes/feedback are an indication that the stakeholders interviewed from the ADS and the FYC communities take great pride in Yarra's diversity and want to see it maintained. There is recognition of the difficulty experienced by marginalized groups (e.g. low income, those with disability, homeless) and a recognition that Council should support these groups to ensure an inclusive municipality.

SECTION 8 VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY

This section includes verbatim comments or discussion areas raised during the consultations which referenced or made specific suggestions about volunteering.

8.1 WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES - FEEDBACK

- My physical wellbeing and state of mind which also relates to employment and stress levels...impact my mood and how open and engaging I am as a person. Volunteering is a great way of getting involved in community, currently I am not that involved because I rarely see anything that interests me and that is followed up with regular dates and fun meetings.
- I used to be a volunteer with the red cross as a first aid officer and loved it but had to give it up due to health issues and I cannot find any other volunteer things to do that interest me and that I can physically do.
- We would welcome information about how to be involved in activities that bring us into contact with people from different social groups/ages/backgrounds/etc. We live near the Senior Citizen Centre in Richmond and would love to be involved in volunteering opportunities there. We have tried to find out about this but as far as we can tell there are not regular activities run out of that facility.
- Haven't found organisations that are looking for volunteers. The State Government is anti-volunteers (look at how thy treat firefighters and others), makes one question the value of volunteering when you are unwanted, even if organisations feel differently.
- I don't know how to access volunteering opportunities in Yarra - City of Boroondara - they do more.
- Not aware of volunteering opportunities within the council. Would like to help out with data analytics but do not know how to approach the council.
- Volunteering applications are just as difficult as employment applications. I don't have referees and yet I have a background in nursing and a recent aged care cert 3 but still am unable to succeed in work or volunteering.
- It will be good to have elderly support programs such as volunteers to keep an eye on elderly residents especially living alone. Weekly visits or social phone calls or social outings, pet programs, singing or dancing days or sit and just chat. Perhaps subsidised vet facilities. Also, the regular interaction will enable the person to be monitored without being intrusive.
- Create air conditioned "gathering places" and volunteers to bring people to them. This should include tea/coffee/snacks and comfortable seating so people can chat to each other. This would be a good way to track is someone is beginning to struggle.
- Organise volunteers to visit isolated people/drive people to appointments or to shop. Have a matching service for elders needing care at home with other fit pensioners or students needing low cost or free rent.

- A volunteer visiting service, presenting opportunities for volunteering or participating in community activities. Promoting the potential, the skills that older people have that would be of value, e.g. repairing, cooking, etc.
- Create a volunteer bank that matches people to opportunities.
- Highlight opportunities to volunteer in the community. Have a social media page that could connect people somehow.

FAMILY, YOUTH AND CHILDREN - FEEDBACK

- More peer leaders. Volunteer work.

GENERAL COMMUNITY - FEEDBACK

- Open volunteering opportunities to council - enable us to connect to isolated, hard to reach, communities.
- Local community visitor program for those housebound for whatever reason.

8.2 KEY THEMES AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Whilst volunteering was mentioned by the stakeholders in all the consultations – it was an important issue with the older community. The feedback focused on:

Benefits for Volunteer:	Older people in particular highlighted the mental health benefits of being engaged and provided an opportunity to "do something" in retirement.
Benefits for Community:	Feedback highlighted how volunteering could go hand in hand with maintaining a diverse community by supporting marginalized people (e.g. isolated, low income/house bound etc.)
Program Simplification:	There was significant feedback around the complexity of registering and the difficulty of actually finding somewhere to volunteer.

Development of a Social Justice Charter

Context, Issues & Best Practice

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS UNIT
February 2019

Attachment 3 - Social Justice Charter - Context, Issues & Best Practice

PREAMBLE

The City of Yarra is a vibrant and diverse municipality. It is the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri, and a place of special significance for the broader Aboriginal community.

Council engages with its diverse community on a daily basis – a community that includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people who reside in public housing, people with disability, older people, people who inject drugs, homeless people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, and people of diverse sexuality and gender.

As such Council plays an important (and legally required) role in protecting and promoting its diverse population's human rights.

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SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 SOCIAL JUSTICE & HUMAN RIGHTS IN YARRA

Council actively works to reduce barriers so that all residents can participate in community and access services regardless of age, gender, sexuality, income, education, cultural background, language skills or disability. Yarra has a strong commitment to achieving social justice and continues to work with the community and all levels of government to challenge discrimination and address disadvantage.

Council has articulated its commitment to equality and human rights for people from all cultures and faiths by becoming signatories to the following:

- Refugee Council of Australia's 'Refugee Welcome Zones' ongoing campaign (2002);
- Community Accord, also signed by approximately 30 community groups (2006); and
- UNESCO's International Coalition of Cities Against Discrimination in Asia and the Pacific Ten-Point Commitment Plan. (2009).

Additionally, there are a number of existing strategies and policies which contain content addressing human rights issues and social justice in Yarra (see Appendix A).

In the Council Plan 2017-2021, **Objective Two – An Inclusive Yarra**, Council committed to investigating the development of a Social Justice Charter to further articulate Council's position.

1.2 OUR DEMOGRAPHIC, SOCIO-ECONOMIC & HEALTH PROFILE

The data used for this profile is sourced primarily from the ABS 2016 Census of population and housing. Census data has been accessed either directly from the ABS or through Yarra's community profile[1] produced by .id consulting. Having a clear picture of the municipality in terms of its diversity and socio-economic profile is important in the development of a social justice charter.

1.2.1 Birthplace

29% (25,055) of Yarra residents were born overseas in 2016, in over 140 countries. 19% of residents came from non-English speaking countries and 10% from main English-speaking countries[2] (primarily the UK and New Zealand). In total, 51% were either born overseas or born in Australia with at least one parent born overseas. The 10 top countries of birth in 2016 are shown in the table below.

Top 15 countries of birth	Number	%
England	3,314	3.8%
New Zealand	2,649	3.1%
Vietnam	2,625	3%
China	1,573	1.8%
Greece	1,131	1.3%
Italy	863	1%
USA	830	1%
Malaysia	742	0.9%
India	639	0.7%
Ireland	529	0.6%

[1] https://profile.id.com.au/yarra
[2] Main English speaking countries includes the United Kingdom, Ireland, New Zealand, USA, Canada and South Africa.

There is significant variation across Yarra, in terms of diversity, with as many as 36% of North Richmond residents born overseas (including 28% from non-English backgrounds) and as few as 17% in Fairfield-Alphington.

1.2.2 Recent Arrivals & Changing Trends

Settlement data from the Australian Government shows the number of permanent settlers to Yarra in the last three years[3].

Year	Humanitarian	Family	Skilled	Total
2016 (Jan-Dec)	13	425	620	1058
2017 (Jan-Dec)	10	490	674	1174
2018 (Jan-Dec)	14	488	682	1184

Numbers have been quite stable in the last few years, with skilled migrants making up the bulk of settlers (58%), followed by those arriving through the family stream. As compared to Victoria, Yarra has a higher proportion using the family stream (41% as compared to 32%).

According to the 2016 ABS Census, 28% of Yarra residents born overseas were recently arrived in Australia (2011-2016), a slightly higher proportion than that of Greater Melbourne (24%).

1.2.3 Language

About 19,000, or 22%, of Yarra residents spoke a language other than English at home, representing a total of 120 different languages. The 10 biggest languages in Yarra, other than English, are shown in the table below.

TOP 10 LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH	Number	%
Vietnamese	3,373	3.9%
Greek	2,285	2.6%
Mandarin	1,906	2.2%
Italian	1,567	1.8%
Cantonese	1,174	1.4%
Spanish	876	1.0%
Arabic	690	0.8%
French	627	0.7%
German	421	0.5%
Somali	411	0.5%

Vietnamese is the biggest language group after English. Greek is the second biggest language group, however given the ageing profile of the Greek population in Yarra the number of Greek speakers is decreasing. Mandarin is now the third biggest non-English language and has seen the biggest increase in numbers between 2011 and 2016. Of those who spoke another language, close to 4,500 people did not speak English well or at all, at the time of the last Census. The Vietnamese speaking population of Yarra had the highest number of people who didn't speak English well or at all (1,311), followed by Greek (623), Mandarin (607) and Cantonese (434).

[3] Source: Settlement Database, Australian Government

1.2.4 Religion

In the 2016 Census, about half of Yarra's residents did not identify with a religion. The biggest religion when grouped was Christianity, as shown below.

RELIGION TOTALS	Number	%
Christian total	26,034	30%
Non-Christian total	6,812	7.9%
Non-classifiable religious belief	868	1%
No religion	42,767	49.4%
Not stated	10,186	11.8%
Total Population	**86,657**	**100%**

The greatest increase in a religion between 2011 and 2016 was Islam (+387), however those who identified as "no religion" increased by over 13,000 between the Census years. Yarra residents who spoke a language other than English were more likely to identify as religious, with 40% of non-English speakers identifying as Christians (as compared to 30% on average), 15% as Buddhists (as compared to 4%) and 8% as Muslim (as compared to 2%).

1.2.5 Home Ownership & Housing

The City of Yarra's Housing Tenure data provides insights into its socio-economic status as well as the role it plays in the housing market. Analysis of the housing tenure of the population of the City of Yarra in 2016 compared to Greater Melbourne shows that there was a smaller proportion of households who owned their dwelling; a smaller proportion purchasing their dwelling; and a larger proportion who were renters.

Overall, 18.2% of the population owned their dwelling; 20.4% were purchasing, and 50.3% were renting, compared with 29.0%, 34.3% and 28.8% respectively for Greater Melbourne.

Tenure Type	Number	%
Fully owned	7,239	18.2
Mortgage	8,142	20.4
Renting - Total	20,042	50.3
Renting - Social housing	3,793	9.5
Renting - Private	16,069	40.3
Renting - Not stated	180	0.5
Other tenure type	256	0.6
Not stated	4,191	10.5
Total households	39,870	100.0

Yarra has a significant proportion of residents living in public/social housing, with 9.5% social housing noted across the municipality at the time of the last Census (Yarra has the highest proportion of social/public housing of any municipality in Victoria). If you look at Yarra's overseas born population it rises to 17%, and looking specifically at those Yarra residents who were born in non-English speaking countries, as many as 25% were living in public housing. Of the 7,550 residents who lived in public housing, 57% were born overseas, with 55% from non-English backgrounds.

Yarra has over 30 Rooming Houses (according to the Public Register Consumer Affairs).

The DHHS Rental Report for September 2018 identifies Yarra as one of the LGAs with the with the lowest proportion of new lettings affordable to households on Centrelink incomes for all Victorian Local Government Areas (LGA). Bayside, Boroondara and Yarra all have less than 1.0% available. [4]

Approximately 941 people are homeless in Yarra. This represents 11.9 people per thousand population which is significantly higher than the Victorian rate of 3.2 per thousand population. There are a growing number of households experiencing housing stress which is putting more people at risk of homelessness.[5]

1.2.6 Employment

The City of Yarra's employment statistics are an important indicator of socio-economic status. The levels of full or part-time employment, unemployment and labour force participation indicate the strength of the local economy and social characteristics of the population.

The size of the City of Yarra's labour force in 2016 was 53,592, of which 14,741 were employed part-time and 35,358 were full time workers. Over 5% of the population are unemployed.

Employment Status	Number	%
Employed	50,776	94.7
Employed full-time	35,358	66.0
Employed part-time	14,741	27.5
Hours worked not stated	677	1.3
Unemployed (Unemployment rate)	2,816	5.3
Looking for full-time work	1,572	2.9
Looking for part-time work	1,244	2.3
Total labour force	53,592	100.0
Total Population	**86,657**	**100%**

1.2.7 Income

Households form the common 'economic unit' in our society. the City of Yarra's Household Income is one of the most important indicators of socio-economic status. Analysis of household income levels in the City of Yarra in 2016 compared to Greater Melbourne shows that there was a larger proportion of high-income households (those earning $2,500 per week or more) and a lower proportion of low-income households (those earning less than $650 per week).

Overall, 32.6% of the households earned a high income and 15.7% were low income households.

The City of Yarra is home to a high proportion of residents living with socio-economic disadvantage, in what is an otherwise affluent municipality.

[4] https://dhhs.vic.gov.au/publications/rental-report
[5] Health and Well Being Status Report 2016 – City of Yarra

1.2.8 Department of Social Services – Support Payments

Payment recipient numbers by payment type provided for September 2018 are as follows for the City of Yarra[6]. The most common payments were for pensioner concession cards (9,820), age pension (4,768), Health Care cards (4,439) and rent assistance (3,277).

PAYMENT TYPE	Number (Sept. 2018)
Pensioner Concession Card	9,820
Age Pension	4,768
Health Care Card Low Income Card	4,439
Commonwealth Rent Assistance (income units)	3,277
Disability Support Pension	2,555
Newstart Allowance	2,262
Low Income	2,232
Family Tax Benefit A	2,135
Family Tax Benefit B	1,880
Youth Allowance (student and apprentice)	1,467
Carer Allowance	1,198
Commonwealth Seniors Health Card	1,074
Austudy	552
Carer Payment	526
Parenting Payment Single	456
Parenting Payment Partnered	189
Youth Allowance (other)	106
Widow Allowance	42
Special Benefit	39
Carer Allowance (Child Health Care Card only)	24
ABSTUDY (Living allowance)	22
ABSTUDY (Non-living allowance)	13
Wife Pension (Partner on Age Pension)	7
Wife Pension (Partner on Disability Support Pension)	6
Partner Allowance	<5
Sickness Allowance	5
Widow B Pension	<5

1.2.9 Health & Well Being

Outlined below are some key statistics taken from the Yarra Health Status Report[7] which further identifies the diversity of Yarra's population and notes some key factors impacting on the health and well-being of the community (social determinants of health):

- Yarra has the highest proportion of same-sex couple households in Victoria (4.4%).
- There are just over 300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra, with equal numbers of males and females. The City of Yarra, especially the suburbs of Fitzroy and Collingwood, hold special historical significance for the Aboriginal community. These areas were a major hub of social and political activity for the Aboriginal community and today remain a critical centre for

[6] https://data.gov.au/dataset/ds-dga-cff2ae8a-55e4-47db-a66d-e177fe0ac6a0/details
[7] Health and Well Being Status Report 2016 – City of Yarra

Aboriginal services and organisations. In Victoria, Aboriginal Australians experience poorer health outcomes than non-Aboriginal Australians in almost every measure of health, which results in a significant gap in life expectancy.

- The need for assistance with day to day activities increases with age. In total, 2,832 people in Yarra have a need for assistance with core activities. Of those 79% are over the age of 50, however the 'not stated' category is high for this question with roughly 7%-10% of the population opting out of this question across the age groups.
- Based on the SEIFA Index (Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage), levels of disadvantage in Yarra are highly concentrated in the main public housing areas of Richmond, Collingwood and Fitzroy.
- Even though Yarra has a lower rate of overweight and obese people compared to average rates across Victoria, it is still notable that 36% of the population is considered either overweight or obese. In addition, 22.5% of 24 the Yarra population has high blood pressure and 3.5% of the population is diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.
- The Yarra population has a higher risk of short-term alcohol-related harm compared to the Victorian average and the proportion of people at risk seems to be increasing. Yarra compares less favorably in the vast majority of alcohol-related indicators examined, including those that examine males and females independently. Males however compare significantly less favorably than females in all alcohol-related indicators examined, including emergency department rates, hospital admissions, ambulance attendances and treatment episodes. Alcohol-related assaults during high alcohol hours are also high, with rates for males and 18-24-year olds more than double the state rate.
- Yarra tracks well above state rates for most of the illicit drug indicators. Yarra has the highest rate of illicit and heroin related ambulance attendances, as well as overdose deaths. Yarra also has a particularly high rate of drug offences, emergency department presentations relating to illicit substances, and drug and alcohol clients. Although a significant portion of this can be attributed to visitors coming to the area both for support services and to trade and use illicit substances, the high emergency department and hospital admissions (which are based on patient residential addresses rather than location of incidence) suggests that those living in Yarra are experiencing drug-related harm through the use of illicit substances. The drug trade and associated health behaviours and outcomes therefore affect the municipality both from a community safety perspective, as well as from a resident health and wellbeing perspective.

SECTION 2 POLITICAL & LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

2.1: INTERNATIONAL DEFINITIONS & CONVENTIONS

It can be argued that human rights and social justice are complementary concepts. Whist academics worldwide have often debated variations in the definitions of both concepts, in essence, it is agreed that human rights are concerned with restraints on the exercise of power whereas social justice is concerned with the redistribution of wealth and resources (in order to protect human rights)[8]. Put more simply, **social justice** is based on the concepts of **human rights** and equality (equal rights and equal opportunity for all), and can be defined as the way in which **human rights** are manifested in the everyday lives of people at every level of society.

2.1.1 Human Rights

The term "human rights" was mentioned seven times in the United Nation's founding Charter, making the promotion and protection of human rights a key purpose and guiding principle of the Organization.

Amnesty International provides the following outline on Human rights development. In 1948, the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (UDHR) brought human rights into the realm of international law. Together with the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" and the "International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights", the three instruments form the so-called International Bill of Human Rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a milestone document in the history of human rights. Drafted by representatives with different legal and cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world, the Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948 (General Assembly resolution 217 A) as a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations. It sets out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected and it has been translated into over 500 languages.[9] Appendix B lists the 30 Articles (human rights) declared in the UDHR.

Human rights are based on dignity, equality and mutual respect – regardless of nationality, religion or beliefs. A person's rights are about being treated fairly and treating others fairly, and having the ability to make choices about your own life. These basic human rights are:

- **Universal** — They belong to all of us – everybody in the world
- **Inalienable** — They cannot be taken away from us
- **Indivisible and interdependent** — Governments should not be able to pick and choose which are respected.[10]

A series of international human rights treaties and other instruments adopted since 1945 have expanded the body of international human rights law. Currently, there are nine human rights international treaties, and one optional protocol, from which 10 treaty bodies have been established. Each of these treaty bodies monitor implementation of the treaty provisions by its States parties.

[8] https://www.amnesty.nl/content/uploads/2015/10/can_human_rights_bring_social_justice.pdf
[9] http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/
[10] https://www.amnesty.org.au/

Some of the treaties are supplemented by optional protocols dealing with specific concerns. The nine core treaties are:

1) International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) 1965;
2) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) 1966;
3) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) 1966;
4) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979;
5) Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) 1984;
6) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)1989;
7) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).
8) International Convention on Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICMRW) 1990;
9) International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED).

There are ten human rights treaty bodies that monitor implementation of the core international human rights treaties:

1) Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
2) Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
3) Human Rights Committee (CCPR)
4) Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
5) Committee against Torture (CAT)
6) Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
7) Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)
8) Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (SPT)
9) Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
10) Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)

2.1.2 Social Justice

Social justice principles work together to manage inequities based on cultural, social, economic and political factors. For this reason, social justice principles aim to provide a fair allocation of resources and entitlements without discrimination.

The basic social justice principles are:

1) Access (greater equality of access to goods and services)
2) Equity (overcoming unfairness caused by unequal access to economic resources and power)
3) Rights (equal effective legal, industrial and political rights)
4) Participation (expanded opportunities for real participation in the decisions which govern their lives).

Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence. An organisation (or LGA/state/country) upholds the principles of social justice when they promote gender equality or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. They advance social justice when they remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability.[11] A "just" society (municipality) is an inclusive society (municipality).

[11] https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/international-days/world-day-of-social-justice/world-day-of-social-justice-2017.html

Laws regarding discrimination based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, health, disability, civil rights etc. are directly related to social justice implementation (see 2.2 and 2.3 below) and are developed and enacted on an international, national and state level.

2.2: NATIONAL CONVENTIONS & LEGISLATION[12]

Australia is a party to seven of the core international human rights treaties (see list in 2.1.1 – Treaties 1-7). It is against these treaties that human rights scrutiny processes under the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011* are undertaken.

Under the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011* (the Act) all new Bills and disallowable legislative instruments must be accompanied by a Statement of Compatibility assessing the compatibility of the legislation with the rights and freedoms recognised in the seven core international human rights treaties which Australia has ratified.

The Act also requires the establishment of a Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights. The Committee has functions to:

- Examine Bills, Acts and legislative instruments for compatibility with human rights;
- Examine Acts for compatibility with human rights, and
- Inquire into any matter relating to human rights which is referred to it by the Attorney-General.

These human rights scrutiny processes are designed to encourage early and ongoing consideration of human rights issues in policy and legislative development. They also aim to improve parliamentary scrutiny of new laws for consistency with rights and freedoms in the seven-core international human rights treaties to which Australia is a party.

Australia also has periodic treaty body reporting obligations under the 7 international treaties and is an active participant in the Universal Periodic Review process which provides an in-depth analysis of Australia's compliance with our international human rights obligations.

Australia is also a party to:

- The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights establishing an individual communication mechanism;
- The Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Aiming at the Abolition of the Death Penalty;
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict;
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography;
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women establishing an individual communication mechanism; and,
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities establishing an individual communication mechanism.

The Australian Government also supports the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Persons as a non-legally binding document.

[12] https://www.ag.gov.au/RightsAndProtections/HumanRights/Pages/International-Human-Rights-System.aspx

Australia is a party to the complaints (or 'communications') mechanisms in relation to the following five human rights treaties:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Any individual can make a complaint against Australia if they are concerned that their human rights under these treaties have been violated.

Laws regarding discrimination include (but are not limited to):

- Racial Discrimination Act 1975,
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984,
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984,
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986,
- Crimes (torture) Act 1988,
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992,
- Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999,
- Age Discrimination Act 2004.

2.3: STATE (VIC) CONVENTIONS & LEGISLATION[13]

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (the Charter) is a Victorian law that sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. It is about the relationship between government and the people it serves. The Charter requires public authorities, such as Victorian state and local government departments and agencies, and people delivering services on behalf of government, to act consistently with the human rights in the Charter.

Twenty fundamental human rights are protected in the Charter because the Victorian Parliament recognises that, as human beings, we have basic rights, including the right to be treated equally, to be safe from violence and abuse, to be part of a family and to have our privacy respected.

The Victorian Government, local councils and other public authorities must not knowingly be in breach of these rights, and must always consider them when they create laws, develop policies and deliver their services. The Charter complements other laws – such as equal opportunity legislation – by setting out a familiar list of 20 rights that can be grouped under the four key principles of Freedom, Respect, Equality and Dignity.

Freedom

1. Freedom from forced work
2. Freedom of movement
3. Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
4. Freedom of expression
5. Right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association
6. Property rights

[13] https://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/human-rights/the-charter

7. Right to liberty and security of person
8. Fair hearing
9. Rights in criminal proceedings
10. Right not to be tried and punished more than once
11. Protection from retrospective criminal laws

Respect

12. Right to life
13. Protection of families and children
14. Cultural rights, including recognition of the distinct cultural rights of the Aboriginal people of Victoria

Equality

15. Recognition and equality before the law
16. Entitlement to participate in public life (including voting)

Dignity

17. Protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment
18. Protection of privacy and reputation
19. Humane treatment when deprived of liberty
20. Appropriate treatment of children in the criminal process

Additional state laws related to discrimination include (but are not limited to):

- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001;
- Multicultural Victoria Act 2004; and,
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995.

2.4: LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONVENTIONS & LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

As stated in 2.3 the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic) requires local councils (and other public authorities) to act compatibly with human rights, and to consider human rights when developing policies, making laws, delivering services and making decisions. As a result, no matter which state or local government agency the community is dealing with, the same human rights apply.

Local councils must ensure that:

- all council decisions give proper consideration to human rights;
- all actions, policies and services are compatible with human rights;
- local laws are interpreted and applied consistently with human rights; and,
- people who work on behalf of councils do so in a way that respects human rights[14].

By understanding and promoting human rights, local councils can help build a culture of human rights in the community.

Convention now is for local councils to establish their own Social Justice Charter which sets goals for the community to work together to promote and protect the inalienable rights afforded to all members of the community as legislated by the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (2006).

[14] https://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/human-rights/the-charter-and-local-government

SECTION 3 SOCIAL JUSTICE & HUMAN RIGHTS IN AUSTRALIA

3.1: NATIONAL ISSUES

So far in 2019 – issues related to refugees and people seeking asylum, indigenous rights and Australia Day, and gender quality remain at the forefront in news reports and public debate. Outlined below is analysis and commentary on what are the key issues (according to a leading advocacy group and also based on the results of a public national survey).

In December 2017 legislation to allow same-sex marriage, the Marriage Amendment (Definition and Religious Freedoms) Act 2017, passed the Australian Parliament and received royal assent from the Governor-General. This brought to a close a long period of debate on a key human right issue - marriage equality. The legislation was introduced after a majority of people voted "yes" to the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey.

3.1.1 Australian Lawyers for Human Rights (ALHR) [15]

The 2018 Human Rights Report Card from Australian Lawyers for Human Rights[16] (**ALHR**) has found Australia continues to significantly lag in key areas. Further, many states and territories continued to perform poorly in their approach to human rights.

The Australian government's human rights approach to a) refugees, b) Indigenous people and c) those with disability are key national issues and have been highlighted in reports as being at risk of breaching its international human rights obligations. Australian Lawyers for Human Rights' (ALHR) 2018 Human Rights Report Card scored Australia poorly on key areas including Indigenous rights (F-), refugees and people seeking asylum (F) and freedoms (F). See full ratings and specific comments below.

Key Human Rights Performance Areas 2017 v 2018 Results

Performance Area	2017 Score	2018 Score
Indigenous Rights	F-	F-
Business and Human Rights	C	C+
Refugees and People Seeking Asylum	F	F
LGBTI	D-	D
Freedoms	F	F
Disability Rights	D	D
Women and Girls' Rights	F	C
Children's Rights		D**

**First year this performance areas has been specifically tracked through a new sub-committee

[15] Established in 1993, Australian Lawyers for Human Rights is an association of legal professionals active in practising and promoting awareness of international human rights standards in Australia.
[16] https://alhr.org.au/alhr-2018-human-rights-report/

Refugees & People Seeking Asylum

ALHR have called on the Australian government to bring every person transferred to Manus Island and Nauru to safety, and said the government had legal responsibility to ensure the protection of people subject to offshore processing.

ALHR have welcomed the passage of the Medevac Bill through the Senate following from the historic vote in the House of Representatives. They believe the Bill is necessary to ensure that people are able to access the urgent medical treatment they need, in line with Australia's international human rights obligations.

Indigenous People

In the view of ALHR Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to experience disadvantageous treatment in their daily lives. There has been no progress towards reconciliation, civil, political, economic, social or cultural rights. In the 2018-19 Federal Budget of important areas such as justice, family violence, Closing the Gap and child protection, but there were major cuts to remote housing.

ALHR also highlights the the Federal Government has also done little to rectify the over-incarceration and suicide rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples by not providing funding to implement recommendations from the Northern Territory Royal Commission, or the Australian Law Reform Commissions 'Pathways to Justice' report. This is a human rights abrogation and shows a callous disregard for equal justice for First Nations People.

Freedoms

ALHR concerns regarding freedoms focused on:

- Encouragement of religious discrimination;
- Increases in surveillance /invasions of privacy/overbroad national security legislation;
- Demonizing foreigners and the United Nations; and
- Undermining of democracy/ the rule of law.

3.1.2 Roy Morgan Public Opinion Survey (2018)[17]

In early 2018 new in-depth research (650 Australians) exploring the concerns of Australians has found Australians regard economic issues as the major problems facing Australia and the world at large. Economic issues led by financial problems and cost of living, unemployment, economic problems, housing affordability, poverty and the gap between rich and poor were mentioned by 32% of Australians as the most important problems facing Australia. These further themes emerged:

- 14% of respondents mentioned concerns related to religion, immigration and human rights which includes the contentious issues surrounding asylum seekers and Australia's treatment of refugees;
- Government, politics and leadership issues were mentioned by just under 14% of Australians;
- Social issues were mentioned by just over 13% of Australians;
- Environmental issues were mentioned by 11% of Australians;
- Under 5% (down from 15%) mentioned the Energy Crisis, Energy and Power supply, Electricity grid and Fossil fuel.

[17] http://www.roymorgan.com/findings/7504-most-important-problems-australia-the-world-february-2018-201803051043

The main themes highlighted above covered a wide range of specific issues (see over page).

Religion/Human Rights: Religion, Religious fundamentalism, Human rights, Refugees, Asylum seekers, Boat people, Refugee and asylum problems, Detention of refugees, Immigration/Immigration policy, Intolerance, Racism, Racial tension, Aboriginal issues/health/rights, Multiculturalism, Integration and Assimilation and others.

Social Issues: Social apathy, Family breakdowns, Selfishness, Moral decline, Social welfare, Welfare dependency, Youth issues – Homelessness, apathy, discipline, Drugs and drug abuse, Education, Crime, Law and order, Anger, Violence, Aggression and others.

3.2: LOCAL ISSUES

Council has been very proactive in addressing a number of areas that are high on the national and international human rights agenda – including indigenous rights, the rights of refugees and people seeking asylum, and access and inclusion for people with disability.

Yarra has worked tirelessly to ensure that its large indigenous community is welcomed and acknowledged, that Yarra is a safe place for refugees and people seeking asylum, and that access and inclusion for all is a Council wide focus. This work has been done via policy positions, strategic planning and program delivery.

3.2.1 Indigenous Issues in Yarra

The Community Planning Unit in conjunction with the community and service providers is currently developing the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan 2019 – 2022. This document confirms Council's ongoing commitment to, and work with, the large Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

The Aboriginal Advisory Group is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's official voice into Yarra City Council. The group provides the Aboriginal community with ongoing opportunities to raise issues of importance, influence policy development and give feedback on existing Council programs. The group oversees the development and implementation of the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan (2019-2022). The group also serves a vital purpose in ensuring that our projects, policies and other work remains in tune with local Aboriginal community needs, expectations and aspirations.

The 1st statement in Yarra's Multicultural Policy (see full statement in Appendix C) highlights Council's commitment to its indigenous community:

Yarra City Council:

- ***Affirms that Indigenous Australians are the first custodians of this country and continue to contribute to the cultural heritage of this land. Council recognises that cultural diversity existed before white settlement in the cultural diversity of the Indigenous nations living here pre-colonisation, and will actively work towards promoting and celebrating this.***

3.2.2 Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Yarra City Council has been a Refugee Welcome Zone since 2002, and it was one of the first local governments to join this initiative.

A Refugee Welcome Zone is a Local Government Area which has made a commitment in spirit to welcoming refugees into the community, upholding the human rights of refugees, demonstrating compassion for refugees and enhancing cultural and religious diversity in the community.

In 2005 when the first Refugee and Asylum Seeker Statement was adopted by Council, the welcome banners stating "City of Yarra Welcomes Refugees and Asylum Seekers" were hung outside the Collingwood Town Hall on special occasions such as Refugee Week. Council adopted a revised Refugee and Asylum Seeker Statement in 2015, which outlines Yarra's commitment to a respectful and compassionate approach to Asylum Seekers (see Appendix D).

Early in 2018 Yarra City Council officially joined the Welcoming Cities Network. This network facilitates a national network of inclusive, vibrant communities internationally recognised for their ability to foster a sense of belonging and participation. It seeks to address and embrace the challenges and opportunities of migration. It aims to create more welcoming and inclusive communities by supporting local government leaders and communities to be more effectively resourced, networked and supported.

Yarra's recently revised Multicultural Population Plan (2019 – 2022) has been developed in alignment with the Welcoming Cities standards as they closely reflect Yarra's policy stance and are based on a human rights framework.

3.2.3 Access & Inclusion

Council is committed to supporting people with disability to live full and active lives, ensuring that Yarra is an inclusive and accessible community and is a place where everyone can live well.

As a public authority, Council is required and is committed to demonstrate that it has properly considered human rights in all its decisions when making laws, developing policy and providing services.

The Access and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2024 (available for review on request) has a vision for an inclusive and accessible Yarra, encompassing a broad, strengths-based approach to contribute towards self-actualization of people with disability by improving access to information, built environment and facilities, engaging people with disability in consultations and events, and by creating a diverse and inclusive workforce. Council acknowledges that Universal Access and mainstream participation can bring solid and lasting change in the quality of lives of people with disability

3.2.4 Diversity & Inclusiveness

Given Yarra was updating and/or introducing a number of plans/charters that would guide its continuing support for human rights, diversity and inclusiveness in 2018 – a community survey was undertaken to identify what "inclusiveness" looks like to the residents of Yarra.

The survey process aimed to encourage people to think about what makes them feel included in the community, and what Yarra could do to make sure all people, from all backgrounds and with different life experiences feel involved and included in the community. This was achieved by asking people to share stories of a) where they had seen or experienced inclusiveness in Yarra, and b) ideas for improving inclusiveness in Yarra.

While further review and reporting of the findings from this survey are still to occur, responses generally fell under one of the following key areas/themes regarding how/where to build inclusiveness:

- Programs & Services
- Community Connectedness
- Welcoming Diversity
- Community Events
- Participation & Inclusion
- Safe & Liveable Spaces
- Advocacy
- Local businesses
- Open Space

In building inclusiveness, Council is working to protect and promote the freedom, respect, equality and dignity (4 key human rights themes from Victoria Charter of Human Rights) of the people and communities it represents.

SECTION 4 BENCHMARKING

4.1: INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES

International human rights law lays down obligations which countries are bound to respect. By becoming parties to international treaties, countries assume obligations and duties under international law to respect, to protect and to fulfil human rights. The obligation to respect means that countries must refrain from interfering with or curtailing the enjoyment of human rights.

The obligation to protect requires countries to protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses. The obligation to fulfil means that countries must take positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of basic human rights. As a result, countries establish their own human rights implementation guidelines and laws.

Obviously, there is a myriad of approaches to enshrining a nations human rights – however there is a fairly consistent approach to replicating the language and structure of existing UN documents (e.g. treaties and definitions).

4.2: LOCAL APPROACHES

A review of LGA Social Justice Charters (e.g. Hume, Port Phillip, Brimbank, Maribyrnong), and the VLGA tool kit for implementing the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities was undertaken and the following observations can be made about best practice in these documents.

Fundamentally – the Charters all outline how a specific Council aims to protect human rights by promoting social justice principles and addressing the social justice issues most associated with, and reflective of, their community. The Charters have:

- Clear definitions for social justice and human rights.
- Guiding principles or local "bill of rights" are a part of all documents. These principles appear to be generally built upon the accepted social justice principles of access, equity, rights and participation.
- Each document has identified a framework and a pathway to show how the Charter aligns with the Council Plan and connects with other key strategies and plans. In some cases, the charter sits above all other strategies that relate to "inclusiveness" and/or address social justice issues in the community.
- Each document identifies what its community looks like (demographically) and what social justice issues are at the forefront at a point in time.
- The documents show a commitment to action and commitment to accountability. That is, they outline the key rights under the Victorian Charter (Freedom, Respect, Equality and Dignity) and then identify how Council adheres to the obligations under these rights.

4.3: STRUCTURE & WORDING OPTIONS

The documents reviewed as part of this report preparation suggest there are many consistent elements to most charters – however variations in wording/titles. A key variation which does not significantly impact on the actual documents is the name – some councils/bodies only use the term "social justice" whilst others include "human rights".

Attachment 3 - Social Justice Charter - Context, Issues & Best Practice

It will be important that Council clearly identifies/links how the new Social Justice Charter relates to existing social justice commitments and actions identified in existing strategies and plans (e.g. Multicultural Policy, Access & Inclusion Strategy, Aboriginal Partnerships Plan etc.).

The structure of the charters varies – but generally reflect standard policies – that is:

- Preamble and/or Mayor Statement
- Vision and Objectives
- Definitions and Context
- Profile of municipality – including key social issues;
- Social Justice Principles & Framework; and,
- Obligations and Actions.

F**ramework** considerations for Yarra could include a three-pronged approach (based on a slightly different version used by Maribyrnong) - Culture (vision & engagement), Commitment (policies, strategies, and advocacy), and Compliance (obligations and actions).

Within "Council Commitment" further consideration needs to be given as to where the Social Justice Charter will sit in terms of existing documents. One example is below.

The **obligation and actions** could be outlined under the 4 key Human Rights Principles in the Victorian Charter (Freedom, Respect, Equality and Dignity), or be broken down further to reflect each of the 20 stipulated rights. Consideration needs to be given as to how to ensure the actions reflect the 4 key social justice principles of Access, Equity, Rights and Participation.

SECTION 5 ENGAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT OF CHARTER

5.1: ENGAGEMENT

The charter needs to be a whole of council document and as such internal consultation is required to ensure that the document will be utilized and has shared ownership.

For human rights milestones to be actively complied to in the City of Yarra – and social justice issues actively addressed – education, information and communication regarding Council's position (and legal responsibilities) must reach:

- Councillors;
- Administration;
- Community; and,
- Third Parties (e.g. contracts and procurement, funding bodes)

Engagement and communication are vital, as that will ensure ongoing action.

"At the end of the day, it's all about what action a city or government is willing to take to reach the lofty goals it sets out. Best practice isn't just in the words of the charter as I'm sure you'll agree."
Mary Sims - former chief commissioner of the British Columbia Human Rights Commission

5.2: DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHARTER

When engaging with internal and external stakeholders (where relevant), it would be appropriate to test wording for the Charter, including:

- Guiding Principles (or a Yarra Bill of Rights);
- How the Social Justice Charter aligns with the other plans and strategies Council currently has that protect human rights (Appendix A);
- How the Social Justice charter applies to, and is implemented by, business units and program/service delivery; and,
- Identifying Council's current initiatives and activities in the 4 key areas of freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

The next steps in development will be to workshop and draft:

- Agreed definitions of Human Rights and Social Justice;
- Yarra's guiding principles; and
- Yarra's framework.

APPENDIX A

Complementary Policies & Strategies

- Council Plan 2017 - 2021
- Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017 - 2021
- Access & Inclusions Strategy & Action Plan 2018-2024
- Active Ageing Strategy & Action Plan 2018 – 2024
- Aboriginal Partnerships Community Plan 2019 – 2022
- Multicultural Partnerships Plan 2019 – 2022
- Language Services Policy (Aged & Disability Services)
- Community Engagement Policy 2014
- Employment Diversity Strategy [currently in development]
- Reconciliation Action Plan 2015–2018
- Policy Guidance Note on Affordable Housing in Significant Redevelopments

APPENDIX B

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 1:	Innate freedom and equality
Article 2:	Ban on discrimination
Article 3:	Right to life
Article 4:	Ban on slavery
Article 5:	Ban on torture
Article 6:	Right to recognition as a person before the law
Article 7:	Equality before the law
Article 8:	Right to effective judiciary
Article 9:	Ban on arbitrary detention
Article 10:	Right to public hearing
Article 11:	Right to the presumption of innocence
Article 12:	Right to privacy
Article 13:	Right to freedom of movement
Article 14:	Right to asylum
Article 15:	Right to a nationality
Article 16:	Right to marriage and family
Article 17:	Right to own property
Article 18:	Right to freedom of thought and religion
Article 19:	Right to freedom of opinion and expression
Article 20:	Right to freedom of assembly and association
Article 21:	Right to take part in government
Article 22:	Right to social security
Article 23:	Right to work
Article 24:	Right to rest
Article 25:	Right to an adequate standard of living
Article 26:	Right to education
Article 27:	Right to participate in cultural life
Article 28:	Right to to a social and international order
Article 29:	Duties and limitations
Article 30:	Salvatory clause

APPENDIX C

Multicultural Policy Statement

Yarra City Council:

- Affirms that Indigenous Australians are the first custodians of this country and continue to contribute to the cultural heritage of this land. Council recognises that cultural diversity existed before white settlement in the cultural diversity of the Indigenous nations living here pre-colonisation, and will actively work towards promoting and celebrating this.
- Recognises cultural, linguistic and religious diversity as an integral part of Yarra's history and identity, and that this diversity enriches Yarra.
- Respects and promotes the expression of culture, language and religion free from vilification or discrimination, and that these are basic human rights for ALL people.
- Acknowledges that within multicultural communities, there are potentially vulnerable groups who may be at risk of further disadvantage such as women, refugees, people seeking asylum, older people, people who are Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI), and people with disabilities.
- Promotes an inclusive community, in which people are enabled to participate fully in the social, cultural, economic and political opportunities of the municipality irrespective of race, gender, culture, language or religion.
- Welcomes refugees, people seeking asylum and other newly arrived migrants to the municipality with respect and compassion, and has a role to play in creating a welcoming and socially cohesive community.
- Rejects all forms of racial and religious vilification, violence, harassment and unlawful discrimination, and will work towards a community free of racism.

APPENDIX D

Refugee & People Seeking Asylum Statement

Yarra City Council:

- Recognises and welcomes all people who have arrived on humanitarian visas, people seeking asylum and those who come from refugee backgrounds who arrive on other visa types, including family migration and skilled migration.
- Recognises the United Nations definition of a person seeking asylum as an individual seeking international protection but whose claim has not been fully decided yet.
- Recognises the journey of people seeking asylum who are often fleeing from war and human rights violations. They have often experienced trauma and persecution and should be treated with dignity and compassion, while acknowledging these people also have strengths, which have contributed to their survival and resilience.
- Will provide opportunities for refugees and people seeking asylum to actively participate and contribute in community life.
- Will actively advocate for the rights of refugees and people seeking asylum to be free from hardship and enable them to actively participate in this community, while also challenging discriminatory beliefs and policies.
- Will celebrate and acknowledge the contributions refugees and people seeking asylum have made to Yarra and continue to do so, recognising these communities have inherent strengths and resilience.

11.6 Yana Ngargna Plan 2020-2023

Executive Summary

Purpose

To seek Council's adoption of the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 (formerly known as the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan) and the *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan.

To acknowledge and thank all Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have contributed their time, energy and knowledge to the development of the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 and the *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan.

Key Issues

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

The *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 has been developed through extensive community consultation and approval processes.

Final consultation and approval processes saw significant changes to terminology as well as the renaming of the policy. The new name, *Yana Ngargna* (pronounced 'yarna engarnya'), means 'continuing connection' in Woi Wurrung language.

The new Plan also includes renewed official Acknowledgment of Country statements.

The *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan contains 51 actions. Progress on implementation is reported and discussed at bimonthly *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group meetings (formerly the AAG).

Comprehensive information gathering and consultation around Yarra's Consumption of Liquor in Public Places Local Law will be a priority project in 2020.

Financial Implications

All actions but one in the *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan are funded through the operational budget.

The exception relates to a new initiative bid for the 2020/2021 Yarra Council budget process to create a dedicated heritage officer role for a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.

Also of note (amongst funded actions) is the funding of two dedicated Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions (band 4, part-time) through the 2019/2020 Council budget process.

PROPOSAL

That Council:

(a) Adopt the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 and the *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan; and

(b) Acknowledge and thank all Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have contributed their time, energy and knowledge to the development of the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023.

11.6 Yana Ngargna Plan 2020-2023

Trim Record Number: D19/197148
Responsible Officer: Group Manager People, Culture and Community

Purpose

1. To seek Council's adoption of the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 (formerly known as the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan) and the *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan.
2. To acknowledge and thank all Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have contributed their time, energy and knowledge to the development of the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 and the *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan.

Background

3. Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. Council also acknowledges the significant contributions made by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra. Council pays its respects to Elders from all nations—and to their Elders past, present and future.
4. Council endorsed the final report on implementation of the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan 2015–2018 (and Year 4 Action Plan 2018) in February 2019.
5. Council will be presented with a report on implementation of this year's 'single year/interim' Aboriginal Partnerships Action Plan 2019 in February 2020.
6. The *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 (The Plan) has been developed through extensive consultation and community approval processes. It continues the work of previous Plans and lays a solid foundation for Council's partnerships and collaborative projects with the local Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the years to come.
7. The new Plan includes renewed official Acknowledgment of Country statements and protocols. These statements and protocols are renewed every four years to prevent the language becoming hackneyed and tokenistic, to address any issues in how the statements are being pronounced and understood, and to ensure the language is up-to-date and in-tune with community sentiment.
8. The official acknowledgements were developed through lengthy and passionate community discussions at *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group meetings. The Plan also includes a protocol explaining when and how acknowledgments should be used. For the vast majority of occasions the first (shortest) acknowledgment should be used. The mayor may be required to read the second (medium length) or third (long) acknowledgment at specific official events.
9. As always, implementation of the Plan requires Council to be highly agile and responsive in its approach. This approach is necessary to meet the needs of dynamic community in which issues can sometimes emerge quickly and unpredictably.
10. Several such issues have emerged in the second half of 2019 during the final review and approval stages of the Plan and have been incorporated accordingly. The main changes and an explanation of the changes are summarised below.
11. The need to make changes to the Plan's terminology emerged late in 2019, during the final sign-off processes with both Yarra's Aboriginal Advisory Group and the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation)—Committee of Management.
12. Although on first glance, terminology is a seemingly small issue, it is actually an incredibly important and complex issue, with few solutions that suit everyone. The complexity stems from terminology's strong links to issues of identity (individual and group), impacts of colonisation (past and ongoing) and the right to self-determination (in particular the right for individuals to choose the terminology that is used to describe them).

13. It is worth noting the role and impact of the current Treaty development process, including Traditional Owner nominations for the First People's Assembly Elections, on how people choose to identify and the knock-on implications for terminology. It is also worth noting that Torres Strait Islanders are not part of the Treaty process in Victoria, despite their contribution to life in the area.

14. In developing the Plan, Torres Strait Islanders made it clear that they wanted to be acknowledged more consistently alongside Aboriginal people as a separate and unique group within the municipality. Consistent acknowledgment was discussed and unanimously agreed upon at an Aboriginal Advisory Group meeting.

15. In acknowledging Torres Strait Islanders as a separate group, however, it quickly became apparent that we needed to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung as the Traditional Owners as a separate and unique group. This was unanimously supported by all Elders at a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation—Committee of Management meeting.

16. Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung is the term currently being used by the Traditional Owners to describe themselves—and they recently updated the name of their corporation to reflect this. By including the name of their language (Woi Wurrung) in how they refer to themselves, they more clearly show their link to the other tribes in the Kulin Nation (all of which identify by language group). The tribes of the Kulin Nation include the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, the Boon Wurrung, the Dja Dja Wurrung, the Taungurung and the Wathawarrung.

17. In some cases, the terms 'community' or 'communities' is used as shorthand for the longer term 'Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities'. This will only be used when it is abundantly clear which community or communities are being referred to. The term will not be used in any policy statement, priority area, commitment or action that might be directly quoted in another policy or project and therefore needs to stand as a complete and independent statement on its own.

18. As part of the approval process for this Plan, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders also endorsed *Yana Ngargna* as the new name for the Plan.

19. *Yana Ngargna* (pronounced 'yarna engarnya') means 'continuing connection' in Woi Wurrung language—the language that has been spoken on this land for tens of thousands of years. This new name refers to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung's continuing connection to culture, country and identity, as well as Council's commitment to developing continuing connections with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, as well as other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations.

20. The renaming of the Plan and adjustments to terminology will have cascading implications for terminology use throughout the organisation as well as the names of existing advisory and working groups. For example, the Aboriginal Advisory Group will become the *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group and the RAP Working Group will become the *Yana Ngargna* Working Group. For now, the title of the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan Officer will remain the same as renaming roles requires a HR process to be undertaken. Changes to terminology may take some time to roll out through the organisation (and may need to be assessed on a case by case basis) and an action to address this has been incorporated into the 2020 Year 1 Action Plan.

21. Although some of these changes may seem challenging at first, it is vital to respectful ongoing relationships that Council accept and use the terminology that our communities choose to identify themselves (rather than Council choosing its own terminology to describe a group, especially if a decision to do this is based merely on convenience). Council recognises that this is a constantly evolving issue and remains open to guidance from the community.

22. A final and most recent issue to emerge, was the need for Council to initiate further consultation about the Consumption of Liquor in Public Places Local Law. Although some consultation for this was conducted during 2019, attitudes to the law have polarised in recent months, partly as a result of the current coronial inquest into the death in custody of Yorta Yorta woman Tanya Day, along with the proposed abolition of the State Government's public drunkenness law.

23. A community consultation to discuss the local law and other related issues has now been added to the 2020 Year 1 Action Plan as a priority project.

24. The development of the Plan 2020–2023 and the 2020 Year 1 Action Plan draws on two decades of experience working and collaborating with the local Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community (the community). This continuous relationship building between Council, community, community organisations and mainstream organisations within the municipality has paved the way for many positive relationships and outcomes.

25. The development of the Plan 2020–2023 and the 2020 Year 1 Action Plan also reflects significant growth across the organisation. Staff champions from the *Yana Ngargna* Working Group continue to lead the way through their direct involvement in implementing the actions contained within the Plan under the guidance of the Aboriginal Partnerships Officer and *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group. This growth in cultural competence of the organisation bodes well for the new Plan.

26. The Plan 2020–2023 is guided by four high-level priority areas:

    (a) **Priority One - Relationships**: Supporting community connections, promoting culture and protecting important places;

    (b) **Priority Two - Visible Culture**: Increasing the visibility of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture, issues and achievements in Yarra;

    (c) **Priority Three - Community Health and Wellbeing**: Working towards improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra; and

    (d) **Priority Four - Organisational Development**: Increasing Council's capacity, confidence and connection through improving Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways, cultural awareness and internal coordination.

27. The Plan continues the strong focus on key partnerships with Traditional Owners—the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Corporation, Melbourne Aboriginal Sport & Recreation (MAYSAR), Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS), Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA), Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS), Aboriginal Community Elders Service (ACES), Connecting Home, Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV), Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO), SNAICC, the community that call themselves the Parkies, Victoria Police, Co-health, Launch Housing, Charcoal Lane, Neami National, North Richmond Community Health, Council's Yana Ngargna Advisory Group, *Yana Ngargna* Working Group, Yarra's Aboriginal Support Network (YASN), Federal and State Government Departments, Statutory Bodies, and many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and mainstream service providers and community groups.

28. The *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 is **Attachment One** and the *Yana Ngargna 2020* Year 1 Action Plan is **Attachment Two.**

External Consultation

29. The Plan 2020–2023 was developed through extensive consultation with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community from August–September in 2018. This consultation included a special Aboriginal Advisory Group Meeting held at MAYSAR in Gertrude Street Fitzroy, outreach visits to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation and a number of community organisations, and the online distribution of two surveys (one for community and one for people who work with community).

30. Drafts of the Plan were then discussed at bimonthly Aboriginal Advisory Group meetings and at Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation meetings.

31. The majority of respondents said they thought Council was doing a good job, with many people citing the January 26 project, Smith Street Dreaming Festival and the Stolen Generations Marker project as important and meaningful collaborations. A couple of community members said that Yarra is leading the way for local government in Victoria.

32. People were also clear in stating that there is still much work to be done. The need for better employment opportunities was a key issue, along with the need for better health and wellbeing outcomes. By extension, people wanted more support for young, vulnerable and homeless people, people who use drugs and/or people coming into contact with the justice system.

33. The community consultations produced a wealth of data which has informed the Plan's priority areas and commitments. Direct quotes from the consultation are included in the context descriptions for each of the Plan's four priority areas, along with other relevant details such as ongoing projects or historical backgrounds.

34. This consultation is also part of ongoing engagement (both formal and informal) with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through a variety of networks, meetings and relationships.

35. This includes relationships with Elders, Parkies, broader community members, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and mainstream service providers and their representatives, MAYSAR, VAHS, VACSAL, AHV, AFL Sports Ready, Charcoal Lane, the Neighbourhood Justice Centre (NJC), Launch Housing, CoHealth, North Richmond Community Health (NRCH), Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO), Indigenous Workstars, 3KND Radio, Aboriginal Community Elders Service (ACES), Government Departments and Statutory Bodies including representatives from the Department of Justice (DoJ), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Aboriginal Victoria (AV), Victoria Police, Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB), Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), Department Health and Human Services, Environment Victoria, Fitzroy Legal Service, St Vincent's Hospital, Whitelion, Office of Housing (OoH), Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL), Cooke St Kinder.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

36. The internal *Yana Ngargna* Working Group has been highly engaged in the development of the Yana Ngargna Plan 2020–2023 and *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan.

37. The internal *Yana Ngargna* Working Group is comprised of Council officers from across the organisation (including an Executive sponsor), ensuring a whole of Council approach. This group meets monthly to review the implementation of the annual actions of the Plan ensuring an ongoing commitment to internal engagement and consultation across Council.

38. There are also other officers and branches undertaking work with the community who have actions in the *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan but are not part of the *Yana Ngargna* Working Group.

39. The development of the Plan included engagement with the following branches: Aged and Disability Services; Arts, Culture and Venues; Economic Development; Environmental Management; Family, Youth and Children's Services; Recreation; Open Space, Planning and Design; Strategic Planning; Yarra Leisure; Yarra Libraries; Local Laws; Sustainability; Strategic Transport; City Works; and Diversity and Inclusion.

Financial Implications

40. All actions in the *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan (with one exception) are funded through the operational budget.

41. The exception relates to a new initiative bid for the 2020/2021 Yarra Council budget process to create a dedicated heritage officer role for a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person.

42. Of note amongst funded actions, is the funding of two dedicated Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions (band 4, part-time) through the 2019/2020 Council budget process.

Economic Implications

43. Council understands and recognises the barriers and disadvantages facing Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members seeking economic equality. Council also recognises the advantages in providing opportunities for self-determination for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This Plan not only provides community members with opportunities to build capacity and access gainful employment, it also provides opportunities for self-determination, social interaction and community engagement. This ultimately provides opportunities for community engagement, improved health, lifestyle and economic outcomes for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

44. The continued commitment from Council to identify and promote Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities to local businesses and encourage them to employ local Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people only improves the economic outcomes for the community.

45. Council has identified that improvements to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes at Council are dependent upon dedicated funding and the further development of culturally sensitive recruitment and retention practices.

Sustainability Implications

46. Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people have managed their traditional lands and waterways in the area using traditional practices for tens of thousands of years. Sustainability was crucial to the survival of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and culture. The Plan contributes to the preservation of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and culture and protects culturally significant sites of importance to the Wurundjeri community.

47. Yarra's draft Nature Strategy 2019–2023 outlines Council's plan for working with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation's *Narrap* Team to manage, protect and enhance the natural environment in Yarra.

Social Implications

48. This Plan 2020–2023 is a framework for action, with its primary strength being partnerships. These partnerships have been nurtured and built over many years and they have strengthened the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's participation as active members of Yarra's community. Members of this community has direct involvement in Council's *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group, YASN, Billabong BBQ and Smith Street Dreaming Working Group meetings—and in the past through the Stolen Generations Marker Steering Group meetings. These are all opportunities for the local community to have their aspirations heard and be involved in the planning of projects, events and policies. This provides social harmony, inclusion and self-determination.

49. The Plan also maintains Yarra's rich Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture by promoting it to Yarra staff and the wider Yarra community. The Plan promotes Council's acknowledgment and recognition of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung community as the Traditional Owners of Yarra and promotes Council's stance on self-determination as best practice within the community.

Human Rights Implications

50. The Plan provides a strategic document to ensure Council meets its commitments and responsibilities in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* in the area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs by stating its commitment to respecting and promoting the rights of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

51. One of the founding principles of the Charter is that: Human rights have a special importance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Victoria, as descendants of Australia's first people with diverse social, cultural, and economic relationships with their traditional lands and waters.

52. One of the substantive rights listed in the Charter under cultural rights is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must not be denied the right, with other members of their community to:

    (a) enjoy their identity and culture;

    (b) maintain and use their language;

    (c) maintain their kinship ties; and

    (d) maintain their distinctive spiritual, material, and economic relationship with the land and water and other resources with which they have a connection under traditional lore's and customs.

53. These rights are respected and promoted throughout the Plan and underpin the way Council engages with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

54. A number of Council officers who are connected to Yarra's CALD communities frequently promote Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture, issues and histories. There are several examples of officers who do this in Council's Community Partnerships Team (e.g. Community Grants, Neighbourhood Houses and Multicultural Partnerships), and many other examples across the organisation such as Youth Services, Child Care Centres and Libraries, Arts and Cultural Services.

55. A January 26 information page has been translated into five community languages and continues to be distributed annually in partnership with the Yarra Settlement Forum and the Yarra Multicultural Advisory Group.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

56. The Council Plan 2017-2021 gives direction to the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 through the following strategic objectives:

    (a) Objective 1- A healthy Yarra, a place where community, health, safety, and wellbeing are a focus on everything we do;

    (b) Objective 2- An inclusive Yarra, a place where inclusion, diversity, and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated;

    (c) Objective 3 - A sustainable Yarra, council leads on sustainability and protect and enhances its natural environment; and

    (d) Objective 4 – A liveable Yarra, development and growth are managed to maintain and enhance the character and heritage of the city.

Legal Implications

57. Some of the legislation related to this area of Council's works include:

    (a) Local Government Act 1989 (Vic);

    (b) Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic);

    (c) Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and 2016 amendment (Vic);

    (d) The Yarra Protection (*Wilip -gin Birrarung murron*) Act 2017;

    (e) The Advancing the Treaty with Aboriginal Victorians Act 2018;

    (f) Racial Discrimination Act 1975; and

    (g) United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2007.

Other Issues

58. The *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group will continue to oversee the development and implementation of the Plan, with Council's internal Working Group tracking progress of actions on a monthly basis. All new action are cognisant of priorities identified in community consultation.

59. The *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan includes 51 actions, including new and ongoing actions.

60. A new Action Plan will be written annually for the four year life of the plan, with all actions remaining under the priority areas identified in the community consultation.

Options

61. There are no options.

Conclusion

62. The *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 will continue to provide positive outcomes in the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

63. The Plan has been renamed *Yana Ngargna* which means 'continuing connection' in Woi Wurrung language. This name was endorsed by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation Committee of Management. The Plan also includes significant changes to terminology that were determined through discussions at both the Aboriginal Advisory Group and the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Committee of Management.

64. These name and terminology changes might take some time to roll out across the organisation—and it is not expected that everyone will implement the changes simultaneously or perfectly.

65. The Plan also features renewed Acknowledgement of Country statements which have been developed through extensive discussions at the *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group meetings.

66. Council will continue to build its relationships and collaborative projects with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, advocating for better outcomes at the Local, State and Federal level. Council will also work to improve Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes at Council and locally.

67. The Plan highlights and reflects the value of a coordinated, collaborative and whole-of-organisation approach.

68. The *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 demonstrates Council's unmistakable commitment to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and provides it with an amazing vehicle to achieve great outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council:

   (a) Adopt the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 and the *Yana Ngargna* 2020 Year 1 Action Plan; and

   (b) Acknowledge and thank all Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have contributed their time, energy and knowledge to the development of the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Colin Hunter**
TITLE: **Community Planner - Aboriginal Partnerships**
TEL: **9205 5014**

Attachments

1⇩ Yana Ngargna Plan 2020-2023
2⇩ Yana Ngargna Plan 2020 Year 1 Action Plan

Attachment 1 - Yana Ngargna Plan 2020-2023

Yarra City Council's

Yana Ngargna[1] Plan 2020–2023

A partnership with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung,

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We acknowledge their creator spirit Bunjil, their ancestors and their Elders. We acknowledge the strength and resilience of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, who have never ceded sovereignty and retain their strong connections to family, clan and country despite the impacts of European invasion. 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 here today—and to their Elders past, present and future.

[1] *Yana Ngargna* means 'continuing connection' in Woi Wurrung language.

Attachment 1 - Yana Ngargna Plan 2020-2023

Yarra City Council's *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023

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Introduction

The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung are the Traditional Owners of the land and waterways now known as the City of Yarra. Their connection to country extends back more than 60,000 years to the Dreamtime when their creator spirit Bunjil created the land, the people and all living things. Woi Wurrung is the original language of this country, although other languages were also spoken when, for example, neighbouring tribes visited for ceremony, trade and other business.

Incorporated just 25 years ago, Yarra City Council is a relatively young entity. Even younger again are Council's formal relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Formally, these relationships commenced just 21 years ago, with the establishment of Yarra's Aboriginal Advisory Group, which continues to be co-chaired today by a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder.

Many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have also made (and continue to make) significant contributions to the life area—and have made generous contributions to the development of Council's policies, projects and relationships. Council's relationships with local Aboriginal organisations and services are an important part of this. Our relationship with the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS), for example, is vital. Founded in Fitzroy, the positive impacts of VAHS have been monumental, both locally and interstate, with its unique model of community controlled healthcare being replicated all around the country.

Formerly known as the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan, Yarra's official policy will from here-on-in be known as the ***Yana Ngargna* Plan**. *Yana Ngargna* is a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung phrase meaning 'continuing connection'. This refers to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung's continuing connection to culture, country and identity—as well as Council's commitment to developing continuing connections with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations. The Plan was renamed in 2019, the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

Yarra City Council is proud of the *Yana Ngargna* Plan, our fourth partnerships policy. We thank the many community members who have advised and guided us over the years, as well as those who continue to guide us today.

The *Yana Ngargna* Plan continues to build upon the successes and challenges of previous plans. Council embraces these challenges as an opportunity to engage, listen, learn and grow. We recognise that it is just the beginning of a long shared journey, and while there are significant challenges ahead, there is also so much to be gained.

Attachment 1 - Yana Ngargna Plan 2020-2023

An Important Note on Terminology

The development of this Plan has seen some significant changes to our terminology. These changes emerged quite late in 2019, during the final review and sign-off processes with both the Aboriginal Advisory Group and the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation Committee of Management.

Although on first glance, terminology is a seemingly small issue, it is actually an incredibly important and complex issue, with few solutions that suit everyone. The complexity stems from terminology's strong links to issues of identity (individual and group), impacts of colonisation (past and ongoing) and the right to self-determination (in particular the right for individuals to choose the terminology that is used to describe them).

It is best practice when referring to an individual—when, for example, introducing someone as a guest speaker—to ask the individual how they prefer to be identified. Usually we have found that individuals prefer to be referred to by their tribal / clan lines. For example, Yarra's Aboriginal Partnerships Officer, Uncle Colin Hunter, is a proud Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder, and Smith Street Dreaming Festival producer, Jason Tamiru, is a proud Yorta Yorta man.

In referring to groups of people, terminology becomes trickier. Here are some of the commonly used terms, with a description of each and its general level of acceptance. Note that terms used to describe a group of people should always be capitalised.

Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung—this is the term currently used by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung community to describe themselves—and they recently updated the name of their corporation to reflect this. By including the name of their language (Woi Wurrung) in how they refer to themselves, they more clearly show their link to the other tribes in the Kulin Nation (all of which identify by language group). The tribes of the Kulin Nation include the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, the Boon Wurrung, the Dja Dja Wurrung, the Taungurung and the Wathawarrung.

Aboriginal people/community—this is the best accepted term we have at present in Victoria to refer to a group of Aboriginal people from many tribes and nations. The word 'Aboriginal' should always be used with 'people' or 'community', rather than the words 'Aboriginal' or 'Aboriginals' by themselves. It is worth noting though that while this is an English word that is also used to describe many Aboriginal peoples around the world, Aboriginal people here have asserted a strong sense of ownership over the word and many use it to describe themselves and each other. Its use is also strongly associated with the Aboriginal flag as a unifying symbol of solidarity, protest and strength. That said, some community members feel that it is too homogenous a term, applying as it does to all tribes, nations and individuals in Australia and prefer to be identified by their tribe or use other terms.

Torres Strait Islander—this is a widely accepted term used to describe people from the Torres Strait Islands in northern Queensland, who now live in many parts of Australia. Highly respected Torres Strait Elder, Aunty Eleanor Harding, left an indelible mark on the Aboriginal community in Fitzroy in particular, opening her doors to all in the community and volunteering at a number of important Aboriginal organisations, such as the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service and the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service.

Attachment 1 - Yana Ngargna Plan 2020-2023

Community / Communities—for the purposes of this document, the terms community and communities will in some instances be used as shorthand for the term 'Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities'. This will only be used when it is abundantly clear which community or communities are being referred to. The term will not be used in any policy statement, priority area, commitment or action that might be directly quoted in another policy or project and therefore needs to stand as a complete and independent statement on its own.

Aborigine—this is generally an outdated and inappropriate term and should be avoided. It was used by the English to describe Aboriginal people from roughly 1789 onwards and carries the negative historical associations of this. An exception with positive associations is the Australian Aborigines Advancement League—the first entirely Aboriginal organisation—which was founded in 1932 by William Cooper. Following on from this, the hugely influential Aborigines Advancement League was formed in Victoria in 1957. It is considered the 'mother' of the many other Aboriginal organisations founded in Victoria.

Koori / Koorie—this is a popular term used by Aboriginal people from south-eastern Australia to describe themselves. Ownership of this word is strongly held by the community who use it and, for this reason, it can be inappropriate, overly familiar or appear to be ingratiating when used by non-Aboriginal people and especially government representatives.

ATSI—this is a government acronym standing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Few community members use it to describe each other and many community members actively don't like it. Sometimes its use is necessary in documents or graphics with limited space, eg. see census data graphs in the appendices of this document.

Indigenous—this term is generally accepted in some contexts but actively disliked by some community members. We have previously been advised to avoid this term due to negative historical associations.

First Nations—Although this term was used in the Uluru Statement from the Heart, specifically in the call for the establishment of a 'First Nations Voice', members of our advisory group have told us that they don't feel a strong connection to this term. It is also worth noting that term isn't unique and specific to peoples from Australia, but an umbrella term for all First Nations people from around the world.

First Australians—To our knowledge, community members do not currently use nor have a strong sense of ownership over this term, which was popularised by the historical documentary series of the same name by Rachel Perkins.

First Peoples—Although members of our advisory group have told us they don't feel a strong connection to this term, it is the term currently being used by the Treaty Commission in Victoria. For example, at the time of writing the Commission is taking community nominations to establish the First People's Assembly of Victoria.

In developing our new Plan, Torres Strait Islanders made it clear that they wanted to be acknowledged more consistently alongside Aboriginal people as a separate and unique group within the municipality. Consistent acknowledgment was discussed and unanimously agreed upon at an Aboriginal Advisory Group meeting. In acknowledging this separate group,

however, it quickly became apparent and that we also needed to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung first-and-foremost as a separate and unique group. This was unanimously supported by all Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders at a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation Committee of Management meeting. The Elders also endorsed *Yana Ngargna* as the new name for the Plan.

Given all of the above, it is more important for Council to use the terminology that the community would like us to use to describe them, than it is for us to have short, convenient terms for our speeches, policies and publications. We also recognise that this is a constantly evolving issue and will remain open to guidance from the community on this issue.

Highlights from Previous Plans

Some of the highlights from previous Plans include:

- Creation of the Stolen Generations Marker *Remember Me* by Kamilaroi/Gamilaroi artist Reko Rennie in Atherton Gardens, Fitzroy (2018).
- The January 26 project (2017–ongoing).
- Support for MAYSAR to maintain a community-owned space in Gertrude Street, Fitzroy (2009–ongoing).
- Ongoing promotion of local history projects, a teacher's resource and Facebook pages (2002–ongoing).
- The ongoing work of Council's internal *Yana Ngargna* Working Group (formerly the RAP Working Group) in developing organisational confidence, capacity, cohesiveness and competency (2011–ongoing).
- Ongoing support for vulnerable Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members through Billabong BBQ, Yarra Aboriginal Support Network (YASN) and Smith Street Dreaming Festival/ Working Group (2001–ongoing).

Welcome to Country Ceremony — background information and protocol

A Welcome to Country ceremony involves a Traditional Owner formally welcoming people onto their country. It may also involve such things as dance, a smoking ceremony and the granting of safe passage as well as access to resources while on country.

This ceremony should be conducted at significant official events and can **only be carried out by a Traditional Owner on their traditional lands** (that is, a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung person on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung land).

Council commits to: "engaging the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung to conduct 'Welcome to Country' at citizenship ceremonies (if applicable), Mayoral and civic receptions, openings of major events, official openings of Council buildings and significant official events where the Mayor is present."

Ideally, a 'Welcome' should be booked at least 6 weeks in advance of an event through the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Tribe Land and Cultural Heritage Compensation Corporation.

After a Welcome to Country ceremony, it is customary for the next speaker to thank the Traditional Owner for their Welcome and then read Council's Acknowledgement of Country statement.

Acknowledgement of Country—important background information

Acknowledgment of Country is a simple statement that pays respect to the Traditional Owners and their unique, enduring connection to the land and waterways (tens of thousands of years). It will often acknowledge other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people too.

In the modern day context, it can also acknowledge the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the face of rapid, irreversible changes that were made to their culture, health and ways of life from the time of European invasion onwards. Acknowledging this is an important part of a truth-telling process that has been deferred in various ways and to various ends—from the commencement of European invasion onwards.

Denial of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander existence was the first step in the British taking possession of the land. By declaring the land was *terra nullius* (land belonging to no one), the British were able to 'legally' invade, claim sovereignty and assert English law—including the assertion that the Crown was the absolute owner of all land.

It wasn't until 1992 that *terra nullius* as a justification for British ownership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands was legally declared a fiction.

Invasion impacted heavily on the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung causing loss of life, loss of culture and disconnection from country. Despite this, the strong bonds between the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, their families and country could not be broken.

Whenever possible, Acknowledgment of Country should be read with this historical context in mind. The land was inhabited by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes and nations at the time of European invasion and they are still here. A hastily read or unfeeling acknowledgment implies that it is unimportant business and does more harm than good.

Acknowledgement of Country—official versions and protocol

It is appropriate for the first speaker at an event or meeting to read an Acknowledgement of Country statement. If there has been a Welcome to Country prior to this, the Acknowledgement should take place immediately afterwards. Once Acknowledgment has been pronounced, it is not necessary for subsequent speakers to repeat the Acknowledgment, unless it is a particularly solemn Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community event (eg the Anniversary of the Apology, or National Sorry Day) in which case an acknowledgment might be pronounced by each new speaker. **An Acknowledgement of Country can be spoken by anyone, Aboriginal and Torres Strait**

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Islander or not.

Council has three official acknowledgments, which have been written for specific circumstances. In the vast majority of cases, Council staff and Councillors will only use the first one. Further details are outlined below.

Official Acknowledgment of Country #1

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 here today—and to their Elders past, present and future.

- To be used by the Mayor and Councillors at the commencement of all Mayoral and civic receptions, openings of major events, official openings of Council buildings and official events where the Mayor is present.
- To be used by Council officers at the commencement of CEO briefings, significant internal events, as well as Executive, Senior Management Team, Senior Management Team Plus and Branch meetings.
- To be used by Council officers who would like to acknowledge country in any other meeting.

Official Acknowledgment of Country #2

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We acknowledge their creator spirit Bunjil, their ancestors and their Elders. We acknowledge the strength and resilience of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, who have never ceded sovereignty and retain their strong connections to family, clan and country despite the impacts of European invasion. 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 here today—and to their Elders past, present and future.

- To be read by the Mayor at the commencement of all Council meetings and all Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community events. It may also be used at any time at Councillor discretion, in place of the Official Acknowledgment of Country #1.

Official Acknowledgment of Country #3

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We acknowledge their creator spirit Bunjil, their ancestors and their Elders. We acknowledge the strength and resilience of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, who have survived European invasion and

never ceded sovereignty. We also acknowledge the significant contribution made by the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra.

We acknowledge that Fitzroy and Collingwood are areas of special significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—as the cradle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs in Victoria, the birthplace of important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, the centre of political activism and a meeting place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to link in with family, community and services. We acknowledge the role played by past federal and state government policies in the social and cultural dispossession of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—and the dispossession of land—which has caused the current disadvantages faced by many Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. And we believe that having an awareness of, and taking steps towards, mending this disadvantage is the shared responsibility of all residents in the City of Yarra.

Council pays its respects to all in the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and Elders from all nations here today—and to their Elders past, present and future.

- To be used by the Mayor and /or Councillors at the commencement of Yarra's January 26 event, Yarra's National Sorry Day event, Yarra's anniversary of the Apology event and Yarra's citizenship ceremonies (if applicable).
- It may also be used at Councillor discretion in place of the other official acknowledgments at any significant Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar day or community event.

Council's Relationships with the Traditional Owners

Yarra's formal relationship with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung formally began in 1999 when Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder, Aunty Annette Xiberras, became a founding member of Yarra's Aboriginal Advisory Group (now *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group). Twenty years on, she continues to co-chair the group and provide invaluable advice, knowledge and guidance. We acknowledge and thank Annette for her ongoing support.

Since 2009, the *Yana Ngargna* Plan has been strengthened by the employment of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder, Uncle Colin Hunter. He is the only Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung person employed in a dedicated position by local government on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country (which takes in 38 municipalities and the principality). We owe much to Uncle Colin's dedication, tenacity and leadership. He is an ambassador for the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, for the community and for Yarra City Council.

Through Uncle Colin, we have also strengthened our relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Tribe Land and Cultural Heritage Compensation Corporation.

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Role of the *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group

Yarra's *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group (YNAG), formerly known as the Aboriginal Advisory Group (AAG), was established in 1999 as a partnership between Yarra City Council, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The group began work on Yarra's first Aboriginal Partnerships Plan in 2002 and endorsed the Plan in 2004.

In the years since, the group has continued to meet bimonthly, overseeing the development and implementation of all subsequent plans. The group maintains an open and standing invitation to all in the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. It counts amongst its membership two Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders, two Councillors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives and Council officers.

The YNAG is the formal mechanism for ensuring our partnership with the community is underpinned by regular, ongoing conversations. This mechanism is also now supported by a range of other working groups and platforms for ongoing consultation with the community.

Role of the *Yana Ngargna* Working Group

Since 2012, Council's cross-organisational capacity has been built through an internal working group, known as the *Yana Ngargna* Working Group (formerly the RAP Working Group). The establishment of the *Yana Ngargna* Working Group has built confidence, capacity and co-operation across many units and branches within Council. This group meets monthly to track actions, co-ordinate projects and build cultural awareness and confidence amongst officers. The *Yana Ngargna* Working Group includes an executive sponsor and representation from staff across every division in Council.

A brief note: Although Council supports the aims and achievements of the Reconciliation movement, we no longer maintain a Reconciliation Action Plan. Our *Yana Ngargna* Plan is (and always has been) our lead policy document and, at this stage, best suits our responsive work style, as well as our yearly planning and reporting cycles.

Broader Social and Political Context for the Plan: National, State and Local Highlights from 2017 and 2018

2017 and 2018 saw a number of firsts, milestones and high profile events which increased engagement with (and visibility of) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, experiences, issues, histories and achievements.

2017

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2017 was the 50-year anniversary of the 1967 Referendum, the 25-year anniversary of the landmark Mabo decision and the 20-year anniversary of the 'Bringing them Home' report into the Stolen Generations.

In May 2017, The Uluru Statement from the Heart was put together as a joint statement by Elders from around the country, calling for the establishment of a 'First Nations Voice' enshrined in the Australia Constitution and the establishment of a 'Makarrata Commission' to supervise agreement-making and truth-telling between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In June 2017, Woi Wurrung language was spoken for the first time in Victorian Parliament at the adoption of the historic 'Yarra River Protection (*Wilip -gin Birrarung murron*) Act 2017'.

In late 2017, three Victorian Councils—Yarra, Darebin and Moreland—made historic changes to how they mark January 26, taking positions that publicly acknowledge the pain and sorrow experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on this day.

In November 2017, Lidia Thorpe became the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman elected to Victorian Parliament.

2018

January 26 in 2018 marked the 80 year anniversary of the 1938 Day of Mourning protest and the 20 year anniversary of National Sorry Day. January 26 also saw large scale marches in all Australian capital cities in recognition and acknowledgement of this.

In July 2018, NAIDOC Week brought increased awareness of and due recognition to the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

In Victoria, 2018 saw the commencement of historic treaty talks and the adoption of the 'Advancing the Treaty Process with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians Act 2018'—Australia's first ever Treaty law;

In June 2018, the federal seat of Batman was renamed after Yorta Yorta leader William Cooper.

Sporting organisations like the AFL and NRL continue to build pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander achievement through high profile events such as Dreamtime at the G as part of the Sir Doug Nicholls round.

2019

The United Nations declared 2019 the Year of Indigenous Languages. This was to

acknowledge the fact that indigenous languages around the world are disappearing at an alarming rate—and to acknowledge that languages play a crucial role in the everyday lives of people, not just as a tool for communication, but also as a repository for each person's unique identity, cultural history, traditions and memory. This event provided some impetus for the renaming of Council's Plan in Woi Wurrung language.

The 2019 NAIDOC week theme was 'Voice, Treaty, Truth'.

The 2019 Close the Gap Report—'Our choices, Our Voices' revealed that the target to close the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous people by 2031 is widening rather than closing.

From May–August 2019, The Victorian Treaty Advancement Commission took nominations for the First People's Assembly of Victoria. The Assembly will be tasked with establishing a framework and 'ground rules' for the creation of a Treaty.

In August 2019, Stan Grant's documentary on Adam Goodes and racism in Australia, *The Australian Dream*, opened to a standing ovation (2000 people in attendance) at Melbourne International Film Festival.

Relevant Federal and State Policies, Acts and Commitments

Yarra's *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023 is cognisant of a range of local, state and federal commitments.

At a Federal Level we are bound by:

- The *Close the Gap* targets, which bind us to work towards improved health and life expectancy outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- The responsibilities inherent to Australia's role as a signatory to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, including the recommendation that we develop a Treaty with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In Victoria, we are bound by:

- *The Yarra Protection (Wilip -gin Birrarung murron) Act 2017*, which recognises the Yarra River as having unique qualities in need of special protections.
- *The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (2006)*, which: protects the distinct rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria; outlines the legal obligation of public authorities to act compatibly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural rights, and to properly consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural rights when making decisions; and advocates for consultation with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities when

making any decision or action that may impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural rights.

- The Victorian State Government's *Close the Gap Statement of Intent 2008*.
- *The Advancing the Treaty with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians Act 2018*, which establishes a framework for the development of a Treaty with Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- The *Say No to Racism* campaign.

Council Policy Context

The Plan is cognisant of the Yarra Council Plan 2017–2021 and its values, especially the key objectives:

1. Community health, safety and wellbeing are a focus in everything we do.
2. Inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated.
3. Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances its natural environment.
4. Development and growth are managed to maintain and enhance the character and heritage of the city.
5. Local businesses prosper and creative and knowledge industries thrive.
6. Connectivity and travel options are environmentally sustainable, integrated and well-designed.
7. Transparency, performance and community participation drive the way we operate.

It is also cognisant of other Council Plans such as the Yarra Arts and Cultural Strategy 2016–2020, the Draft Nature Strategy 2019-2023, and the Yarra Libraries Plan 2017–2020.

Community Consultation Method for this Plan

The initial consultation for this Plan took place during August and September in 2018. This involved discussions with community members and the distribution of online surveys.

Consultation commenced with a special AAG meeting held at MAYSAR (184–186 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy) on 2 August 2018, with approximately 30 people in attendance. AAG co-chair and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder, Aunty Annette Xiberras, opened the consultation with a Welcome to Country ceremony and also shared some memories about the area's history.

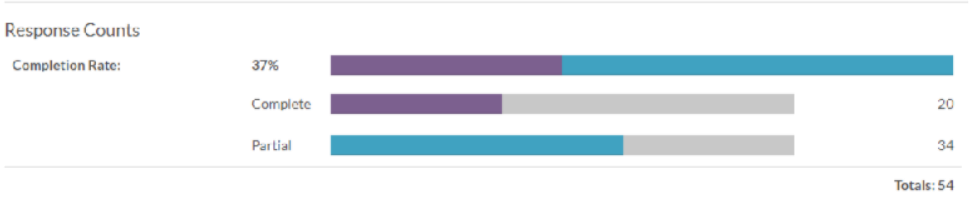
A slideshow was screened, highlighting Yarra's collaborative work with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities over the last 20 years. This included a variety of history projects, events, celebrations, project posters and community gatherings. This was followed by facilitated discussions which primarily focussed on a few short questions: What is Council doing well? What does Council need to work on? If you were the Mayor of Yarra, what are the first three things you would do?

After the opening consultation, Community Partnerships officers sent online surveys to their extensive community networks inviting people to share ideas and give feedback. One of

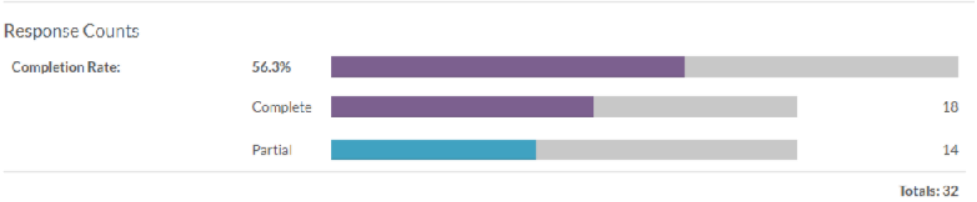
these surveys was for community only, and the other was for service providers and other people who work directly with community.

Council officers also visited a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and network meetings to present the slideshow and initiate discussion. The survey was then disseminated to these organisations for further distribution.

In total, 54 Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participated in the online survey, with 20 complete surveys and 34 partially completed surveys. This was a good level of participation, with many respondents providing rich and detailed information.



In total, a further 32 people who work directly with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community participated in the online survey. This includes 18 complete surveys and 14 partially completed surveys.



Emerging themes from this consultation were then discussed with Yarra staff and the *Yana Ngargna* Working Group to identify opportunities for future projects and actions.

Consultation Results

The majority of respondents from Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people who work with these communities said they thought Council was doing a good job. A number of people said that Yarra is leading the way for local government.

> Yarra Council is leading the way, not only on a state level, but also on a national level.

Yarra's work on January 26, the Stolen Generations Marker and Smith Street Dreaming

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came up again and again, as Council projects that are highly valued by the community.

> Yarra does so much for the community. It has been a trend setter and front runner in rolling out and supporting great initiatives for the A&TSI community. Such as the stolen generations marker, smith street dreaming festival and the council's stance on not celebrating the 26th of January.

> Smith St Dreaming. It is a celebration and it is on the streets that a lot of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people identify with and holds history of a long journey.

People also valued BlakWiz, Billabong BBQ and Yarra's historical resources.

> Snapshots of Aboriginal Fitzroy, Heritage listing, Atherton Gardens, Wurundjeri History of Yarra, MAYSAR support, Teachers Guide: Connecting with the Aboriginal History of Yarra, Plaque Tour, Stolen Generation project.

People perceived Yarra to have strong relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community underpinned by clear, transparent consultative processes.

> Council has done well to build a strong relationship with its local Aboriginal community.

> [Council] consults well, has credibility, acknowledges us mob. Yarra is respectful of the

> Aboriginal community and consults well with our people and organisations.

A small number of respondents said that they weren't aware of any work that Yarra did with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and that they wanted more contact with Yarra Council, or for events to be better advertised, including through traditional promotion (not just online and social media).

A strong and consistent theme in the consultation was that people wanted Yarra to create more employment opportunities for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people both in the organisation itself and in the broader community.

> Make sure all the council places are culturally safe and employees have had cultural awareness provided. Employ more Aboriginal people.

> Would like to see increase in Aboriginal employment by Yarra City Council. Need to have a think about what this is and how to do it. Need to tease it out and have a strategy for it. You have a RAP Plan, so you may have issues with internal issues, but push it through, just do it! We need jobs! Yarra has such a good reputation, but the RAP Plan is the guts of it. If you're fair dinkum, you've got to make this happen.

Other areas for improvement include: ensuring ongoing, long-term support and protection for MAYSAR as the last community-controlled Aboriginal organisation in historically significant Fitzroy:

> MAYSAR to be better funded, community feeling that they need security for the organisation's future. i.e. 10 years or more, so that we can plan for the future.
>
> MAYSAR to be listed to be officially Heritage Listed.

People wanted Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures to be more visible in the municipality:

> More of our history and culture needs to be visible.
>
> We wanna show our pride and history.

People wanted us to keep working on broader community education:

> Keep up the education—through outreach, the teachers' resource, Aboriginal liaison.
>
> Have an Aboriginal person to go into schools. Teach people—you could partner with SNAICC to do that.
>
> There's more education needed.

Both community members and service providers wanted Yarra to advocate for affordable housing and find ways to maintain community connection to Yarra.

> Advocate for increased public, social and affordable housing for Aboriginal people to remain in Yarra. Support organisations to stay in Yarra.
>
> People feel that their community is being "pushed out" as services and affordable rent have pushed the community out of the area.

People also wanted us to provide support for people who are at risk of coming into contact with the justice system and people who are coming out of prison.

> Help with dealing with the high rates of the mob being incarcerated. Help to reconnect, to link to community and culture. Programs inside and out of prison. Having people with lived experience to facilitate the programs.
>
> Support healing services, or centres as a better way forward.

People wanted to see more support for young, vulnerable and homeless Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, as well as people with substance abuse issues.

> More youth activities—give them an alternative to drugs and alcohol, give them respect and a place to belong.
>
> Move the local Aboriginal community out of North Richmond and provide support and

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resources for the substance issues.

Further community quotes and background information are also included in the 'context' sections for each of the four priority areas detailed in this Plan.

Timeline for development of the Plan

July–September 2018

- Review of successes, challenges and opportunities emerging from the last four year plan.
- Community consultation undertaken.

October–November 2018

- Consultation information compiled, reviewed and themed.
- First draft Plan written.

November 2018

- First draft Plan (high level summary) presented to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation Committee of Management for feedback from the Elders.
- Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders provided advice on the exact wording of Yarra's Acknowledgement of Country statements.

December 2018

- Draft Plan presented to AAG for discussion. This included an extensive discussion of Yarra's Acknowledgements of Country statements.
- Draft Plan emailed to the extensive Aboriginal Partnerships Officer's contact list for feedback.

January 2019

- Draft Plan presented to Executive Briefing

February 2019

- Draft Plan presented to Council Briefing
- Feedback on the Plan discussed at AAG.

March 2019

- Final year report on implementation of the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan 2015–2018 presented to Council.
- Draft Plan presented to Council Meeting

March–July 2019

- Plan put on Public Display and promoted to networks with invitations to comment.
- Twenty-two people provided feedback on the Plan, with the 'Community Health and Wellbeing' priority receiving the most suggestions.

August 2019

- Final AAG discussion of the Plan with a special focus on terminology
    - The group resolved to change terminology to consistently acknowledge Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- High level summary of Plan presented to Elders at the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Woi

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Wurrung Corporation Committee of Management.

- *Yana Ngargna* endorsed as new name along with updated terminology.

September 2019

- Final Plan presented to Executive Briefing

October 2019

- Final Plan presented to Councillor Briefing

November 2019

- Final Plan presented to Council Meeting for adoption.

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Yarra's *Yana Ngargna* (Continuing Connection) Policy, 2020

The following policy statement, previously known as the Yarra Aboriginal Partnerships Policy, 2015, is a quick reference stand-alone document which lists Council's official acknowledgments, statements of support and commitments. It remains the foundation of our work with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The values and commitments outlined here are applicable to all Councillors and officers at Yarra City Council.

Council acknowledges:

1. the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra.
2. the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung's creator spirit Bunjil, their ancestors and their Elders—past, present and future.
3. the strength and resilience of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, who have never ceded sovereignty and retain their strong connections to family, clan and country despite the impacts of European invasion.
4. the impacts of frontier wars, massacres and frontier violence in Victoria and the role these things played in the dispossession of Aboriginal people.
5. that Fitzroy and Collingwood are areas of special significance to many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—as the cradle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs in Victoria, the birthplace of important Aboriginal organisations, the centre of political activism and a meeting place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to link-in with family, community and services.
6. the strain that the rising cost of living and rapid population growth continue to put on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander connection to Yarra.
7. that ongoing presence, visibility and participation of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra is vital to maintaining connection to Yarra.
8. the significant number of volunteer hours worked by many Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in order to fulfil cultural, familial and community obligations, often without acknowledgement.
9. the role played by past federal and state government policies in the social, cultural and economic dispossession of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; the ongoing intergenerational trauma experienced by many Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as a result of this; the compounding effects of racism (overt, covert and unconscious) on this trauma—and the ways in which these forces combine to reinforce entrenched disadvantage, poor health outcomes, increased contact with the justice system and economic disadvantage.
10. that having a historical understanding of the ongoing impacts of European invasion on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today is

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essential to our shared healing in the City of Yarra.

Council supports:

11. the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung community in their role as Traditional Owners.
12. the rights of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to live according to their own values and customs.
13. the *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group, as a mechanism for ensuring Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander input into the development of Council policies.
14. Yarra Aboriginal Support Network (YASN) as a mechanism for co-ordinating support for the Parkies community and other members of Yarra's disadvantaged Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
15. the Federal Government's 'Close the Gap' commitments.
16. the anniversaries of The Apology, NAIDOC Week, Sorry Day, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Week, Close the Gap Day, National Reconciliation Week, Indigenous Literacy Day, International Day of the World's Indigenous People and Indigenous Children's Day.
17. development of treaties with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as per the recommendations of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, to which Australia is a signatory.
18. truth telling between governments and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Council commits to:

19. consulting the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Council on all decisions affecting the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, and the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on all issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra.
20. increasing employment of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at Council and working towards Yarra becoming an employer of choice.
21. developing Yarra's organisational culture so that it is attracting and welcoming to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.
22. brokering Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community employment opportunities in the broader municipality.
23. ongoing employment of an Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person as the Aboriginal Partnerships Officer[2], with special consideration given, in the case of a vacancy, to a person who can demonstrate strong community connection.

[2] At the time of writing, Aboriginal Partnerships Officer is the official title of this role, although this *may* go through an HR process to update it to reflect updated terminology used in this Plan.

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24. engaging the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung to conduct 'Welcome to Country' at citizenship ceremonies (if applicable), Mayoral and civic receptions, openings of major events, official openings of Council buildings and significant official events where the Mayor is present.
25. paying respect to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community by reading:
    a) Council's official Acknowledgement of Country #1 statement at the commencement all Mayoral and civic receptions, openings of major events, official openings of Council buildings and official events where the Mayor is present, as well as CEO briefings, significant internal events, Executive, Senior Management Team, Senior Management Team Plus and Branch meetings.
    b) Council's official Acknowledgment of Country #2 statement at the commencement of all Council meetings and all Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community events.
    c) Council's official Acknowledgment of Country #3 statement at the commencement of Yarra's January 26 event, Yarra's National Sorry Day event, Yarra's anniversary of the Apology event and Yarra's citizenship ceremonies (if applicable).
26. remaining a local government leader and innovator in strengthening relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community; increasing visibility of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture, issues and achievements; improving health and wellbeing outcomes for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra; and developing the organisation's confidence and capacity in working with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
27. developing a new action plan for each year of the four years of the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023, to ensure Council projects and actions are responsive to and aligned with community need and emerging community issues.
28. maintaining recognition and profile of areas of local significance to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
29. seeking opportunities to name places in Yarra using *Woi Wurrung* language, in line with Yarra's *Naming of Roads Features and Places Policy, 2014*.
30. flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on Council's Town Halls on a daily basis, and at all ceremonial Council events where the Australian flag is flown.
31. including an Acknowledgment of Country statement on all Yarra staff and Councillor email signatures.
32. advocating for improved Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and cultural awareness among staff in Victoria Police, Office of Housing Victoria and local services and agencies.
33. supporting the ongoing development of MAYSAR as a community space run by

community for community, and the ongoing vitality of meeting places like The Stolen Generations Marker, The Meeting Place and Billabong BBQ.

34. promoting 'The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Protocol' as the first step for people, businesses and organisations planning cultural and community activities in Yarra.
35. facilitating ongoing monthly Yarra Aboriginal Support Network (YASN), monthly *Yana Ngargna* Working Group (YNWG) meetings and bimonthly *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group (YNAG) meetings.
36. building strategic, collaborative and supportive partnerships with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, other levels of government, the community and the private sector, in Yarra and beyond.
37. promoting and holding a small-scale, culturally-sensitive event featuring a Smoking Ceremony on January 26 that acknowledges the loss of culture, language and identity felt by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on January 26.
38. developing a communications plan that focuses on broader community education, to help people better understand the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community experiences of January 26 and to explain Council's position on January 26.
39. promoting information about Council's position on January 26 in the six most commonly spoken community languages in Yarra, and partnering with the Yarra Settlement Forum and the Yarra Multicultural Advisory Group to distribute and promote educational information.
40. partnering with Melbourne Aboriginal Youth, Sport and Recreation Incorporated (MAYSAR) to run a forum for young Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, on the local history and achievements of Elders in the area.
41. continuing to help co-ordinate and provide administrative support for the 'January 26 Network'—a multi-council and community info-sharing group, which meets quarterly.
42. continuing to promote Melbourne City Council's Share the Spirit Festival and other respectful Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events held on January 26.
43. ceasing to refer to January 26 as Australia Day in all communications, to acknowledge the fact that this date commemorates the British invasion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands and is therefore not an appropriate date for an inclusive national celebration.
44. referring to January 26 merely as January 26 until a more appropriate term is adopted nationally to acknowledge the experiences of the people who inhabited the land for more than 60,000 years prior to the raising of the Union Flag on Gadigal country on January 26 in 1788;
45. not holding Citizenship Ceremonies (if applicable) on January 26;
46. continuing to recognise excellence and service in Yarra's community through

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Community Awards that are awarded on days other than January 26, which better suit the nature of each award, and not under the banner of Australia Day Awards.

47. supporting the #changethedate campaign (as long as it remains in-tune with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community sentiment) in Council publications and social media in the lead up to January 26 to seek a more inclusive day to celebrate national pride.
48. working to achieve aims expressed in the Victorian State Government's Close the Gap Statement of Intent (2008).
49. remaining a signatory of the:
    a) Say No to Racism campaign.
50. Maintaining the responsibilities inherent to Australia's role as a signatory to the:
    a) United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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The Plan: Priority Areas, Commitments, Context and Actions

For the next four years, Council's work with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community will be guided by four high-level **priority areas**:

- **Priority 1—Relationships**—supporting community connections, promoting culture and protecting important places.
- **Priority 2—A Visible Culture**—Increasing the visibility of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture, issues and achievements in Yarra.
- **Priority 3—Community Health and Wellbeing**—Working towards improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra.
- **Priority 4—Organisational Development**—Increasing Council's capacity, confidence and connection through improved Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways, cultural awareness and internal coordination.

Each of these priority areas is underpinned by a number of **commitments**, which are detailed in the following pages, and a **context** description, which tells the story of each priority area and includes direct quotes from the community consultation.

Actions will be written into annual action plans (calendar year), with the Year One Action Plan 2020 being the first.

All priorities, commitments, contexts and actions are cognisant of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community consultation conducted from mid–late 2018, community feedback received during the public display period in 2019, as well as ongoing Council projects, commitments and relationships with the community, and emerging opportunities and constraints within the organisation.

Action plans will be available on Council's website and in printed hardcopies by request via the Aboriginal Partnerships Officer at the beginning of each year until the end of 2022. Email: info@yarracity.vic.gov.au, Phone: (03) 9205 5555

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Priority 1. Relationships—Supporting community connections, promoting culture and protecting important places.

Commitments

Council will:

1.1 Consult the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people on all decisions affecting the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, and consult the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on all issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

1.2 Promote broader understandings of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, history, achievements and challenges in the broader community, so that more people, services and organisations (as well as landlords and employers) are able to understand and support Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community connection to Yarra.

1.3 Continue to advocate for the ongoing protection and vitality of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and services in Yarra, as well as important urban meeting places and sites.

1.4 Continue to develop a range of positive relationships with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and support organisations that are also building positive relationships with these communities.

Actions

Detailed actions for each of the above commitments can be viewed in annually produced action plans. An updated action plan will be produced for each calendar year of the Plan's four year lifespan (2020, 2021, 2022, 2023). Action plans will be available on Council's website and in printed hardcopies by request via the Aboriginal Partnerships Officer at the beginning of each year until the end of 2023. Email: info@yarracity.vic.gov.au, Phone: (03) 9205 5555.

Context

Council's relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community are at the heart of Yarra's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Plan 2020–2023. These relationships are both formal and informal.

The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung's unique connection to the land and waterways in Yarra extends back tens of thousands of years to the time when their creator spirit, Bunjil, created the land, the people and all living things. Given this enduring and special connection, it is vital that Council continues to develop a stronger relationship with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people—and especially with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Council Aboriginal Corporation (the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation).

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At present, Council engages the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation for cultural, ceremonial, naming and land management issues. Further to this, Council commits to promoting the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung as the Traditional Owners, advocating for their projects and concerns, and maintaining regular contact.

According to some people who participated in the consultation for this Plan, Council is doing a good job of working with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung.

> Contact with the Wurundjeri Council is excellent.

We will continue to build this relationship with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung through our *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group (YNAG), which has is co-chaired by Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder, alongside various Yarra Councillor and Mayoral co-chairs. This group maintains an open and standing invitation to all in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and provides an avenue for community to have an influence on strategic planning and decision making.

For the last ten years, Council's relationship with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung has been greatly strengthened also, by the employment of Uncle Colin Hunter—the only Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder to be employed by a local government on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country (which takes in 38 municipalities and the principality).

Council also deeply values its relationships with the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community connected to Yarra. The area remains an important place for members of this community, who live, work and spend time in the area. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history of Fitzroy maintains a deep resonance with the community. And it is perhaps because of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's pride in and connection to Fitzroy that Yarra has developed such a strong relationship with and commitment to the community. As one consultation participant described Fitzroy:

> Fitzroy is the heartland and sacred place to Aboriginal community. It always has been and always will be.

Fitzroy stands along Redfern in its stature as an urban area of special significance. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders gained influence and important organisations were born in and around the streets of Fitzroy. The area has seen Stolen Generations and estranged families reunited and it has given rise to renowned artists, activists and athletes. The positive impacts that ripple out from this community continue to be felt today. As another consultation participant put it:

> Victoria has always been the home of radical Aboriginal politics. We lead the way for the rest of the country. We have always been progressive blacks—strong, proud and radical!

It is worth noting, to follow on from this last quote, that many of the community members that advise and partner with Council today are the descendants of Elders and political activists who have led great social change. Many are strong social justice

advocates in their own right. They know the history of the area and demand that Council take a strong leadership role on a range of issues relevant to the community. This history is vital in understanding

A number of branches within Council maintain relationships with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, with support offered by officers from the Community Partnerships Branch when required. Other branches such as Arts and Cultural Services, Yarra Libraries, Communications and Strategic Advocacy maintain solid relationships with the community and deliver work, events and information of a consistently high standard.

Over the last twenty years or so, forces affecting greater Melbourne have continued to exert increasing pressure on community connection to the area. Greater Melbourne's rapidly growing population continues to push up property prices and population density, and increasing traffic congestion continues to put a strain on services, infrastructure and community connectedness.

According to the latest population forecasts, the City of Yarra's population will grow from 97,077 in 2018 to 157,607 by 2041. The number of dwellings is forecast to increase from 46,213 in 2018 to 78,327 in 2041.[3] This growth will have significant implications for service demand and delivery in the area—and will continue to strain Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community connection to the area.

> Need to protect and maintain community connection: Gentrification continues to push people further north and away from Fitzroy.

Honouring, supporting and promoting community connection to Yarra in the face of these challenges is something that was repeatedly mentioned in the consultation for this Plan. It is also an issue that has no simple solution and requires a multi-pronged approach. Maintaining strong relationships will be an important part of this—to ensure we are in tune with community sentiment and ready to act on emerging opportunities.

In the consultation, people were eager to see Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, spaces and meeting places supported, advocated for and protected. Many people said they wanted to see MAYSAR supported and protected as the last community controlled organisation in Gertrude Street. People also wanted to see Charcoal Lane supported as an important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth training facility and social enterprise restaurant.

> Secure more funding to employ staff and develop programs at MAYSAR. This place could resemble the Aboriginal Centre for Excellence in Redfern.
>
> Maintain the good things we have: MAYSAR, Charcoal Lane

[3] https://forecast.id.com.au/yarra/

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People wanted to see more Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community spaces created in Yarra.

> Buy back the Doug Nicholas Church and give it back to our community as a new Centre for us.
>
> Buy back buildings in Fitzroy for our community to create community organisations in.
>
> Yarra should buy or access deceased estates for the Aboriginal community for safe housing.

As well as advocating for community spaces, people were keen to see walking tours run in the municipality, as a way to educate people about the history of the area and how this history links to current challenges faced by the community.

> Have the time to be story tellers about the Wurundjeri people, e.g. at committee meetings tell us about the Wurundjeri Aboriginal Land and Compensation Council, e.g. take the committee on the local Fitzroy walk, which is good not only for Aboriginal people but educates non-Indigenous people about the rich history of the local area. This will assist non-Indigenous workers to understand the diverse background (of life) for Aboriginal people who lived in the local region and help them to better understand the significance of this area and understand issues such as the stolen generation, trans-generational trauma, being institutionalised, grief associated with loss and highlight matters such as Aboriginal unemployment, lack of housing, limited opportunities for education, family breakdown, loss of lands and cultural practices and drug and alcohol issues, etc.

This last quote points to the simple act of storytelling as means to connect and improve relationships between otherwise disparate or disconnected groups. Storytelling will remain an important part of what we do—and this includes ongoing promotion of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history through a variety of platforms and formats.

Priority 2. A Visible Culture—Increasing the visibility of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture, issues and achievements in Yarra.

Commitments

Council will:

2.1 Strive to increase the visibility of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, arts, events, significant calendar days, culture, languages, achievements, issues and history in Yarra, and provide opportunities for the broader community to engage and learn.

2.2 Continue working towards a celebration of national identity that is more inclusive of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as outlined in Council's 'January 26 decision' of 15 August 2017.

Actions

Detailed actions for each of the above commitments can be viewed in annually produced action plans. An updated action plan will be produced for each calendar year of the Plan's four-year lifespan (2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023). Action plans will be available on Council's website and in printed hardcopies by request via the Aboriginal Plan Officer at the beginning of each year until the end of 2023. Email: info@yarracity.vic.gov.au, Phone: (03) 9205 5555.

Context

One of the ways participants in the consultation for this Plan were keen to see the community supported was through increased visibility—of people, activities, events and use of traditional languages. Renaming this policy in Woi Wurrung language was an immediate and obvious first step in responding to a call for more use of traditional languages. We will also continue to promote and mark significant Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar days and weeks so that they are more visible to the broader community. This visibility is essential to maintaining a connected, supported and active Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander presence in Yarra.

> More public visibility. Like the Stolen Generations Marker.
>
> City of Yarra cannot be a monument to Aboriginal history. It is a living history. There is a deep connection to this space that every young person that comes to Charcoal Lane gets when they come to Yarra. Yarra must support MAYSAR and Charcoal Lane to share the rich history of this area with the next generation. Through Charcoal Lane we connect young people to culture through food and experiences. Yarra honours Community well. We are hoping our students can embrace the community of Yarra and feel connected to a progressive municipality.

This increased visibility also needs to be inclusive of Torres Strait Islander people and history.

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> Torres Strait Islander history to be more visual and present—and Torres Strait Islander people to be invited to everything.

People cited The Stolen Generations Marker, Smith Street Dreaming Festival and the use of *Woiwurrung* language to name *Bargoonga Nganjin* as good examples of Council projects that have succeeded in increasing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's visibility. It is worth noting that these projects are supported by educational activities and events, and that the combination of the two is important.

> I loved the Stolen Generations marker because it encouraged inclusion—and is a welcoming site (for sitting and spending time).

> Continue to run Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community events that provide an environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are comfortable, feel acknowledged and can celebrate, share and express themselves as cultural people.

Council's stand on January 26 also increased pride, connection and visibility in the community—and also increased understanding of important issues relating to the current position of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our celebrations of national identity.

> To do what you did [re January 26], to stand against it, was really great. It's really great to have it finally recognised.

> Not celebrating 26th Jan. You recognise the contribution Aboriginal Community has played in shaping the municipality and you celebrate it.

Council will continue to mark January 26 in line with our 15 August 2017 resolution and advocate for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, places, culture, achievements and experiences to hold pride of place in our local and national identity and any celebrations relating to identity.

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Priority 3. Community Health and Wellbeing—Working towards improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra.

Commitments

Council will:

3.1 Support vulnerable Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.
3.2 Advocate for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on issues in which they are experiencing poor outcomes.
3.3 Fight racism and advocate for broader understandings of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community experiences, issues and stories in line with Council's 'January 26 decision' on 15 August 2017.

Actions

Detailed actions for each of the above commitments can be viewed in annually produced action plans. An updated action plan will be produced for each calendar year of the Plan's four-year lifespan (2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023). Action plans will be available on Council's website and in printed hardcopies by request via the Aboriginal Partnerships Officer at the beginning of each year until the end of 2023. Email: info@yarracity.vic.gov.au, Phone: (03) 9205 5555

Context

Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra, like Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people all around the country, continue to experience disadvantage in almost every measure of health and wellbeing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to be imprisoned, to experience racism, to have housing issues or be homeless, to live shorter lives, to experience more grief, mental health and substance abuse issues. As one consultation participant put it:

> No council has really taken the steps towards addressing the issues that have long plagued our communities and enforced change within council.

This is not an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community issue but a whole of country issue—and working towards mending Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage is a shared national responsibility.

As a Local Government, some of the ways that Yarra can work towards improving this situation is by building relationships and networks to support vulnerable people, identifying opportunities and pushing for improvements.

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Participants in our community consultation were very clear on areas we should focus on. Homelessness, housing, youth, justice and incarceration were all issues that participants repeatedly mentioned.

People were keen to see Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth supported.

> More work needed with early intervention and youth services. There is very little work being done to support Aboriginal families to avoid having children being put into out of home care.
>
> Provide more opportunities for young kids to have a chance, to get the experience so they can get jobs. Something like Charcoal Lane.
>
> Lots of talented kids out there but no chance to showcase talents—give them possibilities, show them people care (SNAICC rep would partner).

As part of our commitment to increasing Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, we will ensure that there is a youth focus built into our employment model. We will also explore ways in which we can provide other developmental or experiential opportunities that might lead to work opportunities. Council will also continue to build and explore relationships with organisations and services working with youth to see how we can build upon our existing commitments.

Consultation participants also raised the high rate of imprisonment as an urgent issue—the need for preventative measures as well as support and healing measures to be taken.

> Need to have rehabilitation programs for those out of prison, to help with connection and employment opportunities.

Council will continue to develop relationships and knowledge about preventative programs, support services and healing programs through YASN, Billabong BBQ and informal networks. We will also work to support vulnerable people in and around Richmond, including people who inject drugs.

Housing and homelessness were also big issues raised in the consultation.

> Support Council's homelessness worker with more funding and resources to address homelessness.
>
> More effort to support vulnerable people and to address homelessness, substances abuse issues
>
> Accessibility for our community to rent in Fitzroy and our community to buy housing in the areas.

Supporting Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access housing in Yarra is an increasingly challenging issue. With housing primarily being a State Government issue, advocacy is our best tool at the local government level. All advocacy work will be performed in consultation and with guidance from the community. And Council will only act on an issue concerning the community with permission and/or guidance from the

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community. We will also build relationships with organisations and services who are working on community housing and homelessness issues.

In the wake of Yarra's January 26 decision, we received both positive and negative feedback from all around the country. The positive feedback was often heartfelt, appreciative and eloquent. The negative feedback was frequently racist, angry and irrational. As a signatory the *UNESCO Coalition of Cities against Discrimination in Asia and the Pacific;* the *Say No to Racism* campaign and the responsibilities inherent to Australia's role as a signatory to the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, it is vital that Council acts to stamp out racism and its well-known impacts on communities and their wellbeing.

In places where there is racism and hatred we must advocate for understanding, compassion and connectedness. We can especially do this through our positive promotion of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, histories and experiences in our day-to-day communications and on social media. Also by making information available to Yarra's CALD communities and through other recommendations adopted as part of Council's 'January 26 decision'.

Participants in the consultation for this Plan were extremely happy with Council's 'January 26 decision' and were keen to see more leadership in this space.

> Cancelling Invasion Day was a good idea.
>
> Bringing in other councils (on January 26) is where I'd like Yarra to go—advocate for a minimum of flags at half-mast. Put steps to do this in the Plan. Let's bring it on!
>
> I'd like Council to bring in an action to spread through the metropolitan area—and eventually the country.

Council will continue its commitments to January 26 in line with the Council resolution of 15 August 2017.

Council will also continue to engage and support vulnerable people. Council currently has a number of successful ongoing models for this. Billabong BBQ provides a weekly support mechanism for the Parkies and other vulnerable community members. Council also provides funding for an outreach officer, who engages community members on a number of cultural and well-being focused activities. We will continue to convene the Yarra Aboriginal Support Network (YASN)—a monthly meeting of service providers, agency representatives and community members, held to co-ordinate services to the Parkies and respond to emerging issues. And council continues to support Melbourne Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Sport and Recreation (MAYSAR) as a community-controlled space that supports both vulnerable and broader community members.

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Priority 4. Organisational Development—Increasing Council's capacity, confidence and connection through improved Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways, cultural awareness and internal coordination.

Commitments

Council will:

4.1 Improve employment opportunities for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at Council and in the broader community.
4.2 Build organisational capacity, confidence and cultural awareness to better serve the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
4.3 Maintain clear, transparent and accountable processes in implementing and tracking commitments detailed in this Plan and annual action plans.

Actions

Detailed actions for each of the above commitments can be viewed in annually produced action plans. An updated action plan will be produced for each calendar year of the Plan's four year lifespan (2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023). Action plans will be available on Council's website and in printed hardcopies by request via the Aboriginal Partnerships Officer at the beginning of each year until the end of 2023. Email: info@yarracity.vic.gov.au, Phone: (03) 9205 5555.

Context

Council first recognised the need to develop its internal capacity for working with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in 2010. Until that point, we had relied almost exclusively on the Aboriginal Partnerships Officer, to facilitate all engagement with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community—a big job!

In 2011, Council formed its first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) working group—a dedicated group of staff members who would meet monthly to identify needs and opportunities, to collaborate and co-ordinate, and to think about how we can improve the ways in which we work with the community. Slowly but surely, this group has helped to develop the organisation's capacity, leading to improved relationships between the community and many parts of Council.

> You're not just talking reconciliation. You're doing it. You turned it from a noun to a verb.

One ongoing issue for improvement, however, which was repeatedly mentioned in the community consultation, was the need for more Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities at Council and in the broader community.

> Problems with Aboriginal employment, not enough Aboriginal people employed at Council. The work

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> place needs to be an Aboriginal friendly environment. Don't wait until Aboriginal people are job ready, get them job ready while doing a work placement.

As part of implementation of our Aboriginal Partnerships Plan 2015–2018, Council made efforts to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment but the model proved ineffective and yielded limited results. What we must now do is learn from the past and try some new approaches.

We will continue to employ an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Officer and continue to seek guidance on our processes.

We will also:

- Apply internally for funding for two new dedicated part time positions for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Apply for funding for a dedicated position for the Heritage Team.
- Review Council's employment diversity policy.
- Continue to develop culturally appropriate and flexible recruitment and selection processes.
- Continue to work towards flexible working arrangements (in line with the EBA).
- Promote and seek opportunities to broker Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities in the broader community.

At the commencement of this Plan, Council's RAP group is stronger than ever, counting 20 staff members from across Council in its membership, including an Executive Sponsor and representation from all five Council divisions. The *Yana Ngargna* Working Group allows staff to network, support each other, learn, collaborate, build confidence and identify issues.

> Ensure all employees across the Shire were continually educated, audited, accredited in cultural safety; capacity building particularly around employment where every non-Aboriginal employee worked in a co-mentor partnership with Aboriginal people; address the structural arrangements that privilege whiteness to reflect cultural sovereignty.

Council acknowledges that up to a third of the work undertaken with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is responsive in nature. It is a vital part of our work with a dynamic community. Having the *Yana Ngargna* Working Group group allows Council to be more agile and responsive to emerging issues.

Another mechanism that ensures agility and responsiveness is the creation of annual action plans for each year of the four year *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020–2023. This is underpinned by ongoing consultation (formal and informal), progress reporting and constant evaluation.

> I like that there is much more visibility of community and programs or initiatives in such a progressive electorate than others.

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Provides opportunities for community to participate in decision making processes. Transparent processes/consultations.

Writing annual action plans ensures that Council projects remain aligned with emerging community issues. Actions for each year will be drawn from Council's ongoing relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, direct suggestions from community members and Council officer knowledge of local, state and federal level issues. Each action plan will be developed and implemented in consultation with the *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group (YNAG). The Aboriginal Partnerships Officer is responsible for annual progress reporting to Council on the implementation of each action plan.

I have only just returned to live back in Melbourne however I have attended the Stolen Gen's marker launch this year and attended yesterday's community engagement forum. What is noticeable is Yarra's transparency and open willingness to do well in this space and to be supported by council. The forum also included many Aboriginal people with a good mix of council staff. It also seems as though Yarra have ensured there are Aboriginal voices at the decision making table.

Thanks

We thank everyone who helped to shape this Plan by sharing their thoughts, ideas, knowledge and feedback; it is sincerely appreciated. We hope that the Plan will generate great benefits for the community in the years to come!

Appendices

Census Information: The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander[4] population in Yarra

IMPORTANT NOTE ON THE FOLLOWING CENSUS DATA: Because of the small number of people in Yarra who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the Census, findings need to be interpreted with caution, particularly when broken down further.

This increase does not necessarily represent an actual increase in numbers but potentially more people choosing to identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the Census, or perhaps more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people completing the Census in 2016 than previous years. At a national level, a significant increase in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population was seen between the 2011 and 2016 Censuses and which is explored here in a publication by the ABS.

It is worth noting too that the quantitative data regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Yarra is somewhat at odds with the qualitative data conveyed to us by those who participated in the community consultation.

Key facts

- 386 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Yarra (as per 2016 Census)
- Highest number recorded in 20 years
- 1 in 4 live in social housing
- Lower labour force participation rate than general population
- 36% earn less than $500 per week

Census results

In the 2016 ABS Census 386 people in Yarra identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander[5]. This is the highest number recorded over a 20 year period[6].

[4] Note that we have reverted to using the term Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander here to be consistent with terminology used in the Census.

[5] Because of the small number of people in Yarra who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the Census, findings need to be interpreted with caution, particularly when broken down further.

[6] This increase does not necessarily represent an actual increase in numbers but potentially more people choosing to identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the Census, or perhaps more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Torres Strait Islander people completing the Census in 2016 than previous years. At a national level a significant increase in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population was seen between the 2011 and 2016 Censuses.

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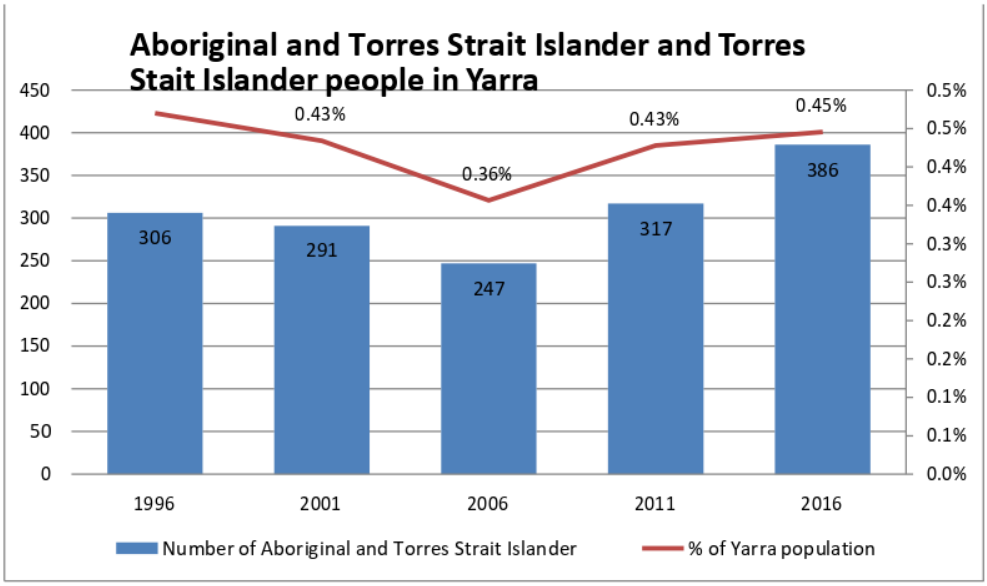


There were slightly more males than females (52% to 48% respectively) in 2016. The majority of those who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander were Aboriginal (356), with far smaller numbers identifying as either Torres Strait Islander (20) or both (10).

Based on the 2016 Census results, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander were twice as likely to have a disability as the Yarra population as a whole (7% as compared to 3.5%).

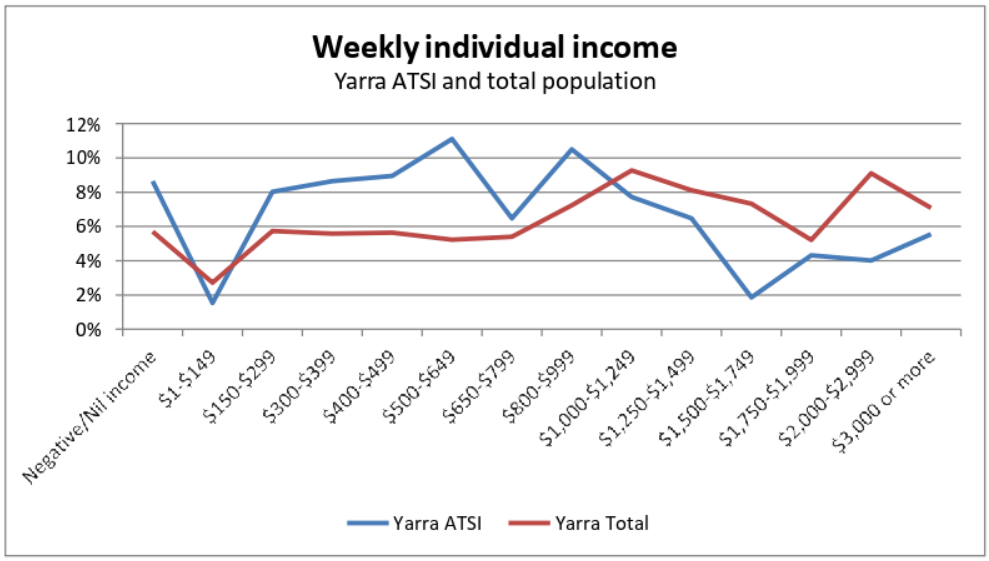
The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of Yarra had a labour force participation rate of 64% (as compared to 70% for Yarra on average).

	ATSI population		Yarra Total
	n	%	%
Employed	196	94.2%	94.7%
Unemployed	12	5.8%	5.3%
Total labour force	208	100%	100%
Total labour force	208	64%	70%
Not in the labour force	105	32%	21.1%
Not stated	9	3%	9.2%
TOTAL PERSONS AGED 15+ YEARS	**324**	**100%**	**100%**

36% of those living in Yarra who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander in the latest Census earned less than $500 dollars per week (total personal income). The comparison for Yarra broadly is 25%. The graph below shows the income bracket distribution for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Yarra as compared to the whole

Attachment 1 - Yana Ngargna Plan 2020-2023

Yarra population.



According to the latest Census, more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders live in social housing (24%) than own their home (23%). By contrast, across Yarra four times as many own a home (39%) as compared to living in social housing (9%).

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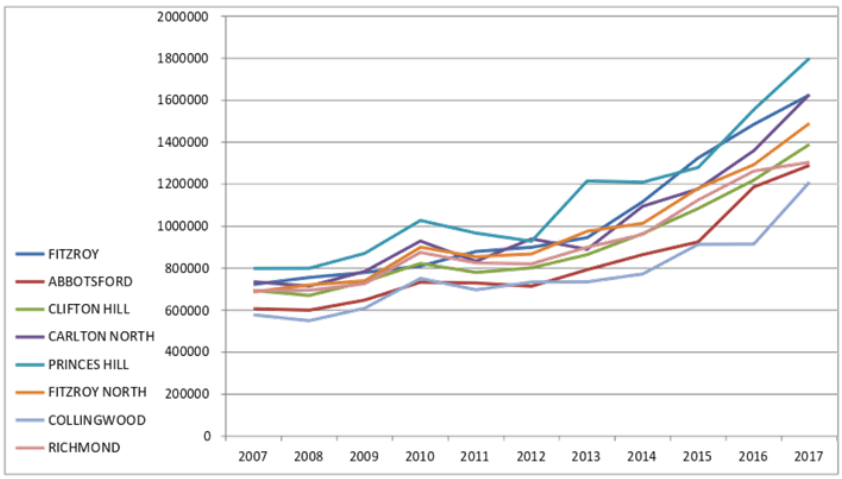
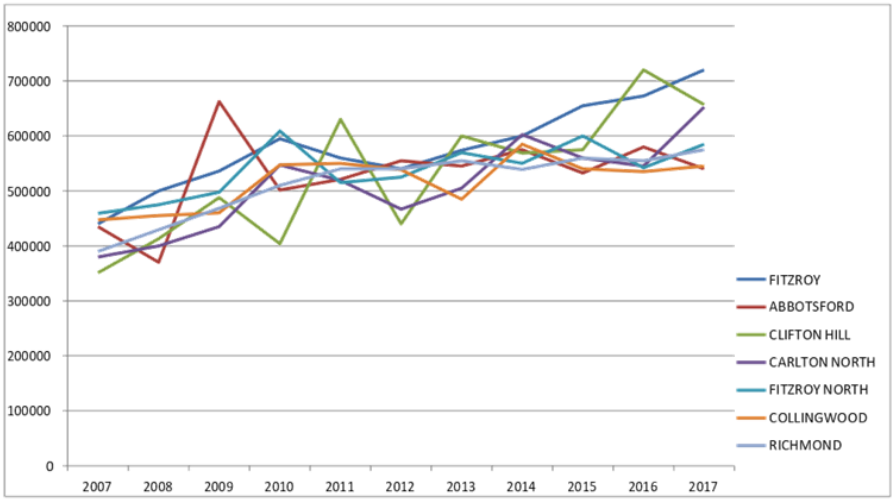
Median House Prices in Yarra (2017)



Median Unit Prices in Yarra (2017)



Attachment 1 - Yana Ngargna Plan 2020-2023

Yarra Population and Household Forecasts

New population and household forecasts have been prepared for the City of Yarra, showing significant population growth for the municipality in the next 20+ years.

In Yarra, new dwellings are the major driver of population growth and overseas migration is one of the most important contributors of population change. Between 2018 and 2041, Yarra is expected to grow by over 60,500 people to a population of 157,600. The number of dwellings is forecast to increase from 46,213 in 2018 to 78,327 in 2041 (an increase of more than 32,000 dwellings).

Population growth will be largely driven by inflows of younger persons attracted to higher density housing, cultural amenities and employment. This means that the current age structure of Yarra is expected to remain, with continued high proportions of lone persons and couples without children in the 20–39 age range. It is important to note that significant numbers of children and older persons are also forecast, with greater implications for service demand and delivery in the area.

Attachment 2 - Yana Ngargna Plan 2020 Year 1 Action Plan

1. RELATIONSHIPS – *Supporting connections, promoting culture and protecting important places.*

Commitments

Council will:

1.1 Consult the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people on all decisions affecting the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, and consult the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on all issues affecting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

1.2 Promote broader understandings of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, history, achievements and challenges in the broader community, so that more people, services and organisations (as well as landlords and employers) are able to understand and support Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community connection to Yarra.

1.3 Continue to advocate for the ongoing protection and vitality of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and services in Yarra, as well as important urban meeting places and sites.

1.4 Continue to develop a range of positive relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and support organisations that are also building positive relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

1.1 Council will consult the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people on all decisions affecting the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, and consult the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on all issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Activities	Progress
1.1.1	Convene Council's *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group (YNAG) as the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's official voice to Council and the reference group for ongoing implementation of the Plan. *For many years after settlement, many Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait*	Aboriginal Partnerships Officer Special Projects Officer	February, April, June, August, October 2020	• Ensure a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elder co-chairs all meetings. • Have at least 1 Councillor regularly attend and co-chair meetings. • Have one Council officer dedicated to organising the group (minutes, agendas, catering, room bookings etc) • Continue to build and maintain membership and contacts list. • Hold at least 5 meetings per year.	

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	Islander leaders fought hard to have a voice in government policy and decision making processes. The Yana Ngargna Advisory Group, which includes an elected Councillor as Co-chair, is a hard-won opportunity for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to directly influence local government policy and decision making.			• Have at least 2 Council officers regularly attend the meetings – a contribution of at least 30 officer hours per year. • Respond to emerging issues in the community.	
1.1.2	Consult and gather comprehensive information about the Consumption of Liquor in Public Places Local Law 2019 and report back to Council.	Special Projects Officer Aboriginal Partnerships Officer Social Policy Local Laws	Ongoing	• Gather comprehensive information on the Consumption of Liquor in Public Places Local Law 2019 and report back to council covering the following: • what the Local Law aims to achieve; • information on how the Local Law sits amongst other related laws, including the Crime's Act 1958 (Vic), the Summary Offences Act 1966 and other related laws; • how the Local Law could be replaced with a public health-based response with consideration to: • any report of the State Government's Expert Reference Group on the decriminalisation of public drunkenness; • Coroner English's findings in relation to the inquiry into the death of Ms Tanya Day; • any other available data on the implementation of similar local laws in similar municipalities; • possible alternatives to such a Local Law, to manage occasions such as Football Grand Finals, New Year's Eve Celebrations or similar events, anti-social and/or aggressive behaviours;	

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			• the formulation of a Memorandum of Understanding between Victoria Police and Yarra City Council that: • entails ongoing consultation regarding the Protocol with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and other relevant community service stakeholders; • includes culturally sensitive practice and cultural awareness training; • includes data keeping regarding interactions with the community over the Local Law; and • a detailed outline of the consultation process.	
1.1.3 Continue to show a strong commitment to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by holding key events celebrating these communities. *To acknowledge and pay respect to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, history and culture.*	Community Programs and Outreach Team Community Learning and Partnership Team All Branch leaders	Ongoing	• Consult the Aboriginal Partnerships Officer on programming opportunities. • Consult the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation to assess opportunities and associated costs. • Celebrate National Reconciliation Week with an event for community and staff. • Maintain membership of the *Yana Ngargna* (formerly RAP) Working Group to link in with allied Council community projects, actions, issues and opportunities. • Seek opportunities to build connections with the local Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.	
1.2 Council will promote broader understandings of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, history, achievements and challenges in the broader community, so that more people, services and organisations (as well as landlords and employers) are able to understand and support Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community connection to Yarra.				

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Yana Ngargna 2020 Year 1 Action Plan

	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Activities	Progress
1.2.1	Promote and follow protocols for working with the local Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community (the Wurundjeri Protocol), booking Welcome to Country ceremonies and pronouncing Council's Acknowledgment of Country statements. *Colonisation impacted heavily on the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung causing loss of life, loss of culture and disconnection from country. Until the Mabo decision in 1992, Australia was legally regarded as Terra Nullius (land belonging to no one). Acknowledgment of Country is a small but important statement that reminds the wider community of a fact that was denied for many years.*	Community Partnerships team Communications and Engagement team	December 2020	• Promote Council's publication: 'The Wurundjeri Protocol: a guide to working with your local Wurundjeri community' to give Council staff and community members contextual and practical information for engaging Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders to perform Welcome to Country ceremonies. • Arrange Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders to give a Welcome to Country address at significant community events. • Pay respect to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community by reading Council's Acknowledgment of Country statements in line with the protocol outlined in *Yana Ngargna* Partnerships Plan 2020–2023. To summarise the protocol: • Council's official Acknowledgment of Country #1 statement should be read at the commencement all Mayoral and civic receptions, openings of major events, official openings of Council buildings and official events where the Mayor is present, as well as CEO briefings, significant internal events, Executive, Senior Management Team, Senior Management Team Plus and Branch meetings. • Council's official Acknowledgment of Country #2 statement should be read at the commencement of all Council meetings and all Wurundjeri	

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				Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community events. • Council's official Acknowledgment of Country #3 statement should be read at the commencement of Yarra's January 26 event, Yarra's National Sorry Day event, Yarra's anniversary of the Apology event and Yarra's citizenship ceremonies (if applicable).	
1.2.2	Give talks, walking tours and advice to the organisation and the broader municipality. *It is important to promote and educate people on the rich Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture within Yarra and beyond. It will help people to better understand Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and the generational effects caused by the colonisation of Melbourne.*	Aboriginal Partnerships Officer	December 2020	• Deliver at least 2 sessions to local schools or pre-schools in Yarra. • Deliver at least 2 tours of the Fitzroy history walk to groups from Yarra. • Deliver at least 1 community group talk within Yarra. • Contribute to the development of at least 1 community group RAP in Yarra, if required. • Give at least 1 talk on the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history of Yarra to staff at Council depot Toolbox meetings. • Provide strategic advice towards the development of at least 4 Council projects with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content or concerns.	
1.2.3	Continue to promote Yarra's existing history resources within the organisation and to the broader community, tourists, schools, the service sector and other interested groups. *Promoting Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and*	Communications and Engagement team Special Projects Officer Aboriginal Partnerships Officer	December 2020	The Communications and Engagement and Community Partnerships teams to promote and distribute the following materials through Yarra's public website, social media channels, special events and Council's internal communications: • Fitzroy Aboriginal Heritage Walking Trail Map (2009) distributed.	

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	cultures to the broader community is vital in creating a more supportive, understanding and empowered community. It helps to fight racism and, from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's point of view, strengthens pride, identity and connectedness.			• The Wurundjeri History of Yarra print publication and website (2013). • Celebrating Aboriginal Culture in Gertrude Street Facebook page (2012–ongoing) • Change the Date Yarra Facebook Page • The Wurundjeri Protocols (2011) • Snapshots of Aboriginal Fitzroy print and online (2002) • Connecting with the Aboriginal History of Yarra Teachers' Resource	
1.2.4	Seek opportunities to run Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history walking tours of Gertrude Street and surrounds. *A business or social enterprise running regular walking tours will provide culturally appropriate employment for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander storytellers with a familial connection to Fitzroy or a passion for local history. Council's consultative work has repeatedly told us that there is real community interest and demand for cultural experiences of this kind.*	Aboriginal Partnerships Officer Special Projects Officer Arts and Cultural Development Officer	December 2020	• Support Aboriginal organisations establishing walking tours in Gertrude Street and surrounds. • Council to provide promotion through existing channels and support materials in kind, e.g. Wurundjeri History of Yarra publications, Aboriginal History of Yarra Walking maps.	
1.2.5	Provide opportunities for Arts and Culture grant recipients to extend knowledge of Aboriginal history in Yarra.	Arts and Culture Community Arts Officer	2020	• Promote Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture in Yarra, by providing opportunities for creators	

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Yarra has a long history of Aboriginal community controlled organisations. It is important that the wider Yarra community learn and understand this history.			of arts and culture to attend historical walking tours of Fitzroy.	
1.3 Council will continue to advocate for the ongoing protection and vitality of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and services in Yarra, as well as important urban meeting places and sites.				
Action	**Responsibility**	**Timeline**	**Activities**	**Progress**
1.3.1 To work towards the protection, enhancement and appreciation of Yarra's natural environment. *The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People have managed and sustained their traditional lands for 60,000 years.*	City Works Community Partnerships	December 2020	• Continue to build the existing relationship with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation's Narrap team. • Work towards positive outcomes as identified in Yarra's draft Nature Strategy 2019-2023.	
1.3.2 Provide officer support to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community programs funded through Council's Community Partnerships Grant Program.	Community Partnerships Unit Manager Aboriginal Partnerships Officer Special Projects Officer	December 2020	• Support of at least 150 officer hours/year to the following 4 programs currently funded through Council's Community Partnerships Grant Program. This support may include general assistance, promoting, linking-in, brokering relationships, advocating for, and	

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This will provide assistance and support to a number of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs, funded through Councils community grant process.			helping to navigate Council systems and processes. **1. Melbourne Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Incorporated (MAYSAR)** MAYSAR was initially established in the late 1970s as a positive space to combat rising drug and alcohol problems in Fitzroy. It is the last remaining community controlled organisation in historically significant Gertrude Street. **2. Indigenous Recreation Program** The Recreation Program helps the Parkies community stay healthy, active and positive. **3. Billabong BBQ and Foodshare** Established in 1999, Billabong BBQ provides a vital and culturally appropriate space for Parkies to have a nutritious meal and link in with services. **4. Aboriginal Access and Engagement** This program was established to work towards improving the participation, health and wellbeing of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra.	

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1.3.3 Ensure Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks and meeting places are free from graffiti. *This ensures respect and acknowledgment of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and meeting places*	Coordinator Services Contracts Waste Management and Cleansing Public Arts Officer	Ongoing	• Ensure timely removal of any graffiti from important Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks and sites in Yarra.	
1.4 Council will continue to develop a range of positive relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and will support organisations that are also building positive relationships with these communities.				
Action	**Responsibility**	**Timeline**	**Activities**	Progress
1.4.1 Continue to ensure that Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and families have access to culturally appropriate and safe services and programs that acknowledge and meet their health, education and wellbeing needs, challenges and aspirations. *The values of this action are integral to other Council policies including the future Zero to 25 Plan* 2018–2022.	Family, Youth and Child's Services Leadership Team	December 2020	• Improve services and suitability of access for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. • Provide culturally appropriate and sensitive practices and programs for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. • Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in centres and on signs. • Develop partnerships with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services to understand and support the health, education and wellbeing needs of Wurundjeri Woi	

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			Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. • Enrol Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children into education and care programs.	
1.4.2	Provide Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the children's education, care programs and curriculums. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history has been the missing link in the Australian education system. The early education of our children will help provide the platform for Reconciliation.*	Children's Services Leadership team Aboriginal Partnerships Officer	December 2020	• Partner with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation to write education programs. • Provide opportunities for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to facilitate children's learning programs. • Work with the Aboriginal Partnerships Officer to personalise age appropriate Acknowledgement of Country statements at centres. • Engage in the Acknowledgement of Country with children in programs. • Develop a teaching resource targeted for educators and teachers working with children in the early years (0–8 years). • Recognise days of significance for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including Wurundjeri Week, NAIDOC week, Reconciliation Week, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day etc.	
1.4.3	Provide officer support to organisations and services that support the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. *To ensure organisations and services are supported and have*	Community Partnerships	Ongoing	• Provide officer support to Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in Yarra. • Provide officer support to Charcoal Lane. • Provide officer support to organisations and services that support the Wurundjeri Woi,	

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Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander input into service delivery.			Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.	

2. VISIBLE CULTURE—*Increasing the visibility of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culture, issues and achievements in Yarra.*

Commitments

Council will:

2.1 Strive to increase the visibility of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, arts, events, significant calendar days, culture, languages, achievements, issues and history in Yarra, and provide opportunities for the broader community to engage and learn.

2.2 Continue working towards a celebration of national identity that is more inclusive of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as outlined in Council's 'January 26 decision' of 15 August 2017.

2.1 Council will increase the visibility of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, arts, events, significant calendar days, culture, languages, achievements, issues and history in Yarra, and provide opportunities for the broader community to engage and learn.

	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Activities	Progress
2.1.1	Increase awareness of important Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community matters by promoting significant community dates and events. *To raise awareness and the profile of the many significant*	Communications and Engagement Team Special Projects Officer	Ongoing for events throughout 2020, especially mid-year, when Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week take place.	• Create an Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Events Calendar for 2020, including dates/events of significance to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, to assist officers to plan, support and promote these events (for internal use only).	

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	dates and events on the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar.			• Promote at least 10 important Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community calendar dates and local community events through Council's website, social media channels and publications. • Review and update the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community section of Council's website to ensure information is current, available and easy to navigate to.	
2.1.2	Continue to fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags. *As a mark of respect and acknowledgment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.*	Venue and Events	Ongoing	• Fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on all town halls.	
2.1.3	Develop educational materials to enhance community understanding of traditional foods and agricultural practices.	Urban Agriculture Facilitator Streetscapes and Natural Values Team Community Partnerships	Dec 2020	• Ensure integration of educational materials about traditional foods and agricultural practices into workshops, website and council projects.	
2.1.4	Work towards consistent use of terminology throughout the organisation.	Special Projects Officer Communications and Engagement Team	January 2020–ongoing	• Promote the *Yana Ngargna* Plan 2020-2023 to staff along with an explanation of name and terminology changes. • Work in partnership with Communications and Engagement to ensure consistent usage. • Support other branches and staff in adjusting to new practices.	
2.1.5	Build partnerships with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Torres Strait Islander community. *It's important that acknowledgment, respect, and the*	Community Partnerships	January 2020–ongoing	• Seek partnerships with Torres Strait Islander community representatives to see how we can improve how we work with and engage the Torres Strait Islander community.	

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	history of the Torres Strait Islander community is promoted to the wider community.				
2.1.6	Deliver Smith Street Dreaming Festival, noting that resources are limited. *Expectations that this event happens are huge within the community, and it provides an opportunity to showcase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.*	Arts and Culture Community Partnership Smith Street Working Group	July 2020	• Engage the Council's *Yana Ngargna* Working Group members in organising and running the Smith Street Dreaming event. • Search for other funding opportunities for the event. • Resource the Smith Dreaming Festival with cash and in-kind support to realise the event.	
2.1.7	Hold an event in National Reconciliation Week to increase knowledge of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. *It is important that the wider Yarra community have an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture. Blakwiz is a great way of facilitating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness.*	Arts and Culture Community Arts Officer Aboriginal Partnerships Officer Communications and Engagement Team Ewing Trust Officer, Yarra Libraries	Event planning and promotion ready by April 2020	• Blakwiz event held during National Reconciliation Week at Fitzroy Town Hall. • Blakwiz is a fun way to provide real information about Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, arts and communities. • Feature and promote Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers. • Promotion of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collection and further learning sources from Yarra Libraries.	
2.1.8	Hold an event to mark National Sorry Day on 26 May 2020. *As a way of showing respect and acknowledgment to members and their families who were*	Community Partnerships	26 May 2020	• Hold a culturally respectful event at the Stolen Generations Marker in Fitzroy on National Sorry Day 2020 • Seek partnership with allied organisations or groups.	

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	affected by past racist government policies				
2.1.9	Celebrate NAIDOC week. *NAIDOC week is a time to celebrate Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and achievements and is an opportunity to recognise the contributions that members of these communities make to our country and our society.*	Aboriginal Partnerships Officer Special Projects Officer	July 2020	• Support Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to engage with their culture and community through NAIDOC Week events. • Support all staff to participate in events in the local community. • Promote Council affiliated NAIDOC week events (and other events happening in the local area) to the broader community. • Contact the Victorian NAIDOC Week Committee to discuss mutually-beneficial opportunities.	
2.1.10	Produce, manage, deliver and promote exhibitions by Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists at Council venues. *Promoting and showcasing Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and their artworks to the wider Yarra community is an important way to promote local work and culture.*	Public Arts Officer	December 2019—February 2020; May—July 2020	• Create an opportunity for a Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Artist to exhibit at *Bargoonga Nganjin* as part of Arts and Culture's Annual Exhibition Program. • Create an opportunity for a Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artist to exhibit at Richmond Town Hall as part of Arts and Culture's Annual Exhibition Program. • Promote the work of Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists. • Promote Victorian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.	

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2.1.11	Council will seek opportunities to name places in Yarra using Woi Wurrung language in line with Yarra's Naming of Roads Features and Places Policy. *In the past this land and places on Country were referred to in Woi Wurrung language. Naming places this way helps to keep Woi Wurrung language alive.*	Aboriginal Partnerships Officer	December 2020	• Ensure that relevant Yarra staff are aware of Council's Naming Roads, Features, and Places policy. • Assist Yarra staff in contacting the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation when naming opportunities arise.	
2.1.12	Advocate for representation of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concerns in public space projects that interface with important sites. *Advocacy for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representation in public space projects ensures community concerns are heard and considered in projects that interface with important sites.*	Urban Design Community Partnerships	December 2020	• Promote increased dialogue with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Corporation on urban design projects that interface with important sites (e.g. Atherton Gardens Estate, Yarra River corridor). • Advocate for the inclusion of Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and/or promotion of the Fitzroy Aboriginal Heritage Walking Trail as part of route 96, 11 and 86 tram stop upgrades around Gertrude Street (project led by PTV). • Contribute to preparation of the Brunswick Street Streetscape Masterplan which includes streetscape and public realm proposals at the Brunswick Street/Gertrude Street intersection, near the proposed Stolen Generations Marker in Atherton Gardens.	
2.2	**Council will continue working towards a celebration of national identity that is more inclusive of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as outlined in Council's 'January 26 decision' of 15 August 2017.**				

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2.2.1	Promote and hold a small-scale, culturally-sensitive event featuring a Smoking Ceremony on January 26 that acknowledges the loss of culture, language and identity felt by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on January 26. *January 26 marks the beginning of the loss of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, life and language and is therefore not an appropriate day for a celebration of our national identity.*	Community Partnerships Wurundjeri Council Yarra Libraries Arts, Culture and Venues	26 January 2020	• Council to host a small-scale, culturally appropriate event at Bargoonga Nganjin featuring a Smoking Ceremony, music and historical storytelling.	
2.2.2	Promote respectful Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events held on January 26 in 2020. *It's important to promote and support Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events to the wider community, as it is an opportunity for education.*	Community Partnerships (Lead) Communications and Engagement Team	January 2020	• Seek opportunities to promote respectful Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events held on January 26. • Contact the City of Melbourne to see how Yarra can support and promote the *Balit Narrun* Share the Spirit Festival 2020. • Contact Songlines to see how Yarra can support and promote the *Balit Narrun* Share the Spirit Festival 2020. •	

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3 COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING—*Working towards improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra.*

Commitments

Council will:

3.1 Support vulnerable Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.
3.2 Advocate for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on issues in which they are experiencing poor outcomes.
3.3 Fight racism and advocate for broader understandings of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community experiences, issues and stories in line with Council's 'January 26 decision' 15 August 2017.

3.1 Council will support vulnerable Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Activities	Progress
3.1.1	Explore ways to support vulnerable Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in and around Victoria Street and Lennox Street in Richmond (including people who use or inject drugs).	Economic Development Community Partnerships	February March April May	• See partnership with local health organisation to run a series of monthly BBQs to support vulnerable people in the Victoria and Lennox Street precincts. • Seek partnerships with allied health organisations to attend the BBQs, establish relationships and provide links into relevant support services. • Seek opportunities to build relationships with traders and residents in the local area.	
3.1.2	Explore opportunities to establish a community arts and crafts workshop for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra.	Community Partnerships	December	• Scope community needs and strengths. • Scope potential partnerships (internal and external) to make this happen. • Explore feasibility.	

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3.1.3	Continue to facilitate the ongoing meetings of Yarra Aboriginal Support Network (YASN) to support services, agencies and organisations working with the Parkies and vulnerable Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members in Yarra. *Established in 2004, YASN serves an invaluable role as an information-sharing and service co-ordination network that supports the wellbeing of Parkies and other vulnerable Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra.*	Aboriginal Partnerships Officer Special Projects Officer	December 2020	• Have one officer responsible for organising group meetings (minutes, agendas, catering, room bookings etc.) • Hold at least 10 meetings per year. • Have at least 2 Council officers regularly attend the meetings – a contribution of at least 72 officer hours per year. • Ensure at least eight different services, agencies and/or organisations to regularly the meetings. • Advocate to various tiers of government on behalf of disadvantaged/vulnerable Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but only when there is consent to do so from this community.	
3.1.4	Provide support and funding to enable the Smith Street Working Group to function and deliver the Smith Street Dreaming Festival. *Expectations that this event happens are huge within the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, and it provides an opportunity to showcase Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.*	Arts and Culture Community Partnerships Smith Street Working Group	July 2020	• In partnership with the chair, lobby and bring together the relevant stakeholders of the Smith Street working group. • Participate in the Smith Street Working Group meetings.	
3.1.5	Provide officer support to local grass roots groups, programs and events.	Aboriginal Partnerships Officer Arts and Cultural Development Officer	December 2020	• Support the following three local grass roots groups, programs and events in 2020: • Smith Street Working group	

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	Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community grass roots programs, groups and events offer unparalleled support for vulnerable groups in Yarra, often running on shoestring budgets. Officer support can broker introductions, partnerships and financial support opportunities.	Special Projects Officer		• The Launch women's group • Billabong BBQ special events such as the Billabong Cup, NAIDOC in the Park, Christmas in the Park and the Parkies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Memorial Day.	
3.1.6	Partner with Melbourne Aboriginal Youth, Sport and Recreation Incorporated (MAYSAR) to run a forum for young Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, on the local history and achievements of Elders in the area. *In the consultation leading up to Yarra's January 26 decision, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members said they would like younger members to have the opportunity to link in with and learn from Elders about the history of Fitzroy and its significance.*	Community Partnerships (Co-lead) MAYSAR (Co-lead) Charcoal Lane Youth Services	2020	• Connect MAYSAR, Yarra Youth Services, and Charcoal Lane. • Book MAYSAR for this event. • Identify appropriate Elders from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.	
3.1.7	Take the library to hard to reach groups, including those who are culturally, linguistically and/or socially isolated.	Libraries Community Programs and Outreach Team Libraries Digital and Community learning Team	Ongoing	• Work with internal and external partners to identify outreach opportunities, including for CALD and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and for people with disability.	

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	Vulnerable members of Yarra's local Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have limited access to libraries and such an action will provide these community members with a better understanding of the service libraries supply to the community.	Libraries Child and Youth Services Team Libraries Community Learning and Partnerships Team		• Explore ways to connect Home Library Service users with library community activities.	
3.1.8	Continue to offer Yarra Leisure community memberships to members of the Parkies community and other disadvantaged members of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. *By offering Yarra Leisure community memberships to disadvantaged Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, Yarra hopes to reduce some of the barriers to greater participation and health within this community.*	Yarra Leisure Community Development Officer	December 2020	• Offer at least 25 Yarra Leisure community memberships continue to disadvantaged/vulnerable members of the local Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.	
3.2 **Council will advocate for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on issues in which Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are experiencing poor outcomes.**					

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	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Activities	Progress
3.2.1	Strengthen Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability support networks through *Balit Narrum* membership. *The incidence of disability is more than twice that of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culturally responsive measures are needed within the roll-out of the NDIS in the North East Metropolitan Area (NEMA) to ensure that adequate resources are available to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.* With the roll out of the NDIS, five Councils, including Yarra, are categorised as NEMA.	Aged and Disability Services Officers	December 2020	• Attend *Balit Narrum* meetings. • Actively support initiatives where appropriately developed as a result of the *Balit Narrum* meetings. • Work in partnership with the Brotherhood of St Laurence, to actively support initiatives where appropriate as a result of the *Balit Narrum* meetings.	
3.2.2	Organise an evening discussion about Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experiences of homelessness in partnership with Yarra Libraries. This event will include a presentation by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person with lived experience. This action is pending on the	Policy Advisor Housing and Homelessness	December 2020	• Target event to local residents and other interested people. • Educate the community and raise awareness on Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander homelessness and the specific challenges for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations addressing homelessness.	

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replacement of the Council's Policy Advisor Housing and Homelessness. *In Victoria, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up 4% of the people experiencing homelessness, despite making up less than 1% of the population. In Yarra's recent street count, nearly 4 % of those sleeping rough on the night identified as Wurundjeri, Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.*				
3.3 **Council will fight racism and advocate for broader understandings of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community experiences, issues and stories in line with Council's 'January 26 decision' 15 August 2017.**				
	Action	**Responsibility**	**Timeline**	**Activities**	**Progress**
3.3.1	Develop a communications plan that focuses on broader community education to help people better understand the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community experiences of January 26 and to explain Council's position on January 26. *It is important to educate the wider community on how the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community feel about January 26 and to help the broader community understand Council's position.*	Communications and Engagement Team (Lead) Community Partnerships (Providing content)	Ongoing during 2020	• Develop a communications plan that will help to educate the wider community on why Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel the way they do about January 26.	

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3.3.2	Promote the January 26 information sheet that was translated into the six most spoken languages in Yarra, and partner with the Yarra Settlement Forum and the Yarra Multicultural Advisory Group to distribute and promote. *It's important that all sections of the Yarra community are given the correct information to be able to make an informed decision on January 26.*	Community Partnerships YMAG YSF Yarra's Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres Communications and Engagement	January 2020	• Partner with Yarra's settlement Forum and Yarra's Multicultural Advisory group to promote and distribute the information sheets. • Partner and work with DHHS housing mangers to promote and distribute January 26 information sheets. • Partner and work with Yarra Libraries to promote and distribute January 26 information sheets.	
3.3.3	Continue to support the #changethedate campaign (as long as it remains in tune with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community sentiment) in Council publications and social media in the lead up to January 26.	Community Partnerships	Ongoing	• Promote historically informed news, information, commentary and events on Change the Date Yarra Facebook Page and other Council social media pages if relevant.	
3.3.4	Support the development and vitality of the 'January 26 network' multi-Council and community info sharing group.	Special Projects Officer	ongoing	• Continue to help co-ordinate and provide administrative support to the January 26 multi-council network. • Aim for 6 meetings per year hosted on rotation by various councils in the network.	

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4 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT—*Increasing Council's confidence and capacity through improved Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways, cultural awareness and internal coordination.*

Commitments

Council will:

4.1 Improve employment opportunities for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at Council and in the broader community.
4.2 Build organisational capacity, confidence and cultural awareness to better serve the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
4.3 Maintain clear, transparent and accountable processes in implementing and tracking commitments detailed in this plan and annual action plans.

4.1 Council will improve employment opportunities for Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at Council and in the broader community.

	Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Activities	Progress
4.1.1	Continue to employ a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Person who can demonstrate capacity as the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan officer. *The right to self-determination is a founding principal for Council's work in this area.*	Community Partnerships	Ongoing	• Ongoing employment of a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres strait Islander person as the Aboriginal Partnerships Officer, with special consideration given, in the case of a vacancy, to a person who can demonstrate strong community connection. • Ongoing customised support for the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan officer.	
4.1.2	Increase Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities at Yarra City Council.	Community Partnerships Organisational Development	Ongoing	• Employ up to two Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander workers through new	

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Gentrification and rising property prices are pushing the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community further away from Melbourne's inner-city areas. Increasing Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment at Yarra is one way of strengthening Yarra's workforce and ensuring ongoing community connection to Yarra. *"Yarra City Council is an equal opportunity employer. We draw pride and strength from our diversity. We support flexible and accessible working arrangements and we are an inclusive employer."*	Diversity and Inclusion		initiative bid funding secured for the 2019–2020 financial year. • Work with HR coordinator, executive and line managers to identify appropriate roles and develop position descriptions. • Work with a variety of employment agencies to secure suitable candidates. • Ensure culturally appropriate and flexible recruitment and selection processes. • Provide intensive support or mentorship as needed to new employees in this program, if needed. • Encourage Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment in Council depot operations through the Autumn Leaves program (up to 2 Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employed 38 hours/week for 16 weeks in autumn, depending on workers available through partnership with Brotherhood of St Laurence). • Run at least 1 Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness session for depot staff through the 'Tool Box' meetings to support the Autumn Leaves program.	

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4.1.3	Seek funding to employ a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Heritage Officer at Council.	Senior Advisor City Heritage HR Coordinator Community Partnership	2020/20221 budget process	• Submit a new initiative bid to secure funding to employ a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Heritage Officer at Council.	
4.1.4	Promote and seek opportunities to broker Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Torres Strait Islander employment in the broader community.	Community Partnerships (lead) People and Culture Economic Development	Jan 2020 ongoing	• Promote Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities through networks. • Seek opportunities to promote Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Torres Strait Islander employment programs, apprenticeships and traineeships to Yarra businesses.	
4.2 Council will build organisational capacity, confidence and cultural awareness to better serve the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Torres Strait Islander community.					
	Action	**Responsibility**	**Timeline**	**Activities**	**Progress**
4.2.1	Develop organisational confidence, capacity and co-ordination through the internal *Yana Ngargna* Working Group. *To ensure Yarra Council is committed to achieving the aspirations of the local Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Torres Strait Islander community through implementing and tracking the progress of each action in the*	Special Projects Officer	Meetings scheduled monthly from February to December 2020	• Hold a minimum of 10 *Yana Ngargna* Working Group meetings in 2020 to co-ordinate actions, support staff, identify opportunities, develop cultural awareness and track projects. • Maintain broad divisional representation with an aim of representatives from all Council divisions around the table. • If necessary, renew the *Yana Ngargna* Working Group membership and Terms of Reference.	

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	Yana Ngargna Partnerships Plan 2020–2023.				
4.2.2	Hold an internal event to increase cultural awareness amongst staff. *Blakwiz is a fun annual event that entertains and promotes cultural awareness amongst staff. It is also a fun way to provide real information about Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture, art and community.*	Arts and Culture Development Officer Aboriginal and Torres Partnerships Officer Communications and Engagement Team Special Projects Officer Ewing Trust Officer, Yarra Libraries	Event planning and promotion ready by April 2020	• 80–100 staff members participate in Blakwiz event during National Reconciliation Week. • Ask members of the *Yana Ngargna* Working Group to encourage cross-organisational participation.	
4.2.3	Basic cultural awareness training for all new staff, SMT+ and newly elected Councillors.	Organisational Development, Engagement and Inclusion and Community Advocacy	Dec 2020	• Within three months all staff complete both online induction and a face-to-face session which includes Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness focusing on Yarra's history and advice on how to work effectively with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and community. • At least 100 leaders to take part in a one-off Diversity Panel Discussion at 'Senior Management Team +' Meetings.	
4.2.4	Continue to develop Council's agility in responding to emerging needs and opportunities in the community.	Community Partnerships	Ongoing	• Respond in a timely manner to all public correspondence related to the local Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.	

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			• Call meetings when issues or opportunities require an orchestrated approach from Council and or other organisations and agencies. • Maintain an excellent understanding of emerging issues and opportunities through both formal and, importantly, informal networks. • Continue to improve internal communication channels at Council so that emerging issues and opportunities are quickly directed to the officer best able to respond or act.	
4.3 Council will maintain clear, transparent and accountable processes in implementing and tracking commitments detailed in this plan and annual action plans.				
	Action	**Responsibility**	**Timeline**	**Activities**	**Progress**
4.3.1	Report on implementation of action plan (2020) and take feedback from the community at bi-monthly *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group meetings.	Aboriginal Partnerships Officer Special Projects Officer	Bi-monthly	• Present at least five progress reports to the *Yana Ngargna* Advisory Group (YNAG) throughout the calendar year. • Undertake formal and informal consultation with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through YNAG meetings and associated correspondence.	
4.3.2	Report on the action plan (2020) and write the year 2 action plan (2021).	Aboriginal Partnerships Officer Special Projects Officer	February 2020	• Present report to Council on the successes and challenges of the year 1 action plan and present year 2 action plan to Council for endorsement.	

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Yana Ngargna 2020 Year 1 Action Plan

To ensure Council's commitments to the local Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the year one action plan are met, and that the aspirations of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community are meet in the year two action plan.				

CONTACT DETAILS – Aboriginal Partnerships Team (Community Partnerships branch)
Uncle Colin Hunter, Aboriginal Partnerships Plan Officer/Wurundjeri Elder phone 03 9205 5014 colin.hunter@yarracity.vic.gov.au
Daniel Ducrou, Special Projects Officer phone 03 9205 5107 daniel.ducrou@yarracity.vic.gov.au

11.7 Draft Homelessness Strategy 2020-2023

Reference: D19/145377
Authoriser: Group Manager People, Culture and Community

Purpose

1. To seek endorsement for the draft Homelessness Strategy to go out for public exhibition.

Background

2. Rates of homelessness have grown over the last decade nationally and internationally. In the 2016 Census, it was estimated that 116,000 people in Australia were homeless, an increase of 4.6% from 2011.
3. Yarra City Council provides support and resources towards addressing homelessness and rough sleeping in Yarra including (but not limited to) the implementation of our Protocol 'How to Respond to Rough Sleeping and Squatting in Yarra'. This comprises Council's operational response: a contract with Launch Housing to provide assertive outreach to support people sleeping rough in Yarra, and resourcing an online homelessness reporting tool.
4. Council's operational response is often referred to as the "Yarra Model", which is unique and regarded as best practice.
5. The decision to develop a specific Homelessness Strategy (Appendix 1) flows from recognition that over recent years, Council's response to homelessness in the municipality has increased in complexity, capacity and effectiveness. The Strategy will provide a robust and constructive basis for this response.
6. The draft Homelessness Strategy complements the draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy by providing a direct response to people experiencing homelessness whilst realising the need to advocate for more emergency accommodation and transitional housing as part of the housing continuum, iterated in the Draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy.
7. Long term social and affordable accommodation is out of the scope of the Homelessness Strategy, instead being the specific focus of Yarra's Social and Affordable Housing Strategy. These two strategies should be considered together; between them they respond to the full spectrum of homelessness and housing types.
8. The process to develop the Homelessness Strategy 2020-2023 has involved:
   (a) a desktop review into other strategies and policies on addressing homelessness to develop a Background & Discussion Paper (Appendix 2);
   (b) research to identify best practice approaches in Australia in relation to the homelessness sector;
   (c) consultation with key Council staff, Councillors, a broad representation of Yarra agencies in the homelessness sector, and people with lived experience of homelessness to ensure a range of stakeholder views are reflected in the strategy; and
   (d) a review of existing Council plans and protocols.
9. The initial consultation found that there needs to be further clarity around Council's response to homelessness and people sleeping rough. This includes educating stakeholders, and a whole-of-council commitment to the Protocol.
10. Collaboration and authentic partnerships with local agencies were also raised, looking at a holistic and sustainable approach to addressing systematic factors leading to homelessness.
11. Additionally, stakeholders were keen for Council to use its voice to advocate for preventing and addressing homelessness, including advocating for emergency crisis accommodation and social and affordable housing in Yarra as a way to break the cycle of homelessness.

12. These issues have been used to inform the three key priority areas where Council can play a role addressing and responding to issues arising from homelessness (see Appendix 3). The key priority areas are:

    (a) Priority area 1: An Informed Response;

    (b) Priority area 2: Collaboration; and

    (c) Priority area 3: Advocacy.

External Consultation

13. Key external stakeholders were consulted for input towards developing key priority areas and strategic goals.

14. Representation was sought from key agencies including Launch Housing, Victoria Police, Council to Homeless Persons, cohealth, Justice Connect, Port Phillip City Council, Melbourne City Council, the ex-Commissioner for Children and Young People, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Anglicare, St Vincent's Health, Department of Health and Human Services, Yarra Housing and Homelessness Network and people with lived experience through the Homeless Persons Union Victoria.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

15. Staff from across Council have been engaged during drafting of the Strategy. This ensures that it aligns with corporate objectives and priorities, and supports Council's unified and best practice approach in responding to and addressing homelessness in our municipality.

16. Input was provided from internal stakeholders including Social Policy, Economic Development, City Works, Library Services, Family, Youth & Children's Services, Aged & Disability Services, Access Yarra, Venues & Events and Compliance.

17. Key stakeholders, including Councillors, were also invited to give feedback on the broad key priority areas and strategies once they were developed.

18. Community Partnerships and Social Policy have worked closely to ensure alignment between the draft Homelessness Strategy and draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy.

Financial Implications

19. The Homelessness Strategy will be delivered within existing budgets.

Economic Implications

20. There are no economic implications.

Sustainability Implications

21. There are no sustainability implications.

Social Implications

22. Homelessness is a complex social problem with a variety of factors such as lack of affordable housing, poverty, mental health, alcohol and other drug use, and community and family breakdown playing a role.

Human Rights Implications

23. People experiencing homelessness face violations of a wide range of human rights.

24. Access to safe and secure housing is one of the most basic human rights. Additionally, a person who is homeless may face violations of the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to education, the right to liberty and security of the person, the right to privacy, the right to social security, the right to freedom from discrimination, the right to vote, and many more.

25. Additionally, all Victorians have the right to be in public spaces.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

26. Council's Community Partnerships team has been consulted throughout the drafting process.

27. Interpreters will be used as necessary throughout the engagement process, as will the use of translated materials and multicultural media.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

28. The development of a homelessness strategy for the City of Yarra is a key initiative of the Council Plan 2017-2021 that supports the strategic intent of the objective 'Health and Inclusive Yarra'. The objective seeks "To promote an effective and compassionate approach to rough sleeping and advocate for affordable, appropriate housing."

29. At a local level, the Homelessness Strategy aligns with and responds to initiatives and resolutions presented in the Yarra Housing Strategy 2018 and the Yarra Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2019.

Legal Implications

30. There are no legal implications.

Other Issues

31. Homelessness issues, especially people sleeping rough, impact on a range of areas across Council – Compliance, Health Protection, Open Space Management, Advocacy and Engagement, OHS, Libraries, Venue and Events, Waste Management, Yarra Leisure, Access Yarra and Community Partnerships. Providing an informed and coordinated response has been an ongoing challenge for Council. The Homelessness Strategy will combat this issue by providing a unified and informed response.

32. Local governments have no clearly defined role in specifically responding to homelessness. Furthermore, State and Federal Governments have not traditionally engaged well with local governments in this space. However some of the responsibilities are alluded to within the remit of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. The Act indicates that it is the role of Council to seek to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing within the municipal district.

Options

33. There are no options.

Conclusion

34. The Homelessness Strategy is a whole-of-council approach to ensure our operational response and future strategic direction to homelessness is well informed, principled and sustained through a robust and constructive framework.

35. Officers would like to lead engagement with the community form mid-November for a period of six weeks, with a view to finalising the Draft Homelessness Strategy.

36. It is anticipated that Officers will bring the final version of the draft Homelessness Strategy to Council in early 2020 for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That:

    (a) Councillors note the draft Homelessness Strategy; and

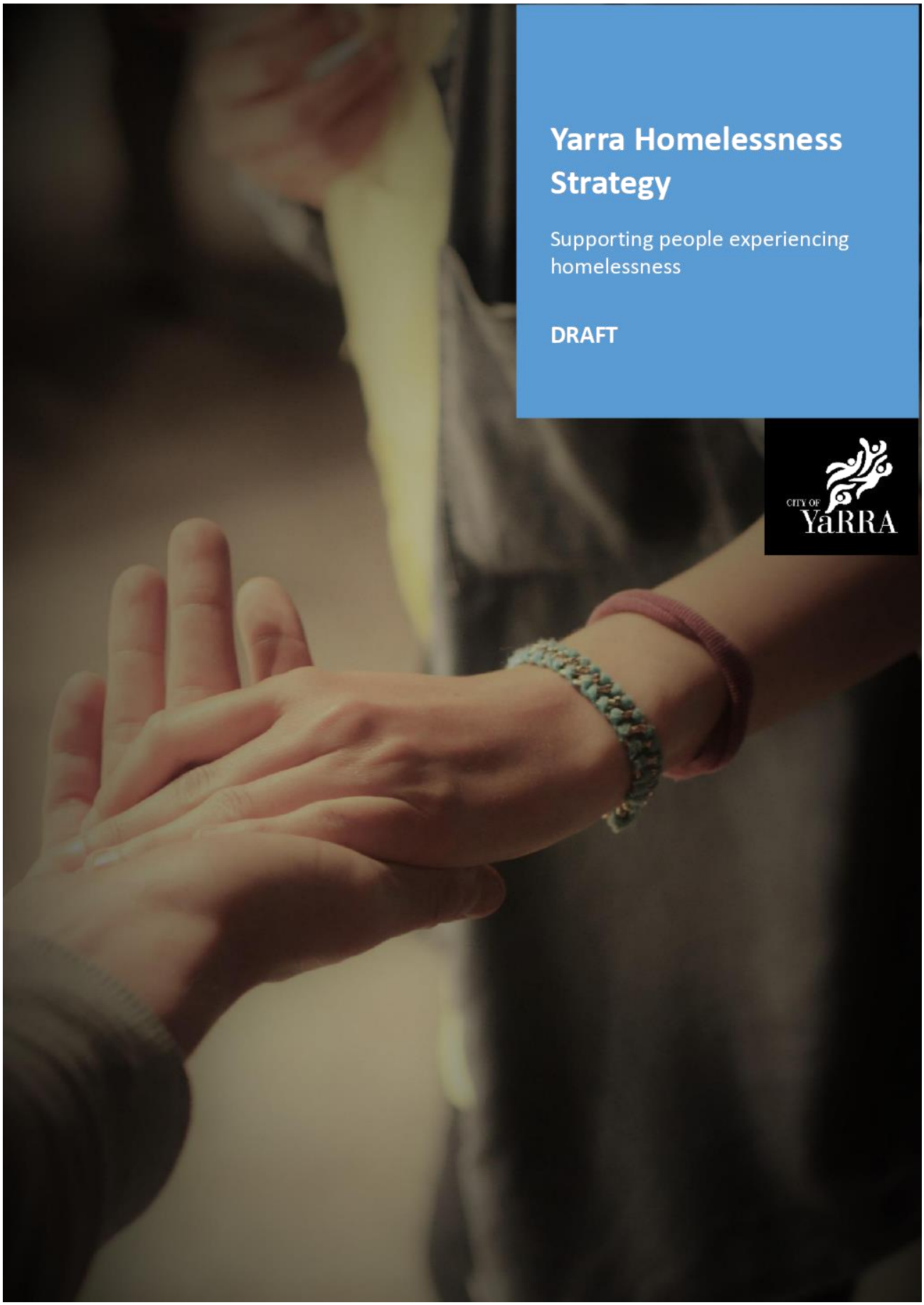
    (b) Councillors endorse the draft Homelessness Strategy for public exhibition from mid-November for a period of six weeks.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Elly Murrell**
TITLE: **Projects and Administration Officer**
TEL: **9205 5106**

Attachments

1⇩ Draft Yarra Homelessness Strategy - 14 Oct 2019
2⇩ Discussion Background Paper Yarra Homelessness Strategy 2020-2023.

Attachment 1 - Draft Yarra Homelessness Strategy - 14 Oct 2019



Acknowledgment of Country

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri as the Traditional Owners of this country, pays tribute to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra, and gives respect to the Elders past and present.

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Mayor's foreword

To be inserted prior to publication, when adopted.

Headline data – estimating homelessness in the City of Yarra

From the ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimated Homelessness, 2016:

The rate of homelessness in Yarra is 95 per 10,000 population, the fourth highest rate for any Victorian municipality, and more than double that of the state average.

- The Census estimated 838 homeless people in Yarra, including 64 people experiencing primary homelessness (i.e. living in tents, improvised dwellings, or sleeping out).
- In addition, there were 170 marginally housed persons.

From the AIHW, Specialist Homelessness Services Collection, 2017–18:

In 2017–18 there were 1,070 clients from Yarra accessing specialist homelessness services.

- Of these clients:
    - 546 were homeless and 463 were at risk of being homeless.
    - 547 were female and 523 male.

From the 2018 StreetCount:

On Tuesday 19 June 2018, 392 people were counted sleeping rough in inner Melbourne, including 29 people in Yarra.

- Of the 392 people sleeping rough in inner Melbourne (includes the Cities of Melbourne, Yarra, Port Phillip, Stonnington and Maribyrnong):
    - 78 percent were male, and 22 percent were female
    - 54 percent of people were aged 26–40, with 34 percent aged 41–60

Council's vision

Yarra's first Homelessness Strategy will ensure that Council's strategic directions and operational responses to homelessness will be well informed, principled, and sustained through a robust and coordinated framework.

This strategy, and its associated actions, aims to foster a compassionate city by building on Yarra's existing Responding to Homelessness Protocol and other homelessness initiatives. To achieve this, Council will work in partnership with stakeholders, networks and neighbouring municipalities to address homelessness in our communities and rough sleeping on our streets.

Council's commitment to human rights

Yarra City Council is committed to promoting social justice and building on a culture of human rights by recognising that:

> *...all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights.*
>
> **Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006**

Council believes that:

> *Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of [themselves] and of [their] family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond [their] control.*
>
> **Article 25.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

This strategy aims to find practical and compassionate ways to reduce homelessness and its effects on the whole Yarra community that are underpinned by a human rights commitment.

Definitions

Situations

Homelessness

Sleeping in public places, or sleeping rough (see definition below), is the most visible form of homelessness, but the term is inclusive of a variety of insecure housing situations, such as couch surfing, staying with family, and living in temporary accommodation, such as a hotel or rooming house. While there is no one definition, it is necessary to have a working understanding of homelessness in order to discuss these situations and complexities that they involve.

The *statistical definition* of homelessness that has been developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to track homelessness numbers, emphasises that to be *home*-less is not the same as being *roof*-less. That is to say that being homeless is having inadequate or insecure housing arrangements, but it is not only something that occurs when a person has no shelter.

Specifically, the ABS considers someone to be experiencing homelessness if:[1]

- they are in a dwelling that is inadequate, or
- they have no secure tenure of a dwelling, or if their tenure is short and cannot be extended, or
- they are in a living situation that does not allow them to have control of, or access to, space for social relations.

This definition was developed by a cross-sector working group to 'operationalise' and explain more clearly the concepts of the ABS's previously used cultural definition of homelessness.[2] Further to this, the ABS notes that overcrowding, a common housing issue, is one way in which a dwelling would be considered to be inadequate for the people living there.[3]

The *cultural definition*[4] of homelessness takes into account an accepted minimum community standard of housing (being a small one-bedroom flat with a bathroom and kitchen), and divides homelessness into categories in relation to this standard as follows:[5]

- ***Marginally housed**: people in housing situations close to the minimum standard*
- ***Tertiary homelessness**: people living in single rooms in private boarding houses without their own bathroom, kitchen or security of tenure*

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[1] ABS (2018) 'Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness, 2016', Canberra, available at https://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2049.0Appendix12016?opendocument&tabname=Notes&prodno=2049.0&issue=2016&num=&view (Accessed 3 Oct 2019).
[2] ABS (2011) 'Position Paper – ABS Review of Counting the Homeless Methodology', Canberra, available at: https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/90db868e528d3eebca2578df00228cee?opendocument (Accessed 3 Oct 2019).
[3] Ibid.
[4] Developed for the ABS by researchers Chamberlain and MacKenzie (2008) in their report 'Counting the Homeless 2006', Commonwealth of Australia, p 3.
[5] ibid.

- ***Secondary homelessness:*** *people moving between various forms of temporary shelter including friends, emergency accommodation, youth refuges, hostels and boarding houses*
- ***Primary homelessness:*** *people without conventional accommodation (living on the streets, in deserted buildings, improvised dwellings, under bridges, in parks, etc)*

The cultural definition is useful in understanding greater nuance in individual situations in a social context, and is still widely used in research, discussion and advocacy within the homelessness sector. For this reason, this strategy uses the terminology of the cultural definition, with the understanding that the underlying concepts of homelessness of this definition are those articulated in the current ABS statistical definition.

Sleeping rough

Rough Sleepers are people who sleep or are bedded down in the open air. They may also be sleeping in buildings or other places not designed for habitation, such as sheds, car parks, abandoned buildings and so on. It is generally understood that this group of people is one of the most marginalised and vulnerable in the community.

Housing types

Crisis and emergency accommodation

Crisis and emergency accommodation includes a range of specialist services for people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, escaping family violence, or in other emergency situations. It includes women's refuges, youth refuges and major crisis supported accommodation services.

These services are available 24-hours a day, however they are temporary and designed to immediately assist people in crisis to stabilise their situation before they move on to something more permanent.

Social housing

Social Housing is an umbrella term for long term housing that includes both Public Housing and Community Housing (as per the *Housing Act 1983*). *Public housing* is government owned and managed, whereas *community housing* is managed (and sometimes owned) by not-for-profit organisations. All social housing must be applied for through the Victorian Housing Register.

Table 1: Weekly income limits for eligible households applying for social housing in Victoria

Household type	Register of Interest	Priority housing
Single	$1,014	$567
Couple	$1,552	$981
Family with one or two parents and dependent children	$2,092	$1,017
Each additional dependent	$339	$36

Source: Social Housing Eligibility, HousingVic, DHHS, 1 April 2019

Public housing

Public Housing is non-profit housing that is delivered on behalf of the Government and or the relevant department (as per the *Housing Act 1983*).

It usually refers to rental housing that is targeted to very-low and low income households on an affordable basis (requiring no more than 25 percent of income on rent). These households are predominantly those in receipt of Commonwealth income support, such as the disability or aged pension. Public Housing is owned and managed by the State Government housing authority, or managed by community housing providers on the government's behalf. Tenure is not time limited but is subject to tenants meeting rental conditions contained in their tenancy agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services.

Community housing

Community housing is housing that is owned, controlled and/or managed by a registered community housing agency.

It is targeted to low-to-moderate income and/or special needs households who meet income and asset tests, in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*. Community Housing is managed and generally owned by a non-government housing provider such as not-for-profit charitable organisations including housing associations, housing providers and cooperatives.

Rents are commonly capped at between 25 percent and 30 percent of household income and can be up to 75 percent of market rent. Many providers incorporate local support services and tenant participation in maintenance and management.

Rooming houses

A rooming house (also referred to as a 'boarding house'[6]) is a building where rooms are available to rent individually, accommodating four or more tenants at the property in this way. At most rooming houses, residents share bathrooms, kitchens, laundries and other common areas.

Rooming house operators must comply with minimum standards set out in the *Residential Tenancies (Rooming House Standards) Regulations 2012*.[7] These standards relate to privacy, security, safety and amenity in rooming houses.

Rooming houses are not necessarily an affordable housing product as they are privately managed.

Transitional accommodation

Transitional Housing is a supported short-term accommodation program. It acts as a stepping stone to more permanent housing.

People moving into transitional housing have often been victims of a change in circumstance. For example, a lost job has meant the rent can't be paid, a relationship break-up leaves one

[6] Victorian Legal Aid (2019) 'Rooming Houses', available at https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/housing-and-tenancy/rooming-houses (Accessed 3 Oct 2019).
[7] The regulations are available here: http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_reg/rthsr2012554/ (Accessed 3 Oct 2019).

partner with no money or support, or a person may lose the support of – or can no longer live with – other family members.

A key element of transitional housing is that it's a temporary option, and tenants must actively work with their support provider to apply for long-term housing.

Homelessness responses

Assertive outreach

Assertive outreach is when a representative from a homelessness service provider purposefully sets out to engage with people who are marginalised and vulnerable due to their situation. This type of outreach is active, rather than passive, and is undertaken when it is thought by the service provider or social worker that someone who needs the service would otherwise not connect with the support they require.[8]

Housing First

The term 'Housing First' refers to a way of addressing homelessness by providing secure, long-term housing as quickly as possible to people who are homeless, and then providing comprehensive services to them to address the other issues and complexities of their circumstances. By providing long-term instead of temporary housing, it is believed that people who were experiencing homelessness can shift their focus from worrying about where they will sleep to overcoming other difficulties in their lives and improving their wellbeing.

Specialist homelessness services

A specialist homelessness service (SHS) is the type of assistance provided by a specialist homelessness agency with the aim of responding to or preventing homelessness for an individual. This kind of assistance will often include multiple services that go beyond the provision of accommodation. Additional supports are often aimed at assisting a person to sustain housing in the longer term, and may include life skills (e.g. domestic tasks), mental and physical health services, specialised counselling for family violence and/or drug and alcohol addiction, legal support, financial counselling, cultural support and employment services.[9]

Wraparound services

Wraparound services are support services delivered through a holistic method that is tailored to each person, taking into account their circumstances and particular needs. In a wraparound approach, multiple services are coordinated so as to work collaboratively in a way that is responsive to each aspect of a person's situation. Wraparound services are particularly used to build long-term capabilities for individuals and families, which extend

[8] Council to Homeless Persons (2019) *Assertive Outreach Resource*, p2, available at: http://chp.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Assertive-outreach-resource.pdf (Accessed 3 Oct 2019).
[9] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2019) *Homelessness Services Glossary*, available at: https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/health-welfare-services/homelessness-services/glossary (Accessed 3 Oct 2019).

beyond any immediate crisis, providing skills to sustain a more stable living situation into the future.[10]

Government agencies and instruments

Department of Health and Human Services

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is an agency of the Victorian State Government that delivers health and human services through policies, programs and regulatory oversight. The range of programs includes services for women, ambulance services, children and families, sport and recreation, health and wellbeing, alcohol and other drugs and housing and homelessness.

Director of Housing

The Director of Housing (DoH) is the body corporate established under section 9(2) of the *Housing Act 1983*. The Director of Housing, sits within DHHS and is the landlord of Victoria's public housing. The Director has powers to purchase, develop, lease and sell property.[11]

Victorian Housing Register

The Victorian Housing Register (VHR) manages applications for long-term social housing in Victoria. The waitlist now combines public and community housing applications for housing so that people only need to apply once and can be considered for both types of housing.

Priority access is given to those people who are:

- homeless and receiving support
- escaping or have escaped family violence
- living with a disability or who have significant support needs
- in need of special housing

People who meet these criteria, and income eligibility as per Table 1, comprise the housing Priority List. The broader Register of Interest list is based solely on income and asset tests.

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[10] Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia (2019) *Living on the edge: Inquiry into Intergenerational Welfare Dependence*, Canberra, p. 45, available at: https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/reportrep/024242/toc_pdf/LivingontheEdge.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf (Accessed 3 Oct 2019).

[11] VAGO 'Managing Victoria's Public Housing', June 2017

Attachment 1 - Draft Yarra Homelessness Strategy - 14 Oct 2019

1.1. Introduction

Having an adequate home is a fundamental human right. It is essential not only to surviving, but also to enabling people to engage in life and society with dignity. [12]

Homelessness has increased markedly in Victoria in the last decade. The ABS Census notes a 43 percent increase in the number of Victorians experiencing homelessness between 2006 and 2016. Homelessness is often higher in the inner city and Yarra has the fourth highest rate of homelessness of all municipalities in Victoria.

As a lived experience, homelessness is shaped by social factors (such as alcohol/drug dependency, mental health concerns etc.), as well as structural and economic factors, such as poverty, disconnection from the labour market, and lack of housing for low income households. When people are homeless, many of their basic human rights become compromised, and they become distanced from family, friends and the community and lose control over their environment.

> Those who sleep rough are among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community. They experience a range of harms – such as violence, extreme weather conditions and poor diet – with lasting impacts on their health and wellbeing that can worsen over time.[13]

Homelessness takes a range of forms. Some people may have become suddenly homeless requiring crisis accommodation, while others may be sleeping rough in public places over a long period of time or 'couch surfing' between friends, family and acquaintances. Diverse, multi-disciplinary strategies from multiple stakeholders are required to address this growing and often complex issue.

Commonwealth and State Governments hold the primary roles for funding and providing services to assist people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. By contrast, the role of local governments in addressing homelessness is not specified in Australian legislation, however Councils have a history of responding to homelessness in *some* way as it is the tier of government closest to the community.

Yarra City Council recognises that access to secure, appropriate and affordable housing is not only a basic requirement for all people, but also an essential component of an inclusive, dynamic and sustainable community. This is a concern not only for those individuals affected, but also for the wider community including residents, workers, services, visitors and businesses. Through education, advocacy and partnerships with service providers, Council seeks to ensure our city is a welcoming place for everyone, where the response to our most vulnerable citizens is one of compassion and respect for human rights.

1.2. Purpose and scope

The purpose of this strategy is to facilitate a coordinated and compassionate response to homelessness in Yarra. It is concerned with addressing and responding to the issues and circumstances concerning people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and who may be sleeping rough in the area.

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[12] Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (1996) 'Housing as a Human Right', Sydney, p. 1, available at https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/pdf/human_rights/housing.pdf (Accessed 1 Oct 2019).
[13] Department of Health and Human Services (January 2018) 'Victoria's homelessness and rough sleeping action plan', Victorian Government, Melbourne.

It also outlines Council's position and operations, and role as an advocate.

Long-term social and affordable accommodation is out of scope here, instead being the specific focus of Yarra's Social and Affordable Housing Strategy. These two strategies should be considered together and between them they respond to the full spectrum of homelessness and housing types.

The private housing market is considered of Yarra's Housing Strategy.

At a local level, the Homelessness Strategy aligns with and responds to initiatives and resolutions presented in the following Council strategies and plans:

Council Plan 2017-2021

Council will: "Actively Plan for Yarra's projected growth and development and advocate for an increase in social and affordable housing"

Yarra Housing Strategy 2018

Strategic Direction 4: Facilitate the provision of more affordable housing in Yarra

Yarra Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2019

Through the Homelessness Strategy, Council will focus on:

- supporting people sleeping rough in public spaces through an informed human rights framework,
- collaborating with agencies to address and prevent homelessness, and
- advocating for long-term solutions that reduce homelessness and create pathways to permanent housing and improved health and wellbeing.

As rough sleeping is a critical crisis point for people who are homeless, additional attention is paid to circumstances and the complexities that must be considered around this issue.

1.3. Review and reporting

Actions responding to the three key priority areas outlined in this Strategy will be revisited regularly. This will enable Council to be responsive to the changing needs of the community and to changes in the social, economic and political environment.

Towards the end of the calendar year, a report will be presented to Council, outlining activities which have been undertaken as well as those planned for the coming year. Elements of the Strategy will be updated when it is apparent that this is required. These updates will be presented to Council for endorsement. At the point of major changes to Council's policy positions and/or the broader policy environment a new Strategy should be developed.

1.4. Policy and practice

Local government's role in addressing homelessness

The recent decisions of the Council of Australian Government (COAG) have committed all tiers of government – including local government – to reducing homelessness. It is important therefore to understand what actions local governments currently undertake in addressing homelessness, how other programs and policies implemented by local government may affect the homeless population and how 'best practice' in the area of local government and homelessness could be conceived.[14]

President of the Australian Local Government Association, Mayor David O'Loughlin, notes that local councils are now positioned 'at the forefront of community efforts to tackle Australia's worsening housing affordability and homelessness challenges.'[15]

Responses by each municipal council depend on what particular issues are priorities in their communities. Actions being taken to address homelessness include using excess council land or buildings to create housing. Councils are also collaborating with local community service providers, and helping meet housing needs through council-owned caravan parks.[16]

Local government is the tier of government closest to the people of Australia and is important for the health and wellbeing of communities through the services it provides and through its role in managing development. This means that local government is also important in addressing homelessness, which is often a very public phenomenon when people are sleeping rough. Living life entirely in public spaces is a confronting experience both for the person who is rough sleeping and for others who use the space. It requires a sensitivity and understanding that local government is best positioned to facilitate.

Accordingly, although the main economic and policy drivers to address homelessness at a broader scale are at the state and federal level, councils in Victoria are finding different ways to play an active role in addressing the alarming increase in homelessness.

Given that this is not a core function of local government, differing levels of resourcing have been allocated to homelessness across the sector. In the City of Melbourne, where homelessness is a very considerable and visible issue, significant resources are being allocated to responding to, and ultimately reducing, homelessness.

These are some of the ways that local governments in Victoria are currently engaging with homelessness:

- Protocols to assist council staff and the community in responding respectfully to rough sleeping
- Information and education through council websites and other forums
- Partnerships with and/or funding of outreach services
- Community grants
- Facilitating networks for the homelessness services industry
- Advocacy to other levels of government

[14] Andrew Beer and Felicity Prance, 'Local Government and Homelessness in Australia: Understanding the Big Picture', Centre for Housing, Urban and Regional Planning, University of Adelaide, 2013.
[15] Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) (2019), 'Homelessness Week' https://alga.asn.au/homelessness-week/ (Accessed 8 Oct 2019)
[16] Ibid

- Various strategies to support an increase in short and long-term affordable housing options for the homeless
- Primary research, e.g. the StreetCount
- Providing lockers where people sleeping rough can safely store their belongings

There is value to having a coordinated and clear response to homelessness at the municipal level, particularly in providing a welcoming environment for all. However, given the transient nature of the issue it is imperative to also work collaboratively across municipal boundaries and in particular with our neighbouring inner-city local government areas.

A whole-of-Council response

Yarra Council's operational response to homelessness has been guided by the 'Protocol for Responding to Rough Sleeping and Squatting in Yarra' (the Protocol) (see appendix 1), and by our Emergency Management response to people sleeping rough in extreme weather.

The Protocol was initially developed in 2012 in response to increasing numbers of people sleeping rough in Yarra. In consultation with Hanover Assertive Outreach team and other local homelessness services, Council developed the internal protocol to assist staff to respond most effectively to rough sleeping and squatting. The Protocol is based on a human rights approach and outlines procedures for responding to rough sleeping, including referrals. There has been good uptake of this protocol across the organisation and staff have responded with a variety of creative initiatives that strive to address homelessness and make Yarra a welcoming and compassionate place.

The following list is an example of some of Council's current activities across the organisation. It shows how services are working both collaboratively and individually to facilitate an effective response to the community's needs around homelessness.

Aged and Disability Services

- Partners with cohealth to provide meals through local cafes.
- Provides nutrition grants for local non-profit organisations to provide meals through food packages and local soup vans.
- Provides support services to people in local rooming houses.

Community Partnerships

- Collaborates with local service providers and other areas of Council to coordinate responses to rough sleeping in Yarra.
- Convenes Yarra's Housing and Homelessness Network.
- Develops and manages Yarra's Homelessness Strategy.
- Manages community grant streams.
- Partners with cohealth to provide weekly meals and coordinate services for the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community.
- Supports community engagement and outreach across Council.

Economic Development

- Works to provide information to traders to educate the local business community about homelessness.

- Advocates for Council's role and facilitates connections between local traders, Council services and rough sleepers.

Facilities

- Works with Yarra's homelessness advisors on handling clean ups at public sites respectfully.

Family, Children & Youth Services

- Provides a family support program.
- Participates in 'The Orange Door', a Victorian State Government initiative to provide free services and support to people who are experiencing (or who have experienced) family violence, including offering extra support for people looking after children and to address housing and homelessness.[17]

Social Policy and Research

- Develops and administers strategies and responses concerning social and affordable housing in the municipality with the aim of promoting the suitability, quality and availability of this housing.

Yarra Leisure

- Collaborates with other areas of Council to facilitate use of Yarra's Leisure facilities for people experiencing homelessness.

Yarra Libraries

- Programs events based around educating the community about homelessness and engaging in dialogue about key issues for the community.
- Makes everyone welcome in library spaces (including allowing people to sleep if it is not interfering with others).
- Enables people to join, borrow and use the libraries resources with no fixed address.
- Partners with Open Table to provide free community meals two times per month.

Commonwealth Government

The Commonwealth Government has committed to investing more than $6 billion in housing support and homelessness services in the next year, including approximately $4.6 billion on Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) and more than $1.5 billion through the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA – see below). [18]

The Federal government also have a number of initiatives related to increasing the supply of social and affordable housing.

NHHA

The National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) is a bilateral agreement between the federal government and the states and territories. In July 2018 the NHHA replaced the previous

[17] State Government of Victoria (2018) 'What is the Orange Door?', available at: https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/what-is-the-orange-door (Accessed 4 Oct 2019).
[18] Department of Social Services (2019) at https://www.dss.gov.au/housing-support/programmes-services/homelessness (Accessed 8 Oct. 2019)

National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness and the National Affordable Housing Agreement, joining the two streams of housing and homelessness. The NHHA includes $125 million set aside for homelessness services in 2019–20. States and territories are expected to match this funding.

Under the NHHA, to receive funding, state and territory governments will need to have publicly available housing and homelessness strategies and contribute to improved data collection and reporting.

The following priority homelessness cohorts have been identified in the NHHA:

- women and children affected by family and domestic violence,
- children and young people,
- Indigenous Australians,
- people experiencing repeat homelessness,
- people exiting from care or institutions into homelessness, and
- older people.

Domestic and Family Violence

In August 2019, the Federal Government endorsed the fourth action plan for the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*. Actions resulting from this endorsement include a $60 million capital grant program that will aim to increase the number of new or expanded emergency accommodation dwellings that are appropriate for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence.[19] It is calculated that this program could build up to 450 safe places and assist up to 6,500 women and children per year.[20] The Commonwealth Government will also provide $18 million through the *Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes* program to continue supporting states and territories to provide security updates and safety planning.[21]

Young people and homelessness

In order to assist the increasing numbers of young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, the *Reconnect Program* has received a funding commitment from the Federal Government of up to $118 million over five years.[22]

The Reconnect Program aims to break the cycle of homelessness by providing holistic support to whole families through counselling, group work, mediation and practical support. It supports young people to find stable accommodation, improve relationships with their family, gain employment or stay at school, and start participating in the local community.[23]

[19] Department of Social Services (2019) at https://www.dss.gov.au/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022 (Accessed 9 Oct. 2019)
[20] ibid
[21] Department of Social Services (2019) at https://www.dss.gov.au/housing-support/programmes-services/homelessness/domestic-and-family-violence (Accessed 8 Oct. 2019)
[22] Department of Social Services (2019) at https://www.dss.gov.au/housing-support/programmes-services/homelessness (Accessed 8 Oct 2019)
[23] ibid

Victorian Government

The primary plan guiding Victoria's response to homelessness is the 2018 *Victoria's homelessness and rough sleeping action plan*.[24] Additionally, the Victorian Government have set out their intentions with regard to increasing the supply of affordable housing through the *Homes for Victorians* (2017) strategy.

The homelessness and rough sleeping action plan notes that there has been an increase in the number of people sleeping rough in Victoria in recent years, and subsequently the number of people seeking homelessness services.

The plan identifies three groups affected by rough sleeping:

1. those who are **recently homeless and sleeping rough due to personal crises**,
2. those who have been **sleeping rough for an extended period** of time and have multiple related issues, and
3. those who are at **risk of chronic homelessness and rough sleeping after leaving an institutional setting**.

Victoria's homelessness and rough sleeping action plan is a framework for reducing the incidence and impacts of rough sleeping with a focus on prevention and early intervention. The action plan is guided by four key themes:

1. Intervening early to prevent homelessness
2. Providing stable accommodation as quickly as possible
3. Support to maintain stable accommodation
4. An effective and responsive homelessness services system

Each response is aimed to be delivered within the context of the three groups identified above.

Affordable Housing

Homes for Victorians (2017) and *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* outline a number of initiatives and funding streams to increase the number of social and affordable housing dwellings in Victoria, largely through public-private partnerships, but crucially they set no target of how many dwellings that need to be added in the coming period.[25]

The *Homes for Victorians* strategy aims to increase the supply of affordable housing in Victoria through:

- a $1 billion Social Housing Growth Fund,
- the development of 6,000 social housing dwellings,
- renewal of 2,500 ageing public housing dwellings,
- $100 million in low cost loans, and
- $1 billion in government guarantees to housing associations to enable them to expand their stock.

In addition, the government has identified 52 parcels of land across the state for development into social housing. These development opportunities are all intended to increase supply of social housing in partnership with the private sector.

[24] Department of Health and Human Services (January 2018) 'Victoria's homelessness and rough sleeping action plan', Victorian Government, Melbourne.
[25] Infrastructure Victoria have estimated a need for approximately 30,000 new affordable dwellings across Victoria within 0-10 years. In 'Victoria's 30-year Infrastructure Strategy', December 2016.

Other programs and funding

The following funding streams are also highlighted in *Victoria's homelessness and rough sleeping action plan*:

- $9.8 million for the ***Towards Home* program** that will provide temporary accommodation with intensive, flexible and specialist support for people with histories of recurring and persistent homelessness.
- A $109 million **homelessness package** to assist people who are homeless or at risk by intervening earlier to prevent homelessness, improving responses to people in crisis and supporting people to sustain their housing and achieve independence.
- A $152 million **Family Violence Housing Blitz** to redevelop refuges, and build and buy more housing for women and children escaping family violence.
- $33.2 million to extend **private rental brokerage** for a further two years to assist people to secure and maintain accommodation in the private rental market as a long-term housing option.[26]

Despite all of these initiatives, there is no sign of a decrease in homelessness in the short-term.

Services

Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) is an umbrella term for a range of agencies that provide support to people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness and receive funding under the NHHA.[27] These services are delivered by a range of not-for-profit organisations through a centralised access point.

SHS provide assistance to access short term or long term housing and help people at-risk to remain housed. Temporary housing is generally provided by registered housing providers or housing associations. This includes transitional housing, crisis accommodation, as well as emergency accommodation which is paid for by a homelessness service but provided in the private sector such as cheap motels, rooming or boarding houses. SHS can also assist people into longer term housing in the private rental market or through applications for social housing.

In addition to housing support, SHS also provide a broad range of general support services, including:[28]

- Advice and information regarding housing options
- Advocacy and liaison
- Assistance to access income support payments
- Assistance with applications for public and community housing
- Assistance with rent arrears or emergency accommodation
- Meals
- Laundry or shower services
- Material aid
- Case management
- Assertive outreach

[26] Department of Health and Human Services (January 2018) 'Victoria's homelessness and rough sleeping action plan', Victorian Government, Melbourne.
[27] As explained in Launch Housing's 'Explainer: The homelessness services system and demand for services'. Available at: https://www.launchhousing.org.au/explainer-the-homelessness-services-system-and-demand-for-services/ (Accessed 10 Oct. 2019)
[28] As outlined in Launch Housing's 'Explainer: The homelessness services system and demand for services'. Available at: https://www.launchhousing.org.au/explainer-the-homelessness-services-system-and-demand-for-services/ (Accessed 10 Oct. 2019)

- Support around sexual assault or family violence
- Referral to specialist services as required (such as health, mental health services, drug and alcohol, legal)
- Court support

1.5. Research

Recognising causes and understanding vulnerability to homelessness

People who are homeless are not a distinct and separate population. The line between being homeless and not being homeless is quite fluid and the pathways into and out of homelessness are neither linear nor uniform. Individuals and families who end up homeless may not share much in common with each other, aside from the fact that they are extremely vulnerable, and lack adequate housing and income and the necessary supports to ensure they stay housed. Homelessness is not just about a lack of housing, but also about severe marginalisation, disadvantage, and discrimination.

Common causes of homelessness
The causes of homelessness reflect a complex interplay between *structural factors, systems failures* and *individual circumstances*.[29] Importantly, homelessness can be both the result of complex issues and the cause of them. Experiences of homelessness are also likely to add to any pre-existing problems.

Homelessness often involves multiple complexities such as:[30]

- The chronic shortage of affordable and available rental housing
- Domestic and family violence
- Intergenerational poverty
- Financial crisis
- Long term unemployment
- Economic and social exclusion
- Severe and persistent mental illness and psychological distress
- Substance abuse
- Exiting state care
- Exiting prison
- Severe overcrowding/housing crisis.

Frequently, people will experience multiple issues at once, which compounds the impact on their lives and living situations.

Being at risk
Many Australians experience events at some point in their lives that may place them at greater risk of homelessness. It is estimated that more than half (57 percent) of lower income rental households in the private market experience rental stress (paying more than 30 percent of their gross income on housing costs),[31] and around 1 in 6 women (1.6 million) have experienced some form of partner violence since the age of 15, putting them at risk of homelessness.[32] For someone under housing

[29] Homeless Hub (2017) 'Causes of Homelessness', available at https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/homelessness-101/causes-homelessness
[30] ibid
[31] ABS (2019) Housing Occupancy and Costs, 2017–18. ABS cat no. 4130.0. Canberra: ABS.
[32] ABS (2017) Personal safety, Australia, 2016. ABS cat no. 4906.0. Canberra: ABS.

stress, losing their job due to illness or retrenchment could create a critical situation in which they become homeless. Someone experiencing domestic violence may have no safety net or resources, or will sacrifice what they do have in order to escape a dire situation.

These situations and figures begin to reveal how some people are particularly at risk of homelessness due to circumstances beyond their control. In particular, AIHW recognises that people who 'have experienced family and domestic violence, young people, children on care and protection orders, [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander] Australians, people leaving health or social care arrangements, and Australians aged 55 or older' are in particularly vulnerable circumstances.[33]

LGBTIQ (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans Intersex Queer or Questioning) people are also over-represented in homeless populations due to both the complexity of their experiences and difficulty accessing services.[34]

Vulnerable groups

Data and research suggests that the following groups have an increased risk of homelessness.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

- **Data:** 18 percent (almost 11,000) Aboriginal people in Victoria, were in contact with homelessness services in 2017–18, as compared to 1.8 percent of Victorians.[35] Additionally, Aboriginal people are over-represented as homelessness clients – 10.4 percent of homelessness clients in Victoria are Aboriginal yet they only make up 0.9 percent of the population.[36]
- **Needs:** wraparound services that accommodate cultural needs and enable self-determination, provide mental and physical health care, housing to enable caring for extended families, and supported pathways from homelessness to long-term secure housing. Specific supports may also be required around elements such as employment, the legal system, disability, alcohol and drugs, and family violence.

Asylum seekers

- **Issue:** Recent changes to eligibility for Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) – a safety net for vulnerable people seeking asylum who are excluded from mainstream support services in Australia – has put thousands of vulnerable people at risk of homelessness. The tightening criteria for eligibility has increased reliance on community and charitable organisations to provide basic supports, in particular housing. Organisations such as the Red Cross and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre report a vast increase in demand for housing services since the new rules came into effect and are unable to meet the demand.[37]

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[33] AIHW (2019) 'Homelessness and Homelessness Services' at https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-welfare/homelessness-and-homelessness-services (accessed 10 Oct 2019)

[34] Mission Australia, Review of Homelessness, 2015

[35] Productivity Commission, Table 19A.4 in Report on Government Services, 2019 (as presented in Aboriginal Housing Victoria 'Key Data' graphic, available at: https://ahvic.org.au/cms_uploads/docs/web-key-data-housing-and-homelessness-victoria-.pdf)

[36] Ibid

[37] Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, *Cutting the Safety Net: The Impact of Cuts to Status Resolution Support Services* (2019). Available at: https://www.asrc.org.au/resources/publications/ (Accessed: 24/09/19).

- **Needs:** legal support around visas, employment pathways, English language training as well as healthcare and housing suitable for families.

Children and young people

- **Data:** 20 to 29 year olds are the largest age cohort of people who are homeless in Yarra.[38]
- **Needs:** Support from wraparound services including life skills, physical and mental health, education and employment. There may also be involvement of human services where children are concerned.

Family violence

- **Data:** Family violence is the number one cause for seeking homelessness assistance in Victoria.[39]
- **Needs:** Wraparound support services including mental and physical health support, employment pathways, and housing that has high safety standards and can accommodate a family.

LGBTIQ+

- **Data:** LBG people are at least twice as likely as heterosexuals to experience homelessness and LGBTQ people are more likely to experience homelessness at a younger age and this is driven by family rejection[40]
- **Needs:** Wraparound support services including mental and physical health support, and housing that has high safety standards. For trans and gender diverse clients, in particular, a sense of safety often includes the need for private bathroom facilities, and being placed in gender appropriate accommodation.[41]

Older people

- **Data:** Yarra's older population has significantly lower earnings than the broader population with almost half earning less than $500 a week (roughly aligned with 'very low' income bracket for singles), as compared to one in four for the broader Yarra population aged 15 years and over.[42] Financial insecurities can occur when people have reached the end of their working lives, rely on the age pension for income, lack future earnings potential, and have increased health costs. Older single women (see below) often face additional financial disadvantage due to lower superannuation or as a result of changed circumstances such as divorce, or death of a partner.
- **Needs:** Mental and physical health care, social supports, accessible, or adaptable, affordable homes to support comfortable ageing and independent living.

Older women

- **Data:** Women over 55 years are the fastest growing cohort of people experiencing homelessness in Australia.[43] They frequently have had a lifetime of income disadvantage through diminished earning capacity due to carer and family responsibilities.

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[38] ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016 and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Specialist Homelessness Services Collection – LGA data cube, 2017-18.
[39] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 'Specialist homelessness services 2017-18: Victoria', Australian Government.
[40] Gay and Lesbian Foundation of Australia (2017) 'LGBTQ Homelessness: Risks, Resilience, and Access to Services in Victoria'. Available at: http://www.lgbtihomeless.org.au/research-and-policy/reports/ (accessed 10 Oct 2019).
[41] Ibid
[42] ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016
[43] ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016

- **Needs:** Mental and physical health care, affordable housing with social and health support and accessible, or adaptable, homes to support comfortable ageing.

People with mental illness

- **Data:** People living with mental illness frequently have inappropriate health and social support, and reduced access to employment, which leads directly and quickly to poverty and unstable housing. [44] Studies have also demonstrated that homelessness itself directly causes mental health issues.[45]
- **Needs:** strong wraparound supports including both mental and physical health, life skills, employment and education and pathways to find and maintain stable, long-term social housing.

People with substance abuse issues

- **Data:** There is a strong association between drug and alcohol abuse and homelessness, with studies from the homelessness services sector showing that 43 percent of the homeless population in Melbourne reported that they had alcohol and other drug use problems.[46] Of these people, one third reported having substance abuse issues prior to becoming homeless.
- **Needs:** People who have substance abuse issues require strong supports for their mental and physical health, social needs, and employment and education in order to find and maintain long-term stable housing. As in all cases, housing should be the first priority so that they have a secure place to focus on addressing their other needs (see Housing First below).

Homelessness in Yarra

Accurate data on homelessness is difficult to obtain due to the transient and hidden nature of the problem, however it is clear that rates of homelessness have grown over the last decade nationally and internationally. In the 2016 Census, it was estimated that 116,000 people in Australia were homeless, an increase of 4.6 percent from 2011. People in severely overcrowded dwellings, elderly and younger people, and people sleeping rough were the groups with the largest spikes.

The rate of homelessness in Yarra is 95 per 10,000 population, the fourth highest rate for any Victorian municipality, and more than double that of Victoria as a whole (42 per 10,000).[47]

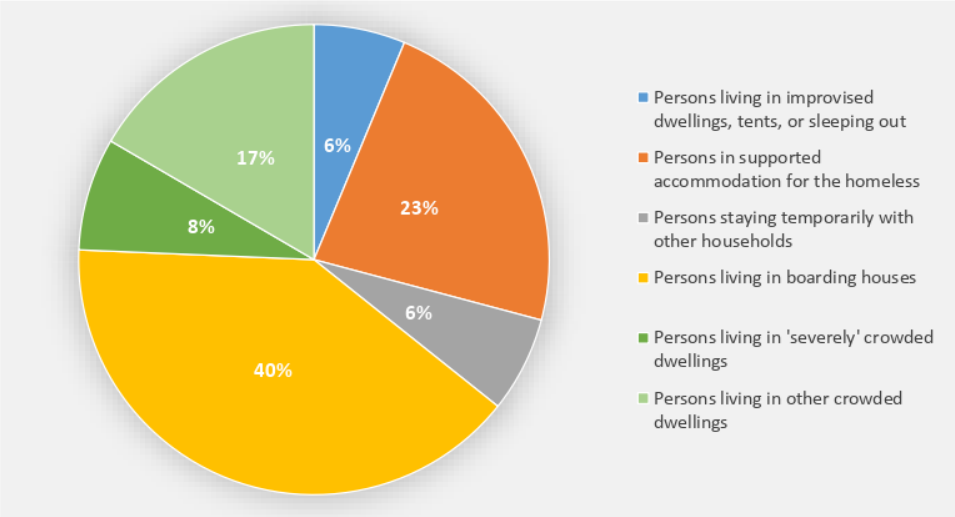
The 2016 estimate of homelessness in Yarra was 838, including 64 people experiencing primary homelessness (i.e. living in tents, improvised dwellings, or sleeping out), a similar number to the 2011 Census.[48] The on-the-ground Officer and assertive outreach experience is however of consistent growth in numbers of reported rough sleeping sites, and increasing complexity of incidents related to primary homelessness.

Rough sleepers are the most visual homeless group, however they only makeup a small proportion of people who are homeless. According to the 2016 Census, the largest homeless group in Yarra was

[44] Smith, J (2018) *Introduction; Mental Health, Disability and Homelessness*, Council to Homeless Persons at https://chp.org.au/mental-health-disability-and-homelessness/ (Accessed 10 Oct 2019).
[45] ibid
[46] AIHW (2019) 'Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs in Australia', at https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/alcohol/alcohol-tobacco-other-drugs-australia/contents/priority-populations/homeless-people (Accessed 10 Oct 19)
[47] ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016
[48] ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2011 and 2016

persons living in boarding houses, followed by persons living in over-crowded dwellings or supported accommodation for the homeless, see Figure 1 overleaf.[49]

Figure 1: Proportion of homeless in Yarra by living situation, 2016



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016

According to the AIHW Specialist Homeless Services 2017-18 data:[50]

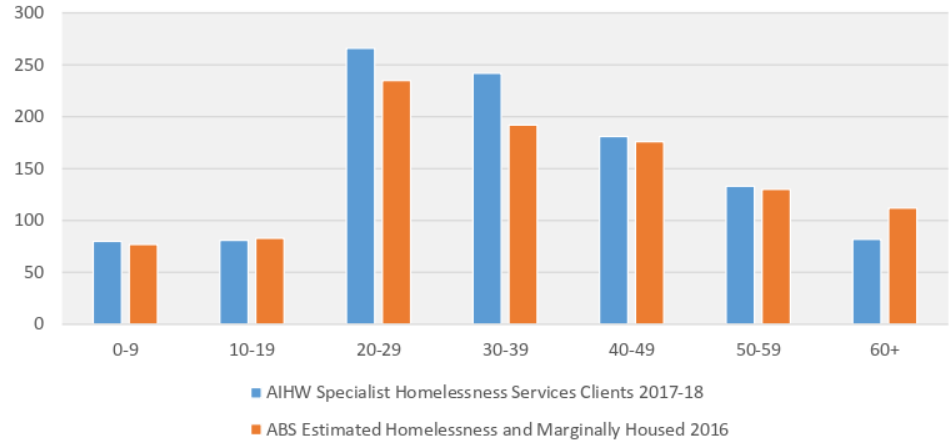
- 288,800 people were assisted by specialist homelessness agencies across Australia, equivalent to 1 in 85 Australians
- In Victoria, 116,872 clients were assisted by specialist homelessness services
- 37 percent were homeless on first presentation
- 64 percent were female and 36 percent male
- 1 in 10 were Indigenous
- domestic and family violence was the number one reason for seeking assistance (47 percent)
- 40 percent sought assistance because of financial difficulties and 37 percent because of housing crisis
- 9 in 10 clients (91 percent) at risk of homelessness were assisted to maintain housing
- 3 in 10 clients (29 percent) who were homeless were assisted into housing.

In 2017–18, 1,070 homelessness clients were recorded in Yarra, of which 547 were female and 523 male. Just over half of all clients in Yarra (51 percent) were homeless at the time of seeking assistance, considerably higher than the proportion for Victoria.

[49] ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016.
[50] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2016) *Specialist Homelessness Services 2015–16*, available at: https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2015-16/data (Accessed 4 Oct 2019).

Most homeless or marginally housed people in Yarra are relatively young – aged 20–29, followed by the 30–39 years age bracket. Notably, about 160 children were recorded in both the ABS estimates and specialist homelessness services client data for Yarra.[51] See Figure 2, overleaf.

Figure 2: Age profile of homeless population in Yarra



Source: AIHW Specialist Homelessness Services clients, 2017-18 and ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016

It is important to note that although data from the ABS Census and Specialist Homelessness Services Collection gives us some indication of the extent of the problem, a 2014 national survey from the ABS found that that in the previous 10 years the majority of people who experienced homelessness (67 percent) did not approach services for assistance at the time of their most recent episode of homelessness.[52]

Sleeping Rough in Yarra

It is almost impossible to get an accurate account of the number of people sleeping rough.

The City of Melbourne StreetCount aims to gain a better understanding of how many people are sleeping rough on a given night of the year, including collection of basic demographics and people's circumstances.

The City of Melbourne have been doing biennial counts since 2008. In 2018 the five inner-city municipalities of Melbourne, Maribyrnong, Yarra, Stonnington and Port Philip participated together for the first time.

On Tuesday 19 June 2018, 392 people were counted sleeping rough in inner Melbourne, including 29 people in Yarra. Of the 392 people sleeping rough in inner Melbourne 78 percent were male, and 22 percent were female, and 54 percent of people were aged 26–40.

[51] ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016 and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Specialist Homelessness Services Collection – LGA data cube, 2017–18.
[52] ABS (2015) 'General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2014', Cat. no. 4159.0

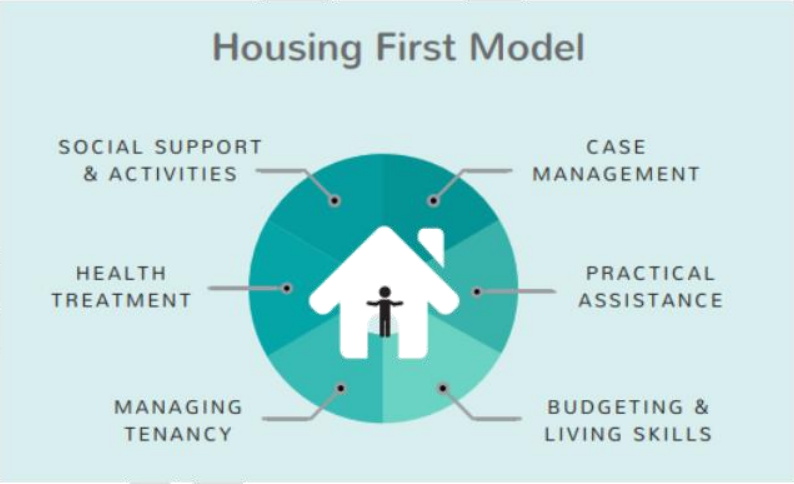
Best practice responses to homelessness

There has been a recent policy shift away from responding to homelessness after the fact, to preventative approaches that aim to avoid homelessness in the first instance. This shift has been shown to prevent potential further trauma for the individual and save government funds by better directing resources, and reducing need for supportive services long term. Where homelessness has occurred, it is recognised that providing long-term secure housing is the first and most essential step to creating a sustainable pathway out of homelessness, and the capacity to address associated factors.

Housing First

As outlined above, the causes of homelessness are complex and homeless people often face a number of health and wellbeing issues. When responding to homelessness, Australian and international research indicates however, that the most effective approach is to secure stable housing first, and then address additional complex needs through targeted 'wraparound' services.[53] This is known as the 'Housing First' model.

Figure 3: Housing First Model



Source: Council for Homeless Persons

By providing long-term instead of temporary housing, it is believed that people who were experiencing homelessness can shift their focus from worrying about where they will sleep to overcoming other difficulties in their lives and improving their wellbeing. This inverts previous practice where services sought first to address personal issues, such as illness or addiction, as a prerequisite to accessing long-term housing.

The Housing First model began in the United States in the early 1990s and has since been applied in various formats internationally, including in Australia. Evaluation of Housing First programs have

[53] Council to Homeless Persons (2018) 'Housing First: Permanent Supportive Housing'. Available at: http://chp.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/FINAL-180606-Housing-First-2018-6-June.pdf (accessed 10 Oct 2019).

found markedly higher retention of housing for participants in these programs. Data from the UK also suggests that it is a cost-efficient approach for governments.[54]

Despite general support for the approach in Australia, there have been challenges in rolling out Housing First programs due to a lack of affordable housing stock.[55]

Wraparound services

In accordance with the Housing First model, once housing has been secured, people often require targeted and tailored wraparound services to maintain their housing long term and start rebuilding their lives.

Wraparound services are essentially a collection of support services delivered through a holistic method, taking into account each person's circumstances and particular needs. Multiple services work in a coordinated way to build long-term capabilities for individuals and families, which extend beyond any immediate crisis, providing skills to sustain a more stable living situation into the future.[56]

In order for wraparound services to be effective, a collaborative and coordinated services system is required that enables simple referrals that don't require people to retell their story multiple times.

Services might include support to maintain tenancies, alcohol and drug treatment, mental health care, parenting support, education and employment programs, as well as a myriad of other supports required by the individual.

Provision of support services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness acknowledges that although crucially important, housing in and of itself, is not sufficient to ensure that people are able to secure housing long term and participate in society.

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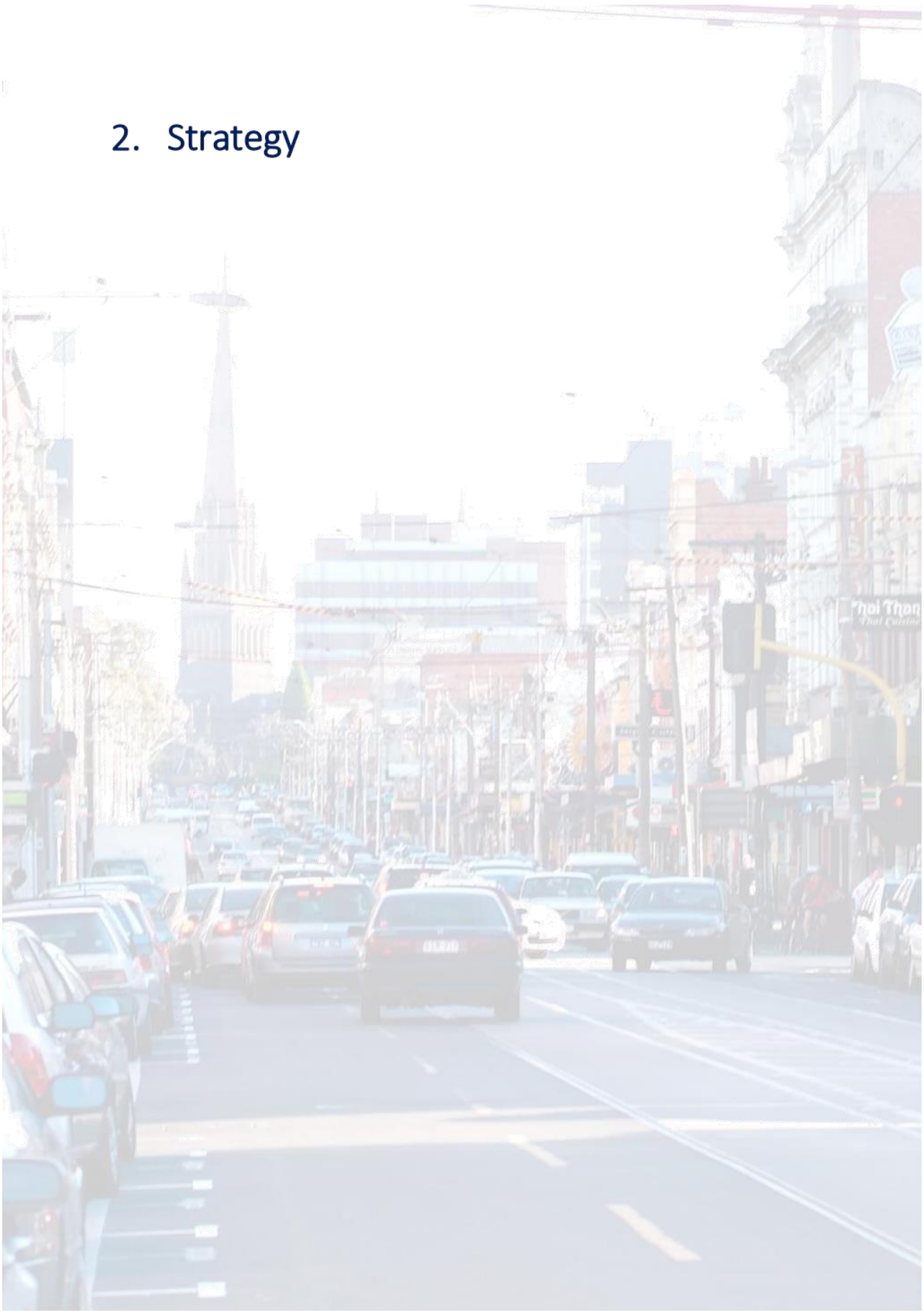
[54] AHURI Brief (2018) 'What is the Housing First model and how does it help those experiencing homelessness?'. Available at: https://www.ahuri.edu.au/policy/ahuri-briefs/what-is-the-housing-first-model (accessed 10 Oct 2019).
[55] Ibid
[56] Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia (2019) *Living on the edge: Inquiry into Intergenerational Welfare Dependence*, Canberra, p. 45, available at: https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/reportrep/024242/toc_pdf/LivingontheEdge.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf (Accessed 3 Oct 2019).

2. Strategy



2.1. Themes

In the development of the Homelessness Strategy some common themes were identified through consultation:

- There needs to be clarity around Council's response to homelessness and people sleeping rough. This includes educating stakeholders, and sustaining a cross-Council commitment to the Protocol.
- Collaboration and partnerships with local agencies were also raised, looking at a holistic and sustainable approach to addressing systemic factors leading to homelessness.
- Stakeholders were keen for Council to use its voice to advocate for preventing and addressing homelessness, including advocating for emergency crisis accommodation and social and affordable housing in Yarra as a way to break the cycle of homelessness.

It is clear that local government cannot work in isolation on this matter. In consultation with the community, including people with lived experience of homelessness, the following key priorities were developed. These priorities will be the foundation of our work moving forward.

2.2. Priority Areas

Yarra's three priority areas are:

Priority 1: An Informed Response to Rough Sleeping

Council will employ a coordinated and practical response to rough sleeping, engaging all areas of the organisation through our Rough Sleeping Protocol.

We will work across council, the homelessness sector and the community to develop best practice ways of utilising existing and potential resources most effectively.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1.1: COMPASSIONATE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SPACE

Ensure a compassionate approach in the management of homeless people and rough sleepers in Council's public spaces.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1.2: AN INFORMED COMMUNITY

Educate and advocate across Council about the systemic nature of homelessness and the duty of care a community has to ensure the human rights of all are protected.

Priority 2: Collaboration

Council will build on existing connections and create new partnerships with stakeholders and networks to work most effectively for sustainable, achievable and accountable outcomes for those who are homeless or sleeping rough in Yarra.

We will ensure that collaboration is not restricted by arbitrary municipal borders to ensure a realistic and holistic approach for a transient community.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2.1: EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Work with stakeholders and service providers to coordinate and partner on initiatives that will help people sleeping rough or at risk of homelessness in our municipality, and across inner metropolitan Melbourne.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2.2: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COLLABORATIONS

Be a key facilitator to ensure that people who are homeless, service providers, local businesses, and the community have a voice in the ongoing discussion about, and development of programs to address, homelessness and rough sleeping in Yarra.

Priority 3: Advocacy

Council is committed to using its voice to advocate on homelessness and rough sleeping matters that support positive and effective outcomes.

We are committed to protecting the human rights of residents and visitors to our municipality and will be a voice for the vulnerable and those living at risk.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4.1: ADVOCATE FOR IMPROVEMENT

Council will utilise our connections to advocate not only for availability of social and affordable housing, but also for appropriate funding and support of alcohol and drug services, mental health support services, and family support programs.

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3. Appendices

3.1. Appendix 1

HOW TO RESPOND TO ROUGH SLEEPING and SQUATTING IN YARRA

Last updated 2017

ISSUE AND RESPONSE

Homelessness and insecure housing are on the rise in large cities all around the world as housing affordability and other forces impact on the ability of people to get and keep their housing.

Over recent years Yarra has seen a rise in the number of people who are sleeping rough (for example on the streets, in parks, and in vehicles) and who are squatting in disused buildings. At the same time there has been a net loss of public housing and in the number of rooming house beds available to people who traditionally used rooming houses rather than slept rough.

You may come into contact with people who are experiencing homelessness and who may need help from homelessness services. Many residents and traders who come into contact with people sleeping rough call Council seeking ways to get them help.

This protocol aims to help staff respond effectively to homelessness by raising awareness of our homelessness referral procedures.

REFERRALS

We have an ongoing agreement with Launch Housing assertive outreach program to give us the resources to respond in a timely and effective way to rough sleeping. This agreement means Launch Housing will respond to our referrals within 48 hours, provide feedback, advice and other information on rough sleeping in the City of Yarra. They will also liaise with us on any actions we need to take that affect people sleeping rough.

How to make a referral:

- Use **yarraroughsleepers.com.au** to make a referral online,
- Email **roughsleeping@yarracity.vic.gov.au** or phone Council on **9205 5555** to advise officers of the location, description, duration of stay, any access points or information related to the health and wellbeing of the person/s sleeping rough or squatting.

All referrals, feedback and follow up information about rough sleeping in Yarra are collated at **roughsleeping@yarracity.vic.gov.au**

ROUGH SLEEPING

According to Homelessness Australia, around 6% of people experiencing homelessness sleep rough. Most people who are homeless are in overcrowded, insecure and inappropriate housing, such as staying with relatives, couch surfing, in rooming houses, or in unsafe and temporary dwellings. Most rough sleepers choose places that are as safe as possible, well lit, around people, and close to services.

If you have any concerns about safety, please ring police on **000**. If the situation is not urgent or unsafe, working collaboratively with the outreach team may be an option. In this case call Council on **9205 5555** or email **roughsleeping@yarracity.vic.gov.au**

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SLEEPING IN VEHICLES, TENTS

Our local laws acknowledge homelessness as special circumstances. Wherever possible, homeless people sleeping in tents and in vehicles should be referred for contact by the outreach team before our officers take action.

SQUATTING

If there are any concerns about safety of squatters, call the police on **000**. On private (including statutory authorities) premises, our Building Services team need to be informed to ensure premises are made safe. On council premises Building Maintenance needs to be informed.

HOMELESSNESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

All Victorians have a right to be in public spaces, and generally staff should only approach a person sleeping rough if:

- They appear distressed and/or in need of assistance.
- They are sheltering in circumstances that threaten the health and safety of themselves and/or others.
- They are accompanied by children who appear to be under 15 or appear to be under 17 themselves.
- Their behaviour threatens the safety and security of people around them or could result in damage to property or to the environment.
- Their safety is threatened by others.

We need to consider whether our decisions and actions are compatible with human rights under the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, which obliges Council to ensure people's rights are respected.

HOMELESS PEOPLE USING COUNCIL SERVICES

All people have a right to equal standards of service irrespective of their social status. Should staff have any concerns about safety around people using our services, call the police on **000**. For issues around behaviour that may relate to homelessness, you can seek advice from local homelessness agencies. Our Policy Advisor Housing and Homelessness **x5094** may assist in liaising with an appropriate service.

Or check out services on Ask Izzy **www.infoxchange.org/au/communityprograms/homeless-help**

Ask Izzy is a mobile website that connects people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with essential services such as shelter, food, clothing and health care.

ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

If you are witness to or have concerns about illegal activity call the police on 000 immediately. Our officers have no authority to act on issues that are police matters, including begging.

YARRA SYRINGE DISPOSAL HOTLINE

If you find needles or syringes in a public place or on private or council premises, call 9417 5125 or email **yarrasyringe.disposal@cohealth.org.au**

Your request will be acted on within 24 hours.

TOWARDS AN APPROPRIATE AND COORDINATED RESPONSE TO INCIDENTS RELATED TO HOMELESSNESS BY COUNCIL OFFICERS

The protocol is produced in accordance with Yarra Council's obligations under the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006.

AFTER HOURS OPTIONS

The Crisis Contact Centre (CCC) is a generalist service which provides a 24/7, 365 days of the year, statewide and local crisis response to people of all ages. It is a high volume service and responds to the diverse needs of over 8000 households each year. CCC also links people with other support providers to address post-crisis needs.

Free call 24/7: 1800 627 727 Phone: 9536 7777

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3.2 Appendix 2

YEAR 1 ACTION PLAN

Key priority 1: AN INFORMED RESPONSE TO ROUGH SLEEPING

STRATEGIC GOAL 1.1: COMPASSIONATE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SPACE

Ensure a compassionate and patient approach is utilised in the management of homeless people and rough sleepers in Council parks and public spaces.

Action	Implementation	Responsibility (including partners)
1.1.1 Respond effectively to people sleeping rough in Yarra	Continue to implement Council's 'How to Respond to Rough Sleeping and Squatting in Yarra Protocol' Continue to engage Launch Housing as the outreach contract to respond to rough sleeping in the municipality Provide assistance for people sleeping rough during extreme weather conditions eg. free gym passes	Community Partnerships Outreach Contract Recreation & Leisure People & Culture
1.1.2 Provide Council spaces and facilities that are safe, accessible and welcoming for people at risk of / or experiencing homelessness	Continue to implement strategies to ensure Council's parks, recreation facilities, libraries and other venues are accessible and inclusive Ensure all staff adopt a compassionate approach and response to people sleeping rough in Council's open spaces and facilities	Whole-of-Council

STRATEGIC GOAL 1.2: AN INFORMED COMMUNITY

Educate and advocate across Council, to local businesses, and to the broader community the systemic nature of homelessness and the duty of care a community has to ensure the human rights of all are protected.

Action	Implementation	Responsibility (including partners)
1.2.1 Ensure Councillors and officers are aware of homelessness referral procedures, and Council's responsibilities under the Victorian Charter of Human Rights	Communicate and promote the Protocol to staff utilising a range of media Facilitate information sessions for Council staff, including training on how to use the online rough sleeping reporting tool	Community Partnerships Communications

		Investigate inclusion of training in Council's internal training calendar	
1.2.2	Ensure the wider community, including residents and traders, are aware of homelessness referral procedures, and Council's responsibilities under the Victorian Charter of Human Rights	Facilitate community information sessions on Council's homelessness referral procedures Develop targeted resources for the community on Council's homelessness referral procedures	Community Partnerships Communications Economic Development
1.2.3	Encourage other municipalities to align with Council's 'How to Respond to Rough Sleeping and Squatting in Yarra Protocol'	Promote the Protocol at relevant meetings and networks Promote to the Protocol through external platforms	Community Partnerships Communications
1.2.4	Include the voice of people with lived experience of homelessness in the development of policies, strategies, and programs that affect them	Ensure community engagement processes involve people with lived experience of homelessness Ensure people with lived experience are invited to attend relevant networks and meetings where appropriate	Whole-of-Council
1.2.5	Develop methods of accessible forms of communication for hard to reach people, at risk of / or experiencing homelessness	Ensure that Council collateral is available in a variety of formats Investigate avenues for distributing collateral for hard to reach people	Community Partnerships

Key priority 2: COLLABORATION

STRATEGIC GOAL 2.1: EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Work with stakeholders and service providers to coordinate and partner on initiatives that will help people sleeping rough or at risk of homelessness in our municipality, and across inner metropolitan Melbourne.

Action	Implementation	Responsibility (including partners)
2.1.1 Continue to actively partner with key stakeholders on initiatives that address homelessness issues	Support and implement IMAP actions that address the prevention of homelessness, including participation in Street Count. Observe the Operating Protocol between Council and Victoria Police	Community Partnerships IMAP?? Victoria Police

STRATEGIC GOAL 2.2: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE COLLABORATIONS

Undertake a key facilitation role in ensuring that the voices of the homeless, service providers, local business, and the community can be heard in the ongoing discussion about, and development of programs to address, homelessness and rough sleeping in Yarra.

Action	Implementation	Responsibility (including partners)
2.2.1 Foster and facilitate relationships with key agencies and community service providers to strengthen support in the homelessness sector.	Continue to facilitate the Yarra Housing and Homelessness Network Continue to actively support other relevant networks including the Melbourne Metropolitan Rooming House Group Continue to work closely with services that respond to people at risk of / or experiencing homelessness including Victoria Police, Launch Housing, Council to Homeless Persons, Frontyard Youth Services and other local organisations Promote online platforms that provide information on services related to homelessness	Community Partnerships Family, Children's & Youth Services Aged & Disability Services Library Services
2.2.2 Support opportunities for people at risk of /	Support Council lead initiatives such as Billabong BBQ	Library Services Arts & Culture

or experiencing homelessness to connect with others	Promote and support events from service delivery teams to foster increased community engagement Support initiatives addressing homelessness through the Community Grants program	Recreation & Leisure Families, Children & Youth Services Community Partnerships Economic Development Community Grants

Key priority 3: ADVOCACY

STRATEGIC GOAL 3.1: ADVOCATE FOR IMPROVEMENT

Council will utilise our considerable reach and connections to advocate not only for availability of social and affordable housing, but also for appropriate funding and support of alcohol and drug services, mental health support services, and family support programs.

Action	Implementation	Responsibility (including partners)
3.1.1 Advocate at a local, state and federal level for an increase in more adequate (safe and secure) social and affordable housing in Yarra as a key way to address housing stress and homelessness.	Research and lobby at all levels of government for more crisis/emergency accommodation and transitional housing in Yarra, as part of the housing continuum, and to align with the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy. Ensure Council responds to future reviews of housing and homelessness Strengthen advocacy submissions by partnering with key stakeholders where appropriate	Social Policy Community Partnerships
3.1.2 Advocate at a local, state and federal level for an increase in funding for support and programs which focus on supporting vulnerable people and outreach to those experiencing primary homelessness	Research and lobby at all levels of government for relevant funding to prevent and support contributors of homelessness for example mental health, substance misuse issues, family violence, etc. Work with local networks and agencies on ways to advocate for funding to support issues connected to homelessness	
3.1.3 Facilitate events with the aim of raising awareness on issues relating to homelessness	Recognise, promote and coordinate activities for key events such as Homelessness Week, Anti-Poverty Week and Street Count Build on research, latest trends and best practice of addressing homelessness through coordinated initiatives	Community Partnerships Library Services

DRAFT

Attachment 2 - Discussion Background Paper Yarra Homelessness Strategy 2020-2023.

BACKGROUND & DISCUSSION PAPER

Homelessness Strategy 2020-2023

Author: Anne Barton, Homelessness Policy Advisor
Updated: May 2019

Attachment 2 - Discussion Background Paper Yarra Homelessness Strategy 2020-2023.

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1 Introduction

1.1 AIM OF THIS PAPER

This Background and Discussion Paper is to assist with the development of Yarra City Council's Homelessness Strategy 2020-2025. Initial consultation with key stakeholders, in particular people with lived experience of homelessness, will inform a draft Strategy for consideration by Council's Executive and Councillors. The endorsed draft will then proceed to public consultation.

The paper:

- Outlines the methodology being utilised to develop the Yarra City Council Homelessness Strategy 2020 – 2023;
- Provides a background to Yarra's historic and current response to homelessness through policy and action to date;
- Reviews current frameworks and strategic approaches at a local, state and international level;
- Raises key emerging trends and issues in homelessness and related areas; and,
- Sets out a template/framework for the strategy for feedback from internal and external stakeholders.

1.2 YARRA'S RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS

Previously, Yarra's strategic directions and actions in response to homelessness have been incorporated into Council's Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2012-2014. The organisation's operational response to homelessness has been guided by the Protocol for Responding to Rough Sleeping and Squatting in Yarra which was developed in 2012 (Attachment A), and by our Emergency Management response to people sleeping rough in extreme weather.

Development of Yarra's first Homelessness Strategy will ensure that Council's strategic directions, and operational responses to, homelessness will be well informed, principled, and sustained through a robust and constructive framework.

This paper benchmarks existing frameworks and principles at a local, state and international level to ensure Yarra's Homelessness Strategy is best practice. As the Strategy is effectively an 'unfunded commitment' (that is, a response in a policy area without a revenue stream to fund this activity (Beer et al, 2014 p.13) to be delivered within current budget, the paper will take a pragmatic and aspirational approach to the capacity and role of local government in delivering an effective strategy given that the drivers of homelessness are systemic, and where policy levers are controlled by state and federal governments.

2 Methodology

This Background and Discussion Paper has been developed after desk research, and initial discussions with key networks, local service providers and the Department of Health and Human Services (Housing). Outlined below are the next steps in the process for developing and finalising the strategy.

- Distribute this Background and Discussion Paper to seek input and feedback on the contents and suggested template of the strategy from:
    - Key members of the Yarra Housing and Homelessness Network;
    - Homelessness policy officers in neighbouring inner Melbourne municipalities
    - Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP);
    - Other key stakeholders (internal and external); and,
    - People with lived experience of homelessness.
- Development of the draft Strategy for consideration by members of Executive.
- Feedback incorporated in final draft for consideration by Councillors.
- Release of the draft strategy for public consultation.
- Consultation results incorporated into strategy for final endorsement by Council.

3 Definitions, Data & Protocols

3.1 HOMELESSNESS DEFINED

While there is no universally agreed definition of homelessness, the ABS define it as a lack of one or more of the elements that represent home, which may include a sense of security, stability, privacy, safety and the ability to control living space, conceptualised as a broad phenomenon incorporating six 'operational groups' (ABS 2012):

- Persons living in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out
- Persons in supported accommodation for the homeless
- Persons staying temporarily with other households
- Persons in other temporary lodgings
- Persons living in 'severely' crowded dwellings

The Victorian Government's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan references a further definition in terms of length of homelessness. These three groups have different support requirements due to the "stage" of their homelessness:

- **Recently homeless and sleeping rough** due to personal crises such as eviction, job loss, family violence or relationship breakdown – many of whom will successfully resolve their homelessness, either independently, or with the help of specialist homelessness services
- **Sleeping rough for an extended period of time** (that is, longer than 12 months) who have multiple related issues – such as mental and physical illness, alcohol and other drug use issues and past trauma – and are unlikely to successfully negotiate and sustain a pathway out of chronic homelessness without intensive resources and ongoing support
- **Chronic homelessness and rough sleeping** following their release or discharge from institutional settings including prisons, youth justice centres and inpatient health facilities, as well as young people leaving out-of-home care.

3.2 RATES OF HOMELESSNESS - UNIVERSAL

Rates of homelessness have grown over the last decade nationally and internationally. In the 2016 Census, it was estimated that 116,000 people in Australia were homeless, an increase of 4.6% from 2011, with people in severely overcrowded dwellings, elderly and younger people, and people sleeping rough, the groups with the largest spikes.

Meanwhile, recent data on homelessness across a number of EU countries show significant increases - for example, in the UK, homelessness increased 150% from 2014-2016. Finland's drop of 18% and Norway's of 36% in numbers of people experiencing homelessness are the anomalies. Interestingly, from a policy perspective, both approached homelessness as a housing problem and a violation of fundamental rights, and developed integrated and decentralised strategies (FEANTSA 2018 p. 16).
In Victoria, 24,817 were homeless in 2016, an increase of 46% on the 2006 census (CHP website). Over the five-year period to 2016–17, there has been a 72 per cent increase in the number of "first time" rough sleepers assisted by Victorian homelessness services (AIHW 2018). This indicates that the number of people sleeping rough is trending upwards at a significant rate. As a result, the sector is overwhelmed by demand for homelessness services, many of which have remained unchanged for decades.

At the February 2019 launch of 'A Crisis in Crisis' report by the North and West Homelessness Network, it was noted that Victoria's homeless numbers have increased by up to 86% in the north and west since 2016, and have worsened over the past 12 months, while since 2013 there has been a loss of over 500 emergency accommodation beds. Numbers of people living in overcrowded dwellings has increased by 91% across Melbourne's west.

3.3 RATES OF HOMELESSNESS – YARRA

The 2016 ABS homeless count for Yarra was a total of 844, with 66 experiencing primary homelessness, a similar number to the 2011 census. However, this data is not reflected in current Officer and assertive outreach experience in the municipality. The on-the-ground experience is consistent growth in numbers of reported rough sleeping sites, and increasing complexity of incidents related to primary homelessness.

Prior to 2012, Council Officers were generally able to respond to issues related to homelessness through referrals to local specialist homelessness services Hanover Assertive Outreach, and HomeGround Services. At this time, Council Officer referrals of people sleeping rough and in squats were infrequent. This hands-off response to homelessness aligned with Yarra's long-standing support for specialist local organisations to address homelessness and concurrent impacts of disadvantage, recognising the specialist expertise needed for responding to people experiencing homelessness. To facilitate effective local responses, Yarra has targeted yearly community grants (currently worth around $70,000 a year) to local organisations to run programs and projects for people experiencing disadvantage.

In 2012 it became apparent that numbers of people sleeping rough in Yarra were increasing to the point that Officers across the organisation were regularly required to respond to residents and traders who were looking to Council for action. In consultation with Hanover Assertive Outreach team and other local homelessness services, Council developed an internal protocol to assist staff to respond most effectively (Attachment A)

However, growing numbers of rough sleeping sites in 2013 led to Council taking a more proactive approach. Supported by the principles outlined in the protocol, Council developed an agreement with Hanover Welfare Services and HomeGround Services (since merged to become Launch Housing) to deliver an enhanced response through a small amount of funding from Council. The agreement enabled a faster, better coordinated and more effective referral system that leads to better outcomes for people sleeping rough in Yarra.

Since 2013 this arrangement has delivered improved capacity for Council Officers, local residents, traders and local organisations to address the impacts of systemic failure at other levels of government. In 2018, a full time Engagement Officer position was created to facilitate Council's actions related to primary homelessness in an increasingly complex environment.

3.4 YARRA POLICY CONTEXT & APPROACH

The existing response to homelessness and the intention to develop a formal Homelessness Strategy aligns with key objectives and directions outlined in the Yarra Council Plan (which incorporates the Public Health and Wellbeing Plan), and the Social Justice Charter (under development).

The Council Plan 2017 – 2021 commits to:

1 A HEALTHY YARRA Community health, safety and wellbeing are a focus in everything we do
2 AN INCLUSIVE YARRA Inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated

A key strategy outlined in the Plan is to promote an effective and compassionate approach to rough sleeping and advocate for affordable, appropriate housing (Strategy 1.7).

Further, the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 is a Victorian law that sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. The Charter requires public authorities, such as Victorian state and local government departments and agencies, and people delivering services on behalf of government, to act consistently with the human rights in the Charter. To support the effective protection of the rights of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, Human Rights Law Centre and Justice Connect have released an advocacy guide for public authorities.

The Charter, similarly to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, acts as a yardstick by which we measure right and wrong, in particular by articulating rights and freedoms to which every human being is equally and inalienably entitled. The power of both the Charter and the Universal Declaration

is the power of ideas to change the world, to inspire us to continue working to empower people to demand what should be guaranteed: their human rights.

Under the Charter, local councils must ensure that:

- all council decisions give proper consideration to human rights;
- all actions, policies and services are compatible with human rights;
- local laws are interpreted and applied consistently with human rights; and,
- people who work on behalf of councils do so in a way that respects human rights.

The current response focuses on understanding and addressing the impacts of homelessness, and its aim is to support actions that work for a community where inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are not only welcome but fundamental goals.

The intent of the Strategy to be developed is to underpin the existing strategic directions of Council through targeted community grants; through advocacy on behalf of marginalised people, and through partnerships and collaborations with stakeholders working to improve the health and wellbeing of people who are impacted by homelessness.

4 Benchmarking

For the purposes of this paper several strategies were examined to assist with the development of robust strategic directions for this strategy.

4.1 INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES

Vancouver, Canada

"Addressing Homelessness in Metro Vancouver" (2017) uses local information to build a case for urgent action to address the underlying problems driving the increase. In Metro Vancouver, approximately five people a week become homeless. Their conceptual framework is focussed on strategies to prevent homelessness, to service people who are currently homeless, and to create pathways out of homelessness. The strategy notes 'extraordinary resources are being expended by municipal staff trying to keep up with an ever-increasing homeless population and the associated community impacts' (p.4) in support of advocating for a systems wide response and long-term solutions. The strategy also notes that homelessness is estimated to cost $55,000 per person annually in the region versus $37,000 for housing and support (p.7).

Portugal

The Portuguese Homelessness Strategy has the following strategic directions: promote knowledge, understanding and awareness; strengthen intervention to promote integration; and strengthen coordination monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Supported by biannual action plans including: civil society action; local models of innovative collaborations; rights based approach towards social problems; and a wide range of stakeholders (public and private). For success, it needs highest level of political endorsement with a legal requirement to take action, clear responsibilities and resources allocation. strong evidence base, clear evidence base; and clear identification of financial resources. The strategy underlines the situation rather than the individual; regional and state-wide dynamics; advocates support people experiencing homelessness to achieve full citizenship; and processes that ensure high public visibility of homelessness in the wider society.

European Overview

The "Third Overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe 2018" brings together the lessons from Europe through examining the effectiveness of strategies developed by EU nations. It notes that homelessness is a fast-growing problem, leading to 'increasingly severe saturation of support systems and increased

pressure on emergency services' (p.4). It also notes that the fight against homelessness must be accompanied by market interventions (p.5) and calls for 'coordinated action across all relevant sectoral policies (health, employment, social protection, training, migration and justice' (p.8).

Using evidence from the two European countries (Norway and Finland) who have seen a reduction in the number of homeless people, the Overview lists five factors integral to a strategy to end homelessness (pp.23-29):

- Users and their rights should be at the centre of the strategy;
- Housing First – a response that makes housing systematically and rapidly available for homeless people;
- Adequate resources need to be mobilised to reach goals;
- A continuous and constant strategy; and,
- Multilevel governance with responsibilities defined.

The report also lists four pitfalls to avoid (pp.30-34):

- A light touch policy with watered down goals;
- 'Paper policies' - not acting on a strategy;
- Developing an ambitious strategy and sabotaging outcomes by criminalising people experiencing homelessness; and,
- Policy silos that do not reflect the complex interplay of responsibilities, resources, organisations, and practices.

Housing First / Common Ground Approach (Universal)

The Common Ground philosophy is an example of the "housing first" or "home first" approach to homelessness that aims to facilitate immediate entry into permanent accommodation. It reverses the established approach, sometimes described as a "staircase" model, which guides clients through different levels of time-limited temporary housing until they qualify for a permanent residence.

Australian and international evidence strongly supports Housing First programs as the most effective way of achieving housing stability and improved well-being for people with histories of chronic homelessness.

The Housing First Ending Chronic Homelessness Paper (Council to Homeless Persons, 2018) states the following key principles of Housing First:

- People have a right to a home
- Flexible support for as long as it is needed
- Housing and support are separated
- Active engagement
- Individuals have choice and control
- The service is based on people's strengths & aspirations
- A harm reduction approach is used

The paper states that after two years, 70% of people in the Street to Home program were in independent secure accommodation. After four years 75% of Journey to Social Inclusion participants remained in stable housing. This success in Australia is due to assertive outreach being combined with Housing First to engage, house and support vulnerable, long-term rough sleepers.

4.2 NATIONAL & STATE APPROACHES

National

The national context was put succinctly by Homelessness Australia, in April 2017:

'Access to housing that is safe and affordable is the most critical factor in preventing and ending homelessness. Australia has a shortfall of over 500,000 rental dwellings that are affordable and

available to households on the lowest 40% of incomes. As of June 2016, there were 194,592 applicants waiting for social housing across the country's social housing programs. This includes public housing, State Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing and community housing. Across these three types of social housing, around 59,000 people were categorised as being in greatest need.'

According to the Commonwealth Department of Social Services website, state and territory governments are responsible for service delivery, whilst the Commonwealth supports state and territory governments in their role of providing services to the homeless, or those at risk of homelessness, with funding through the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH).

In the 2017-18 Budget, the Government announced it was working with the states and territories to reform the NAHA and the NPAH into the new National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA).

Victoria

At a state government level, Victoria's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2018 builds on the Victorian Government's Homes for Victorians Strategy (2017) in response to growing homelessness and housing need across the state. This is part of a broader reform of the specialist homelessness service system (p.11).

The Action Plan funding for specialist homelessness services delivers on early intervention, early housing of rough sleepers, post housing supports, and an effective and responsive homelessness service system.

While the Plan recognises "the successful resolution of rough sleeping must begin with housing" (p.18)' in effect it looks for improvements in the existing system while planning for short term housing responses such as transitional housing, two year modular housing and head leasing (renting properties from private landlords to house tenants eligible for social housing), and for assisting people into private rental.

The Rough Sleeping Action Plan has a matrix approach to addressing the issue – it has 4 key themes that have targeted actions depending on the at-risk client base (see matrix approach over page).

	At Risk Cohorts		
Strategy Theme	Recently homeless and sleeping rough	Sleeping rough for an extended period of time	At risk of chronic homelessness and rough sleeping
Intervening early to prevent homelessness	Targeted Actions	Targeted Actions	Targeted Actions
Providing **stable** accommodation as quickly as possible	Targeted Actions	Targeted Actions	Targeted Actions
Support to maintain stable accommodation	Targeted Actions	Targeted Actions	Targeted Actions
An effective and responsive homelessness **service system**	Targeted Actions	Targeted Actions	

The Victorian government's commitment to a build of 1000 new public housing units and funds for the community housing sector to grow long term housing will not provide the 30,000 new builds per year over ten years called for by the Council to Homeless Persons' Everybody's Home campaign.

Western Australia

The Western Australian Strategy to End Homelessness was developed in 2018 by the WA Alliance to End Homelessness, a community-led initiative informed by a community campaign and an extensive consultation process with the sector. It advocates for a whole of society response to achieve a ten year plan to end homelessness in WA through:

- A Housing First response, where services are wrapped around people after they are housed;
- Advocating through a business case for ending homelessness;
- Using coordination and partnerships for success in key actions;
- Building community capacity.

The Western Australian Government responded by developing a 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness which commits to expand and build on the work of the Alliance, strongly informed by people with lived experience and by the sector, and to continue strong collaboration with the Alliance in delivering on the strategy.

4.3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT APPROACHES

The role of local government in responding to homelessness is not straightforward. As the tier of government that is closest to their communities and providing a range of direct and indirect services, the majority of local governments in Australia do not see responding to homelessness as part of core business.

In part this has been philosophical. Cost shifting from Federal and State Governments is an ongoing issue which severely strains local governments' funding capacity to meet the variety of services and infrastructure required and expected by communities.

A further reason local government have not seen homelessness as within their responsibilities is due to lack of internal awareness and specialised expertise. However, being public space managers and having comprehensive regulatory powers affecting the community inevitably requires that authorised officers respond to primary homelessness in their municipalities.

Research by Beer and Prance at the University of Adelaide (2013) found that most local governments believe that all three tiers of government have responsibility to respond, to work in partnership with other NGO stakeholders to bring in expertise, and to clarify the roles of different levels of government in this response. This research suggested a toolkit to better equip local governments for their specific role. The proposed toolkit would include training for elected officials, human rights modules, a library of exemplar documents and networking to share expertise between councils.

Given that many local governments are already active responders, and in many cases are using local partnerships with specialist services and other groups addressing homelessness, this paper has looked

at a range of local policies and strategic responses through which to develop the grounds for a strategic response.

City of Port Philip and City of Melbourne

Two neighbouring municipalities to Yarra, the City of Port Phillip and the City of Melbourne, have developed homelessness strategies to guide their responses to homelessness. Both approach the role of local government as one based on considerations of local governments' strengths, opportunities and capacities. The strategies' shared themes, which reflect both the strengths and challenges of local governments in the homelessness landscape, are:

- Local government's ability to know the municipality, so that responses are well informed, and to share this information with partners;
- A practice of working in collaboration and looking for joined up integrated responses and useful connections that bring in necessary expertise;
- Making sure the voices of people with lived experience are part of the picture, a mindful practice of making consultation and other forums inclusive; and
- Taking actions that focus on early intervention and prevention, and that build community resilience and capacity for social inclusion

Both these strategies have in common an explicit acknowledgement of the rights of people experiencing homelessness, in particular councils' obligations under the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006.

They also include the need for a collaborative, integrated, whole of community response; the complexity of homelessness, including its invisibility apart from rough sleeping (around 7% of total numbers of homeless); and doing what local governments are best placed to do: know their local community. Both strategies reflect the opportunities for local governments to impact on individual and community well-being, and the limits to local government agency around addressing homelessness as a housing problem.

Parramatta

Parramatta City Council Homelessness Policy 2011 applied their understanding of local need and of the local impacts of homelessness to develop a Homelessness Policy to minimise homelessness in the Parramatta LGA, and in doing so to improve the wellbeing of those at risk and those who are homeless. These aims are explicitly linked to the prosperity of the City for the benefit of the wider business and residential community. The policy objectives (contribute to the prevention of homelessness; support and work with the local homelessness sector; maintain and promote use of public space and assets for the whole of community; champion regional planning and partnerships; and implement, monitor and evaluate the homelessness policy and implementation plan) point to the particular strengths of local government.

5 Key Issues for Consideration

In the context of the above selective examples of strategic responses to homelessness and the increasing rates as identified in section 3 of this Paper, it is worth noting that Homelessness Australia, the national peak body for homelessness in Australia, was defunded by the Federal Government in December 2014. It now operates on a voluntary basis and has no employed staff. Up to the time of its de-funding it provided systemic advocacy for the homelessness sector, a wide variety of advice and information for the community and organisations such as local government seeking a range of supports for their initiatives in addressing homelessness. Meanwhile there continues to be a strategic vacuum at Federal Government level addressing housing and homelessness. The hands-off approach as identified on their own website is that it is for State and Local Governments to address.

5.1 A Systemic Issue

While homelessness is a housing issue, it is not **just** a housing issue. As homelessness occurs within a complex landscape of micro and macro factors, and is often referred to as a systemic or structural issue, it is worth noting some of the emerging trends behind rising homelessness and inequality.

Johnson and Jacobs (2014) address the complexity around causes of homelessness, in particular the interconnection of structure and agency, by recognising that homelessness is a lived experience that is shaped by social factors (such as perspectives that pathologise homelessness and lead to stigma) as well as structural factors like poverty, disconnection from the labour market, and lack of housing for low income households. This interconnection can be described as constituting a pathway into homelessness reflecting a particular interaction between individuals and institutions (pp.32-43).

One example of an institutional/individual interaction that can impact disproportionately on people already at risk of homelessness is the current Federal Government review of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) reported in ProBono Australia on 22 February 2019. The Administrative Appeals Tribunal noted a 77% increase in appeals against decisions against applications for the DSP. Of 104,000 DSP claims in 2017-2018, about 73,000 were unsuccessful. Disability advocates are concerned the tougher eligibility requirements will force people onto Newstart (a drop from $916 a fortnight on the DSP to $550 a fortnight for a single person).

Housing insecurity and housing stress (where low-income households are paying over 30% of their income in housing costs) drive rates of homelessness. Economist Dr Jim Stanford's scorecard on national economic performance (The Australia Institute 2016) suggests the Australian economy is 'headed into very challenging times'. His advice is for 'concrete pragmatic strategies to boost spending, support job creation, and stabilise all debt burdens' (p.19). Stanford notes the post-war increase in housing costs leading to a steady increase in household debts. Total personal debt now exceeds 130% of GDP, one of the highest personal debt burdens in the world (p.14). With current indications of a slowdown in the capital city housing markets, he notes the risks of a personal debt crisis due to growing Australian mortgage debt.

Certain groups and households are susceptible to homelessness, which indicates that personal attributes are not part of a full picture of homelessness. Disadvantage can be multi-generational, geographic, health related, and connected to trauma, often to childhood trauma. This situation is compounded by the impact of lack of safe and appropriate housing – for those with compound trauma, being homeless can lead to worse mental health and higher levels of drug and alcohol use, leading to what is known as churning, where people are housed many times, but without the opportunity and or support to address trauma, housing can break down and people become homeless again.

The Productivity Commission report of August 2018 notes deep and persistent disadvantage in Australia, where the low economic resources of around 3% of the population (roughly 700 000 people) means a life of poverty, material deprivation and social exclusion that is indicative of entrenched inequality (p.8). The groups most likely to experience this entrenched inequality are people living in single parent families, unemployed people, people with disabilities, and Indigenous Australians, with children living in jobless households particularly at risk. These are the people behind the comment: 'Deep social exclusion showed a small and sustained rise after 2012' (p.28)

The report noted that 'the fact that inequality levels are so different among developed countries hints at the scope for policies, institutions and political environments to shape inequality' (p. 25), that 'housing or health policies could be better fashioned to address more directly' these complex challenges', and that 'On average, income tax and highly targeted transfers reduce income inequality by about a third' (p.25) This is supported by research at the People's Poverty Project into whether increasing employment or increasing social spending most reduced poverty across OECD countries. The researcher came to the conclusion that 'developed countries achieve low levels of poverty through large welfare states' (Lewis 2018).

5.2 Local Government – What Should We Focus On?

A strong advocacy role is one of the ways local governments can take community leadership on homelessness. One option for this strategy is to reframe homelessness in ways that can raise community awareness and understanding of an issue that, by all indications, will continue to grow in the near future.

In his 2018 book No Place Like Home, Peter Mares notes that housing wealth is the flip side of housing affordability, although the two are rarely connected, and the current housing situation in Australia indicates political failure. As a secure home is central to human welfare, to be without a home stunts productivity and impoverishes society as a whole (p.8), and Mares names this as a moral problem, as 'to approach housing as a moral issue, as a question of justice, brings us inevitably to homelessness' (p.10).

Abundant evidence suggests not only that there are effective political and policy responses that will lead to a reduction in homelessness, it also suggests that nation states choose not to implement those political and policy responses, which then becomes a moral concern.

This option is supported by working off the idea of fairness. In Australia, writes Mike Berry (who has been one of Melbourne's preeminent housing researchers for many decades) we continue to have 'deeply embedded, morally energised views on fairness' (p.98). For Berry, we have a 'moral intuition' which we use to justify moral positions which, through interactions with others, become more objective and aware (p.104). Creating opportunities for public conversations, and engaging the whole of the community on homelessness, may create opportunities for interactions that could shift understanding of homelessness.

Another question for consideration is the inclusion of people with lived experience in the development of the strategy. For a public authority with regulatory responsibilities there are challenges to embedding the perspective of people with lived experience in policy development. However, to limit the inclusion of people with lived experience maintains a hierarchy that can lead to policies that are limited in ambition and capacity. To create ongoing and constant involvement of the people for whom the policy has deep personal impact may lead to more effective strategic implementation.

Morally, what is in question is the idea of what a decent society should be, of issues of justice and basic political principles. If we consider the suggestion by Nussbaum (2005) that a state has an affirmative duty to create conditions in which people have all they need for well-being, it is the critical and deliberative character of real people that must be at the heart of any conception of well-being, which exposes the inadequacy of economic approaches to wellbeing. According to the local Government Act 1989, objectives of a council need to be to work for the wellbeing of the local community.

While the strategic examples touched on here offer a range of ideas and principles that could inform Yarra's Homelessness Strategy, to date Yarra has prioritised a response to homelessness in the municipality that attempts to ameliorate the impacts of homelessness on the whole community without compromising the wellbeing of people experiencing homelessness. It is a response characterised as much as possible by kindness, fairness, inclusion, collaboration and an understanding of a shared humanity that overrides wealth and privilege.

6 Development of Strategy

A systemic issue requires a systemic approach and response.

In developing a strategy to address homelessness what is clear from the background research is that a local government cannot work in isolation on this matter – partnerships with local networks and specialist service providers will be vital to the success of any document created. Further, the strategy developed by Yarra will be a more successful, effective and actionable document if it can reflect the voices of people with lived experience and the specific needs of the local community, whilst being aligned with the strategic directions of bordering municipalities (IMAP) and the Victorian State Government. This framework will ensure a unified approach to an issue that is not bound by arbitrary municipal borders.

The completed document should engage and inform the whole of the community on homelessness. Creating a greater understanding of the "what, why and who" will allow the broader community to more invested in the goals of the strategy being achieved.

6.1 FRAMEWORK (TEMPLATE)

The aim of this section is to provide a structure and direction which external and internal stakeholders can review and then provide input and/or feedback. Outlined below is a draft template (contents page) for the Yarra Homelessness Strategy.

Section	Ideas/Content
Acknowledgement of Country & Foreword (Mayor)	Statement of intent
The Facts – What, Who, How, and Why	Definitions of Homelessness, Client Cohorts in Yarra (stats), Causes/Systemic reasons for Homelessness
Council's Vision and Position	Policy context and historical approach, including how this policy relates to other Council strategies
Themes & Actions *(see below)*	Present 4 key themes for Yarra (see table below for potential examples) and then targeted actions.
Whole of Community – A Systemic Approach	Section addressing the partnership approach to required - roles of networks, specialist service providers, police, businesses, hospitals, GPS, etc. LGA as facilitator and advocate.
Protocol for Responding to Rough Sleeping and Squatting in Yarra	Will this document be updated, still play an operational role? This needs to be determined and included in strategy if still to be operational guide.

Themes

Outline below are 4 possible themes for the Yarra Homelessness Strategy which could be used as the foundation for actions to be implemented by Council and its partners in this sphere. The themes (draft) are specific to the areas that local government can influence in the day to day issue of homelessness, whilst correlating to the key issues raised in the Australian Homelessness Monitor 2018.

Advocacy: Using Council's voice to not only advocate on housing and homelessness matters but also systemic social issues which are catalysts for homelessness, such as lack of appropriate housing and poverty.

Communication Develop an evidence based message about homelessness that reflects the voices of people with lived experience and aims to raise community awareness and promote understanding of the systemic nature of homelessness.

Community Connections Working across council, the homelessness sector and the community to develop best practice ways of utilising existing and potential resources most effectively.

Partnerships Building on and creating connections to stakeholders to work most effectively internally and externally for sustainable and achievable outcomes that work for the well-being of Yarra's vulnerable residents.

It is clear from the strategies reviewed in the development of this Paper that the Yarra Strategy should be a "lived" document containing real life stories/case studies. Where appropriate, pictures of, and verbatim quotes from, people who have lived experience of homelessness and specialist service providers will make the strategy a much more relatable document.

6.2 CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT

The next stage of developing this strategy will be to consult with key networks, internal stakeholders, and the executive team on the intended themes and framework for the document (Section 6.1).

It is intended that people with lived experience participate in the development of the strategy at crucial stages, in recognition of their acknowledged expertise and understanding of the issues the strategy aims to address.

On completion of the draft strategy (based on feedback from stakeholders) the document will be processed internally, and once the draft strategy is adopted by Council it will be released for public consultation.

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Attachment 2 - Discussion Background Paper Yarra Homelessness Strategy 2020-2023.

Attachment A

Protocol for Responding to Rough Sleeping and Squatting in Yarra 2012

11.8 Social and Affordable Housing Strategy

Executive Summary

Purpose

To seek Council endorsement of the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and updated *Policy Guidance Note: Affordable Housing Outcomes at Significant Developments* and report on the program of consultation on the Draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and how this feedback has been addressed by officers.

Key Issues

House prices in the City of Yarra have increased at a rate of 130 percent between 2006 and 2016, as compared to a 63 percent increase in salaries.

This has affected a range of income groups, from the increase in those sleeping rough on our streets, to key workers who are forced to travel ever longer distances to work in our municipality, or who are placed under financial stress to remain here.

It is estimated that 3,570 households in Yarra have an unmet need for affordable housing. This represents about nine percent of the current population.

It is clear that the private market is unable to adequately address these issues, and that there is a need for a spectrum of subsidised housing products to accommodate the range of affordable housing needs.

A Social and Affordable Housing Strategy has been developed to outline Council's role and preferred strategies to contribute to an increase in social and affordable housing in Yarra.

Financial Implications

The majority of directions in the Strategy can be delivered within existing budgeted resources. The existing contribution to social and affordable housing through the annual grants program is recorded as an ongoing commitment. This is valued at up to $50,000.

Strategic Direction 2 'Make effective and prudent direct investments in social and affordable housing' proposes to investigate the contribution of Council's own assets, such as buildings or air space above car parks or community facilities, for social and affordable housing. The strategy does not obligate Council to make any such undertakings. Council has, however, committed $100,000 to complete a feasibility study into realising affordable and social housing outcomes in the Collingwood Town Hall Precinct.

PROPOSAL

That Council:

(a) notes the officer's report in relation to the proposed new Social and Affordable Housing Strategy;

(b) notes the findings from the consultation program and how feedback has been addressed in finalising the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy;

(c) notes the information provided on tiny houses as per Council Resolution 6318 on 27 August 2019; and

(d) endorses the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Updated Policy Guidance Note: Affordable Housing Outcomes at Significant Developments.

11.8 Social and Affordable Housing Strategy

Reference: D19/186666
Authoriser: Unit Manager Social Policy and Research

Purpose

1. To seek Council endorsement of the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and updated *Policy Guidance Note: Affordable Housing Outcomes at Significant Developments*.
2. To report on the program of consultation on the Draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and how this feedback has been addressed by officers.
3. To provide information on Tiny Houses, as per Council Resolution 6318 on 27 August 2019.

Background

4. On 25 June 2019, Council resolved to seek stakeholder and broader community feedback on the Draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy.
5. Public consultation on the draft Strategy occurred between 23 July and 23 August 2019. By and large respondents were highly informed and engaged and fundamentally supportive of the strategies and directions.
6. The final Strategy that is presented (see Attachment 1) has been updated to address the feedback received during the consultation process. There have been changes to some strategic directions, additional sections added and more information included within pre-existing sections.
7. Significantly, the overarching strategy and four strategic directions have been well supported throughout the consultation, with suggestions for improvement being implemented in the final draft.
8. The most substantial changes resulting from the stakeholder and broader community feedback are as follows:
    (a) To improve document legibility, and clarify what is and isn't in scope, section 1.2 'Document Outline and Scope' was added;
    (b) Section 1.3 'Review' was added to record how the Strategy in its practical application will be reported upon to the Council, and in turn, to the community;
    (c) Expanded upon section 1.4 'Why Social and Affordable Housing matters in Yarra' so as to emphasise the value of increasing social and affordable housing in what is a well located and well serviced municipality;
    (d) The consideration of target groups for social and affordable housing has been developed and is located at section 3.3. There is a better explanation of the concept of vulnerability, how specific groups are more likely to be vulnerable in relation to securing housing and how the particular needs of different target groups should be accommodated in terms of housing products (e.g. accessibility, number of bedrooms, in-reach services);
    (e) The Draft Strategy stated that Council's expectations for affordable housing at significant new developments will be adjusted in accordance with presence or absence of subsidy or incentives. This direction was considered to generate ambiguity concerning Council's expectation and has been removed and replaced; and
    (f) The pre-existing policy positions concerning affordable housing requirement at significant new developments (i.e. 10%) have been reaffirmed and strengthened and are now recorded at Direction 1.1.1 as follows:

When land is rezoned to allow residential use, this positively impacts the site value and Council considers that it is reasonable to capture some of this value and direct it towards improving the provision of affordable housing in the municipality.

Council will continue to seek provisions for at least 10% affordable housing transferred to a registered housing agency, or an alternative of equal or better benefit, to the satisfaction of Council, at the rezoning of land for residential use that allows more than 50 dwellings.

9. The Strategy retains its principal focus on increasing the supply of long-term social and affordable housing. It is this hard infrastructure that provides the foundation from which people can then participate in society and engage with other supports, networks and services.

10. While local governments are not the main player when it comes to social and affordable housing – this is the responsibility of the Commonwealth. state and territory governments – councils can support social and affordable housing through a number of routes, including:

    (a) in their role as a planning authority;

    (b) through material support such as grants or leveraging assets (buildings, land);

    (c) by partnering with and facilitating the work of other stakeholders; and

    (d) through advocacy to other levels of government.

11. Accordingly, the four strategic directions stated in this plan flow from the overarching strategy to increase the supply of affordable housing, and are based on the roles identified for local government to support an increase of social and affordable housing supply at the municipal level.

    (a) *Strategic Direction 1: Be a leading local government in realising affordable housing outcomes at new developments across Yarra;*

    (b) *Strategic Direction 2: Make effective and prudent direct investments in social and affordable housing;*

    (c) *Strategic Direction 3: Partner, facilitate and engage with all stakeholders to increase social and affordable housing in Yarra; and*

    (d) *Strategic Direction 4: Continue to pursue evidence-based, strategic advocacy to other levels of government for improved housing outcomes.*

12. The Policy Guidance Note (attached as an Appendix to the Strategy) has been updated so as to correspond with the Strategy and its directions. The following updates have been made:

    (a) Explicit reference is made to the value captured in rezoning land to include residential use and how this value is being directed to promote affordable housing outcomes;

    (b) It is articulated that anyone considering buying land in the municipality where there is an affordable housing requirement (i.e. in a Development Plan Overlay) must consider this prior to purchase;

    (c) The affordable housing requirement was redrafted to read ‘at least 10% of dwellings, or an alternative arrangement of equal or better benefit, to the satisfaction of Council’. This drafting communicates that Council may consider alternate proposals (for example, three townhouses suitable for families instead of five one bedroom or studio apartments) but will not countenance anything of lesser worth;

    (d) It is recorded that a Housing Diversity Report will be required by Council and that this report is to:

        (i) analyse the types of people and households anticipated to live within the development;

(ii) respond to the Specified Matters under Section 3AA(2) (Guidance For Seeking And Negotiating Affordable Housing Agreements Under the Planning and Environment Act 1987);

(iii) outline a preferred delivery model for realising the agreed affordable housing outcome;

(iv) provide evidence of discussion with registered housing agencies; and

(v) provide financial information pertaining to project feasibility.

(e) Specific groups with an identified need for affordable housing are listed as per section 3.3 of the Strategy;

(f) Expectations around tenure-blindness, accessibility and energy-efficiency are included to align with Strategic Direction 1.2;

(g) Insertion of current data on affordable housing need was inserted to support strategic justification; and

(h) The 'Policy basis' section was expanded (i.e. the supporting statutory and policy environment of Council and the Victorian Government).

13. The Strategy, its directions and the updated Policy Guidance Note are reflective of the opportunities that can actually be leveraged by Council in the policy and legislative environment as it is currently.

14. Naturally, a level of responsiveness will be required to address any changes that arise. For instance, if the current system of voluntary affordable housing agreements becomes superseded by mandatory mechanism, Council will need to update its guidance and the local planning scheme accordingly.

External Consultation

15. An Industry Affordable Housing workshop was hosted by Council officers (with several Councillors in attendance) on 16 April 2019 at the Fitzroy Reading Room. Representatives from community housing, property development, banking and finance and academic sectors attended on the day with views and comments from the forum informing the draft Strategy.

16. At the same time, a discrete piece of work was commissioned to interview community housing organisations with a presence in Yarra to understand their experiences of housing need and preferred role of Council. An individual meeting was also held with the Victorian Public Tenants Association at this stage.

17. Public consultation on the draft Strategy occurred between 23 July and 23 August 2019. A Your Say Yarra (YSY) page – with a summary of key points, a survey and copies of the draft strategy and background documents – was promoted to the community through Yarra Life eNews, social media and postcards at our neighbourhood houses, service centres and libraries. Service providers, industry, resident groups and state government were all contacted directly and officers presented to six Yarra advisory groups.

18. More than forty community members completed the online survey and around a dozen submissions were received from stakeholder organisations, representing the positions of the not-for-profit sector, community housing, developers, community banking, peak-body and advocacy organisations. Overall, the feedback was very positive and the submissions were detailed, considered and insightful. A range of perspectives on the issues and strategies emerged and added significant value to the final draft strategy. As previously stated, most submissions were fundamentally supportive of the strategies and directions.

19. Further information about the content of the submissions and resultant changes to the final Strategy are outlined in the Consultation Report (see Attachment 2).

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

20. Internal workshops were held with officers from Community Wellbeing, Community Partnerships and Strategic and Statutory Planning before drafting and in response to the draft Strategy.

21. Feedback from within the organisation was instrumental in ensuring the Strategy reflects and aligns with the work being done across the organisation. In particular, internal engagement highlighted the need to update the Policy Guidance Note to align with the new Strategy.

Financial Implications

22. The majority of directions in the Strategy can be delivered within existing budgeted resources.

23. The existing contribution to social and affordable housing through the annual grants program is recorded as an ongoing commitment. This is valued at up to $50,000.

24. Strategic Direction 2 'Make effective and prudent direct investments in social and affordable housing' proposes to investigate the contribution of Council's own assets, such as buildings or air space above car parks or community facilities, for social and affordable housing. The strategy does not obligate Council to make any such undertakings.

25. On a related but separate matter, Council has committed $100,000 this financial year (2019/20) to complete a feasibility study into realising affordable and social housing outcomes in the Collingwood Town Hall Precinct. Further direct financial investments in social and affordable housing that may arise from specific projects will be considered in future reports to Council.

Economic Implications

26. Recent research from the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) shows the economic and social benefits of social housing in promoting engagement in education and employment.

27. There are a number of other studies and reviews that support the cost-benefits of subsidising housing for those in need. For instance, the City of Port Phillip has conducted a cost-benefit analysis of their Council's committed $26.6 million investment in community housing over the next 26 years and has estimated it would return $79.2 million worth of benefits. This included avoiding costs associated with health, justice and welfare, labour force engagement and community diversity and strengthening.

Sustainability Implications

28. Strategy 1.2.3 states that Council expects affordable housing dwellings to be built to a high standard in terms of durability and energy-efficiency to decrease ongoing maintenance costs.

Social Implications

29. In recent years, Yarra has had high levels of new apartments and town houses supplied via the private market and the total number of dwellings is projected to rise to more than 62,000 by 2029.

30. Local rental housing however remains expensive with virtually no new private rental houses or apartments in Yarra that are affordable to households with very low and low incomes. For instance, in the June quarter of 2019, there were only nine advertised private rental properties that could be afforded by people on Centrelink incomes.

31. As a result of these trends continuing over many years, the Yarra population has become increasingly wealthy, and lower and moderate income households have gradually become priced out of the private housing market.

32. This has led to a residential population with significant socio-economic divergence – while more than a third of households earn more than $2,400 per week, and 60 percent of residents are employed in managerial and professional occupations, 20 percent of households earn less than $740 per week and have minimal or no educational qualifications.

Many Yarra residents are living with economic hardship and social disadvantage with a low likelihood that their circumstances will improve.

33. Lack of affordability, although most apparent at the lowest incomes, impacts households at various income levels. The effects range from an the increase in those sleeping rough on our streets, to key workers who are forced to travel ever longer distances to work in our municipality, or who are placed under financial stress to remain here.

34. Housing stress occurs when housing costs rise too far above incomes and households end up paying a large proportion (generally more than 30 percent) of their income on housing. This reduces their capacity to spend on other household essentials, such as food, utilities and health.

35. In 2016, 15 percent of Yarra's households (more than 6,000 households) were in housing stress. Of these households more than 5,000 were renting and more than 3,000 were rental households with very low income levels.

36. Furthermore, it is estimated that 3,570 households in Yarra have an unmet need for affordable housing. This represents about nine percent of the current population and is based on the number of persons who are homeless, marginally housed and households in long-term rental stress.

37. What is clear is that the private market is unable to adequately address these issues, and that there is a need for a spectrum of subsidised housing products to accommodate the range of affordable housing needs – with social housing best placed to support the most disadvantaged in our community and affordable housing providing much needed accommodation for lower income households.

38. Yet despite the apparent need, there have been few recent opportunities to develop permanent, safe and affordable housing, at volume, in the municipality. The long-term stagnation of social housing growth, coupled with ever increasing costs of private rental, let alone purchase, has meant those living on fixed incomes such as the pension, or whose incomes derive from lower paid and/or casual employment, would experience difficulties remaining in, or entering, the housing market in Yarra.

39. There are, however, opportunities to leverage the apartment-driven housing growth to generate social equity and increase diversity by encouraging social and affordable housing to be included in the new stock that is built.

40. Maintaining socio-economic diversity has been linked to positive community benefits such as stronger levels of social trust between different economic groups, higher perceptions of local safety, and greater social acceptance of difference.

41. Sustaining a diverse population requires a diversity of housing available at prices that can be afforded by households with modest or low incomes. The focus of this Strategy is therefore to see an increase in social and affordable housing in our municipality.

42. The Social and Affordable Housing Strategy is aligned with the broader efforts of a Council that is dedicated to social justice through a commitment to equitable housing outcomes for current and future populations of Yarra.

43. As outlined in section 1.3 of the Strategy, officers will report to Council annually on the progression and outcomes of the Strategy. Additionally, officers are to be responsive to any changes in the affordable housing environment and will advise Council as opportunities or challenges manifest.

Human Rights Implications

44. Access to housing is a universal human right. Article 25.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that:

    (a) *Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of [themselves] and of [their] family, including food, clothing,* ***housing*** *and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment,*

sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond [their] control.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

45. As part of the public consultation on the draft Strategy (as outlined above), officers presented to the Multicultural Advisory Group, and an invitation to contribute to the YSY page was sent to members of the Yarra Settlement Forum. Interpreters were present for the Multicultural Advisory Group, which engaged in a good level of discussion, offering practical suggestions on the Strategy.

46. As per Council's standard practice, the postcards distributed at neighbourhood houses, service centres and libraries included a translation panel.

47. A number of service providers and agencies that work with CALD communities were also invited to participate in the consultation.

48. The only specific issue mentioned with regard to affordable housing and CALD communities was the identification of asylum seekers as a group that is particularly vulnerable to homelessness. As a result of this, additional research was undertaken and asylum seekers have been added into the Strategy, which recognises that this is a vulnerable group.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

49. The Social and Affordable Housing Strategy will sit within and respond to initiatives and resolutions in Council's strategies and plans as follows:

    (a) Council Plan 2017/2021 – Council will: 'Actively Plan for Yarra's projected growth and development and advocate for an increase in social and affordable housing'; and

    (b) Yarra Housing Strategy 2018 – *Strategic Direction 4: Facilitate the provision of more affordable housing in Yarra.*

50. The Social and Affordable Housing Strategy will also align closely with the forthcoming Homelessness Strategy, which expands on the operational/outreach, causes and lived-experience aspects of homelessness, and in particular rough sleepers and those who require emergency accommodation.

51. This Strategy intersects directly with the Homelessness Strategy through the mutual acknowledgement of housing as the core need of homeless persons. Both strategies support the 'Housing First' approach which promotes the provision of secure long-term housing as the bedrock upon which other supports can be added.

Legal Implications

52. The updated Policy Guidance Note has been reviewed by lawyers and no issues have been identified.

53. Pre-existing or ongoing negotiations for affordable housing outcomes are not affected by the updates to the Policy Guidance Note.

Other Issues

54. It should be noted that the Minister for Planning, the Hon. Richard Wynne MP has established a Ministerial Advisory Committee on Planning Mechanisms for Affordable Housing. The committee has been tasked with providing 'advice and recommendations to the Minister on possible models and options to facilitate the supply of affordable housing through the Victorian Planning system' before the end of the year. Officers will continue to monitor progress and outcomes of this process. The committee will provide its final report to the Minister within 3 months of its initial meeting (18 Sep 2019) and the Committee will operate for a period of six months from the date of its initial meeting.

55. As per the Councillor resolution on 27 August 2019 (item 6318), an overview of 'tiny houses' has been appended to this report (at Attachment 3). The overview outlines the emergence of tiny houses, gives some local examples and discusses the benefits and drawbacks of its use for homelessness or low-income housing. Key observations included:

(a) The primary considerations in assessing the viability of tiny houses for homeless people in Yarra is the relative cost, permanency and value of this type of housing as compared to more traditional housing and the availability of appropriate land;

(b) The cost of the Harris Transportable Houses has been reported at between $80,000 to $130,000 per house when fully connected and installed. Meanwhile, the cost to build a small permanent one bedroom unit could be in the order of $115,000 to $160,000; and

(c) As it currently stands, there is no vacant council-owned land in Yarra of suitable size and/or amenity that is not currently being used as open space and officers are not aware of any Victorian Government owned land locally that is available or suitable for this purpose.

Options

56. Not applicable.

Conclusion

57. Access to safe, secure and affordable housing is a right that should be afforded to all of our citizens and it is a pressing issue that all three levels of government need to work together to address. None of the current policy measures proposed by the state and federal governments to improve the supply of social and affordable housing will be sufficient to meet the ever-growing need in our city, and a shared effort is needed to find creative solutions.

58. Increasingly, innovative ideas are sought to respond to the growing demand for affordable housing, and given that this is an evolving area, a level of flexibility is required to capitalise on new information and approaches.

59. As outlined in the Strategy, we plan to continue to negotiate, research, educate, partner and directly invest to improve access to safe, appropriate and secure affordable housing in Yarra.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council:

(a) notes the officer's report in relation to the proposed new Social and Affordable Housing Strategy;

(b) notes the findings from the consultation program and how feedback has been addressed in finalising the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy;

(c) notes the information provided on tiny houses as per Council Resolution 6318 on 27 August 2019; and

(d) endorses the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Updated Policy Guidance Note: Affordable Housing Outcomes at Significant Developments.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Tess Simson**
TITLE: **Senior Policy Advisor**
TEL: **9205 5056**

Attachments

1⇩ Yarra Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2019
2⇩ Consultation report_draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy_Jul-Aug 2019
3⇩ Tiny Houses Overview

Attachment 1 - Yarra Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2019

Building for Diversity

Yarra's Social and Affordable Housing Strategy

2019

CITY OF YARRA

Acknowledgment of Country

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung as the Traditional Owners of this country, pays tribute to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra and gives respect to the Elders past and present.

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Strategic Direction 3 (SD3): Partner, facilitate and engage with all stakeholders to increase social and affordable housing in Yarra. *30*

Strategic Direction 4 (SD4): Continue to pursue evidence-based, strategic advocacy to other levels of government for improved housing outcomes. *32*

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Mayor's foreword

To be inserted prior to publication, when adopted.

Yarra headline data

6,000 households in housing stress

- It is estimated that more than 6,000 Yarra households, which is 15 percent of households, are in housing stress (households with very low, low and moderate incomes spending more than 30 percent of income on mortgage or rent).
- More than 3,000 of those in housing stress are rental households on very low incomes.
- Almost 1 in 4 single households (23 percent) in Yarra are in housing stress.
- 1 in 4 rental households (25 percent) are in housing stress.

3,570 households have an unmet need for affordable housing

- 9 percent of households (3,570) in Yarra are estimated to have an unmet need for affordable housing (homeless, marginally housed and households in long-term rental stress).

9.5% of households currently live in social housing

- 9.5 percent of households (3,790) currently live in social housing, the highest number and proportion in Victoria.

697 people are waiting for social housing

- There are 697 applicants on the Victorian Housing Register in North Eastern Melbourne (Collingwood, Fitzroy and Richmond), of which 355 are for Priority Access.

9 affordable private rental properties in Yarra

- Only 0.6 percent of advertised private rental properties in Yarra (9 dwellings) are affordable to people on statutory (Centrelink) incomes.

~1,000 homeless people

- It is estimated that there are 1,000 or more homeless people in Yarra (AIHW: 1,070 homelessness services clients, Census: 838 estimated homeless, and StreetCount 2018: 29 rough sleepers).

85% of workforce live elsewhere

- 85 percent of those who work in Yarra live outside the municipality.

Council's vision and commitment

Yarra City Council commits to maintaining our vibrant and diverse municipality by supporting initiatives that lead to an inclusive and welcoming city for all. Sustaining a diverse population requires a diversity of housing available at prices that can be afforded by households with modest or low incomes. We want to see an increase in social and affordable housing in our municipality and are committed to equitable housing outcomes for our current and future population. Council will focus its attentions on the mechanisms within its control that result in a higher proportion of new housing being affordable to very-low, low and moderate income households.

> *Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of [themselves] and of [their] family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond [their] control.*
>
> ***Article 25.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights***

This strategy invites all levels of government to work together to resolve the affordable housing crisis.

Definitions

Long-term housing

Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing comprises various forms of housing solutions that can include Social Housing, but also includes other housing initiatives and or support services that provide for the housing needs of very low-income households, low-income households and moderate-income households.

Very low-to-moderate income households have been defined by the Victorian Government, based on household income distribution derived from the most recent Census of Population and Housing undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Each definition is a value relational to the median household income of Greater Melbourne:[1]

- Very Low income is less than 50 percent of the median
- Low is 50–80 percent of the median
- Moderate is 80–120 percent of the median
- High is more than 120 percent of the median

Table 1: Annual income ranges – eligibility for Affordable Housing (excluding social housing)

Household type	Very low	Low	Moderate
Single adult	Up to $25,970	$25,971–$41,550	$41,551–$62,310
Couple, no dependent	Up to $38,950	$38,951–$62,320	$62,321–$93,470
Family with one or two parents and dependent children	Up to $54,520	$54,521–$87,250	$87,251–$130,870

Source: Victorian Government Gazette, 6 June 2019[2]

Housing affordability

It is important to distinguish between Affordable Housing (as defined above) and housing affordability, which is a 'general term, used in reference to the whole housing system, expressing the relationship between housing costs (prices, mortgage payments and rent) and household incomes.'[3]

Housing Stress

Housing stress occurs when housing costs rise too far above incomes, and households end up paying a large proportion of their income on housing. This reduces their capacity to spend on other household essentials, such as food and health.[4]

There are different ways to measure housing stress. The 30:40 indicator is a preferred method for defining housing stress and is based on when low income households (in the bottom 40 percent of income distribution) spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs. More recently, however, the definition has been brought into alignment with the Victorian government's legislated

[1] As defined in 'Section 3AB – Specifications of Income Ranges' in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as gazetted for Greater Capital City Statistical Area of Melbourne.
[2] Copy of the Gazette entry for 2019 available at:
https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/214823/Order_in_Council_Income_Ranges_1July2019.pdf
[3] Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Glossary, available at:
https://www.ahuri.edu.au/policy/glossary?result_1751_result_page=H (Accessed 14 Mar 2019)
[4] AHURI Brief, 'Understanding the 30:40 indicator of housing affordability stress', 2016, available at:
https://www.ahuri.edu.au/policy/ahuri-briefs/2016/3040-indicator (Accessed 20 May 2019)

income ranges for affordable housing (as described above, and in Table 1: Annual income ranges – eligibility for Affordable Housing (excluding social housing)), with housing stress occurring when households in these income ranges spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs (which can be either mortgage or rent).[5]

Social Housing

Social Housing is an umbrella term that includes both Public Housing and Community Housing (as per the *Housing Act 1983*). *Public housing* is government owned and managed, whereas *community housing* is managed (and sometimes owned) by not-for-profit organisations. All social housing must be applied for through the Victorian Housing Register.

Table 2: Weekly income limits for eligible households applying for social housing in Victoria

Household type	Register of Interest	Priority housing
Single	$1,014	$567
Couple	$1,552	$981
Family with one or two parents and dependent children	$2,092	$1,017
Each additional dependent	$339	$36

Source: Social Housing Eligibility, HousingVic, DHHS, 1 April 2019

Public Housing

Public Housing is non-profit housing that is delivered on behalf of the Government and or the relevant department (as per the *Housing Act 1983*).

It usually refers to rental housing that is targeted to very-low and low income households on an affordable basis (requiring no more than 25 percent of income on rent). These households are predominantly those in receipt of Commonwealth income support, such as the disability or aged pension. Public Housing is owned and managed by the State Government housing authority, or managed by community housing providers on the government's behalf. Tenure is not time limited but is subject to tenants meeting rental conditions contained in their tenancy agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services.

Community Housing

Community Housing is housing that is owned, controlled and/or managed by a registered community housing agency.

It is targeted to low-to-moderate income and/or special needs households who meet income and asset tests, in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*. Community Housing is managed and generally owned by a non-government housing provider such as not-for-profit charitable organisations including housing associations, housing providers and cooperatives.

Rents are commonly capped at between 25 percent and 30 percent of household income and can be up to 75 percent of market rent. Many providers incorporate local support services and tenant participation in maintenance and management.

[5] Allan, G. for .id the population experts (2019) 'How to measure housing stress in your local government area', available at: https://blog.id.com.au/2019/housing-analysis/how-to-measure-housing-stress-in-your-local-government-area/ (Accessed 13 Sept 2019).

Housing First

The term 'Housing First' refers to a way of addressing homelessness by providing secure, long-term housing as quickly as possible to people who are homeless, and then providing comprehensive services to them to address the other issues and complexities of their circumstances. By providing long-term instead of temporary housing, it is believed that people who were experiencing homelessness can shift their focus from worrying about where they will sleep to overcoming other difficulties in their lives and improving their wellbeing.

This inverts models where services sought first to address personal issues, such as illness or addiction, as a prerequisite to accessing long-term housing. The philosophy of Housing First is to focus on harm minimisation, providing substantial, 'wraparound', individualised support from multiple services – such as for life skills education, physical and mental health, employment pathways and drug and alcohol programs – only after people are provided with housing.

Shared equity

A shared equity scheme is an arrangement whereby a homebuyer shares the capital cost of purchasing a home with an equity partner, generally a not-for-profit organisation or government entity. These schemes are typically targeted to lower and moderate income households who can sustain a reasonable level of assured, long-term financial capacity, allowing them to enter the housing market with a lower initial deposit and have lower ongoing housing costs.[6]

When the property is sold, the market value is divided between the parties so that they each receive the same proportion as their equity share. Crucially, to support affordable housing in the long term, at the point of sale, when the government or not-for-profit organisation recoups their investment, this needs to be reinvested into affordable housing.

Shared equity schemes can reduce pressures on supported housing programs and other welfare supports, and may return modest profits to equity partners.

Short-term housing

Crisis and emergency accommodation

Crisis and emergency accommodation includes a range of specialist services for people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, escaping family violence, or in other emergency situations. It includes women's refuges, youth refuges and major crisis supported accommodation services.

These services are available 24-hours a day, however they are temporary and designed to immediately assist people in crisis to stabilise their situation before they move on to something more permanent.

Rooming House

A rooming house is a building where rooms are available to rent individually, accommodating four or more tenants at the property in this way. At most rooming houses, residents share bathrooms, kitchens, laundries and other common areas.

Rooming house operators must comply with minimum standards set out in the Residential Tenancies (Rooming House Standards) Regulations 2012. These standards relate to privacy, security, safety and amenity in rooming houses.

Rooming houses are not necessarily an affordable housing product.

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[6] AHURI (2017) Brief: 'What is a shared equity scheme?', available at: https://www.ahuri.edu.au/policy/ahuri-briefs/what-is-a-shared-equity-scheme (Accessed 24 Sept 2019)

Transitional Housing

Transitional Housing is a supported short-term accommodation program. It acts as a stepping stone to more permanent housing.

People moving into transitional housing have often been victims of a change in circumstance. For example, a lost job has meant the rent can't be paid, a domestic relationship break-up leaves one partner with no money or support, or a person may lose the support of – or can no longer live with – other family members.

A key element of transitional housing is that it's a temporary option, and tenants must be actively working with their support provider to apply for long-term housing.

Government agencies and instruments

Department of Health and Human Services

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is an agency of the Victorian State Government that delivers health and human services through policies, programs and regulatory oversight. The range of programs includes services for women, ambulance services, children and families, sport and recreation, health and wellbeing, alcohol and other drugs and housing and homelessness.

Director of Housing

The Director of Housing (DoH) is the body corporate established under section 9(2) of the *Housing Act 1983*. The Director of Housing, sits within DHHS and is the landlord of Victoria's public housing. The Director has powers to purchase, develop, lease and sell property.[7]

Victorian Housing Register

The Victorian Housing Register (VHR) manages applications for long-term social housing in Victoria. The waitlist now combines public and community housing applications for housing so that people only need to apply once and can be considered for both types of housing.

Priority access is given to those people who are:

- homeless and receiving support
- escaping or have escaped family violence
- living with a disability or who have significant support needs
- in need of special housing

People who meet these criteria, and income eligibility as per Table 2, comprise the housing Priority List. The broader Register of Interest list is based solely on income and asset tests.

Community housing providers

Registered Housing Agency

Registered housing agencies are experienced not-for-profit organisations that provide and/or manage affordable rental housing for low income households. They are registered under the *Housing Act 1983* as either housing associations or housing providers and are regulated by the Victorian Registrar of Housing Agencies. Registered agencies seek to balance affordability for tenants and financial viability for the agency in a fair and transparent way. The rent paid by tenants enables

[7] Victorian Auditor-General's Office (2017) Report: 'Managing Victoria's Public Housing', Victorian Government Printer: Melbourne, p. vii.

registered agencies to largely pay for the costs of owning, maintaining and managing the agency's rental housing.[8]

Victorian Policy is that 75 percent of registered agencies' social housing tenants must come from the Priority List of the Victorian Housing Register.

Registered Housing Association

There are currently a total of ten Registered Housing Associations in Victoria who own and manage affordable rental housing to lower income households. Housing associations are larger, more complex businesses with the skills, expertise and resources to manage, maintain and grow a viable social housing portfolio. They expand new housing through construction, purchase or acquisition, using a mix of government funds and private sector investment. They manage housing properties owned by them or leased from other parties, such as the Director of Housing.[9]

Registered Housing Provider

There are currently 29 Registered Housing Providers operating in Victoria. They range in size and primarily manage rental housing portfolios for other parties, such as the Director of Housing (DoH). Some housing providers own properties, however their growth is small in scale compared with housing associations. Housing providers often specialise in particular client groups which may include housing for people with disability, older people and young people.[10]

Demographics

Key workers

Key workers are defined based on traditional key worker occupations (providing essential human services to the community), as well as a selection of occupations specific to the role and function of the Yarra economy.

Traditional occupations defined as key workers (in alphabetical order):

- Automobile, Bus and Rail Drivers (to help access to jobs)
- Defence Force Members, Fire Fighters and Police
- Health and Welfare Support Workers (includes ambulance officers and paramedics)
- Midwifery and Nursing Professionals
- School Teachers

Additional key worker occupations specific to the Yarra economy:

- Artists, Musicians and other Arts Professionals (to support the ongoing presence of the artistic and creative industries that characterise Yarra's cultural landscape)
- Hospitality Workers (to support the operation of Yarra's vibrant food, beverage and cultural scene)
- Child Carers (to support the continued delivery of services essential to Yarra families)
- Cleaners and Laundry Workers (to support operations of a multitude of local businesses, including the hospital cluster)

To qualify for affordable housing, the income of a key worker must fall within the very low to moderate brackets, as defined by the Victorian Government (and outlined above in Table 1).

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[8] Victorian Housing Registrar (2016) 'Who we regulate', available at: http://www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au/Who-we-regulate (Accessed 10 Dec 2018)
[9] Victorian Housing Registrar (2016) 'Housing associations', available at: http://www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au/Who-we-regulate/Housing-associations (accessed 10 Dec 2018)
[10] Victorian Housing Registrar (2016) 'Housing providers', available at: http://www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au/Who-we-regulate/Housing-providers (accessed 10 Dec 2018)

Housing design

Universal housing design

Universal housing design is the concept of designing a home to anticipate and meet the changing needs of its occupants throughout their lives, catering for a range of ages and abilities. The design includes key features that aim to make a dwelling safe and accessible for anyone to live in, including:

- people with disability,
- older people,
- people with injuries, and
- families with young children.[11]

Universal housing design ensures that housing is easy to enter and move around, and easily adaptable in the case of changing needs.

The *Livable Housing Design Guidelines*[12] set out universal design standards in Australia using fifteen principle measures that are applied to create three different 'performance levels' of liveability: silver, gold and platinum. To meet these standards, all houses must incorporate at least seven core design elements to ensure a basic level of accessibility. Dwellings that incorporate only these seven elements are rated as silver standard, while gold standard also incorporates additional features from the list of fifteen measures. Platinum standard liveable housing incorporates all fifteen universal design elements.[13]

A partnership between community and consumer groups, government and industry called Livable Housing Australia promotes and oversees the guidelines, advocating for a minimum of silver standard in all new housing developments.

Tenure-blind development

Where a portion of a private market housing development is allocated to be social or affordable housing, this is called a 'mixed tenure' development. The name is indicative of the socio-economic mix of people that occupies the different types of housing.

Tenure-blind developments comprise mixed tenure housing where the social and/or affordable housing allocation is indistinguishable from the private housing in appearance, quality and amenity. Social and/or affordable housing tenants in a tenure-blind development should also have equal access to all communal indoor and outdoor spaces.

The intent of tenure-blind development is to avoid further socio-economic marginalisation and promote community building.

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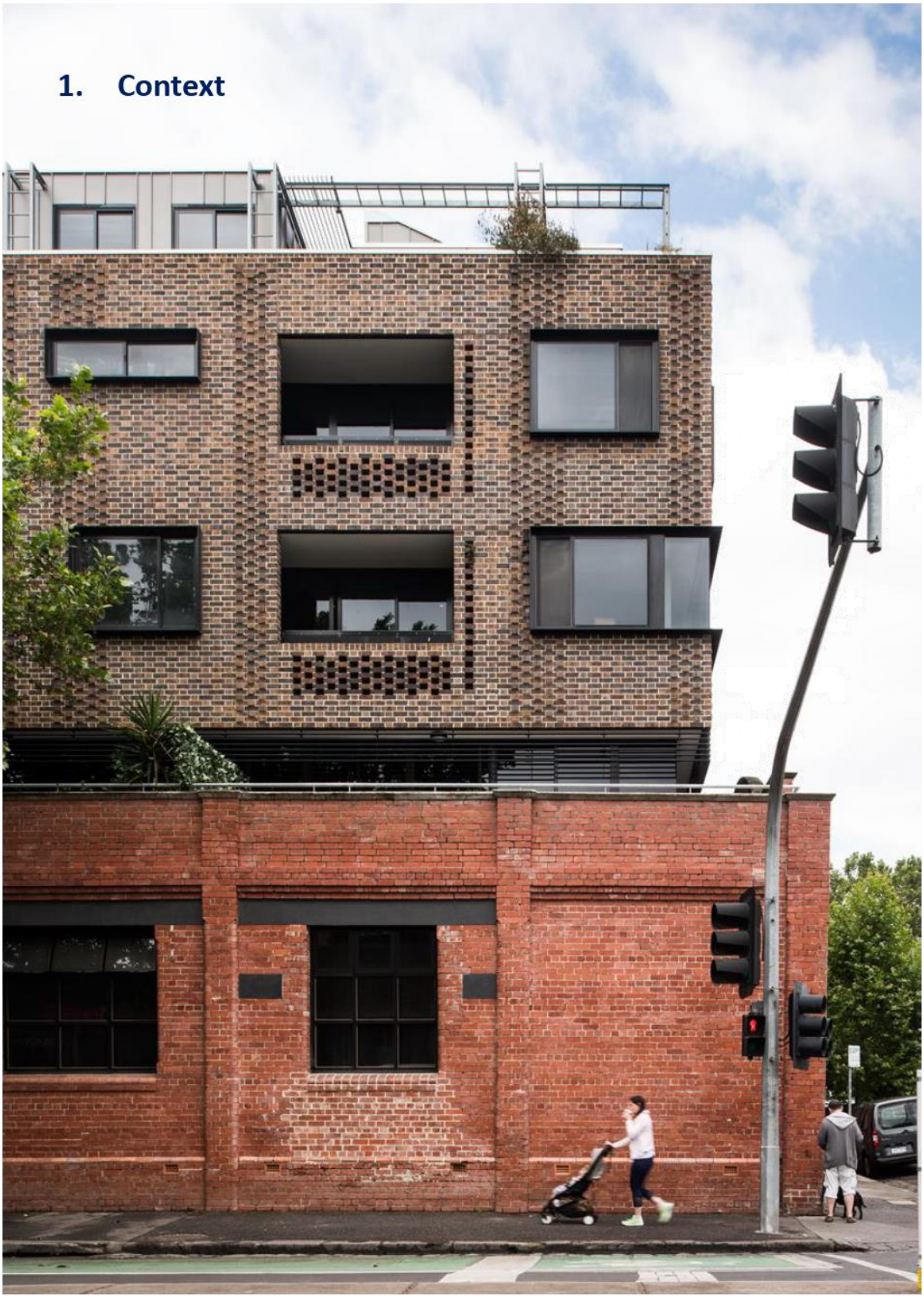
[11] Australian Government Department of Social Services (2010) *National Dialogue on Universal Housing Design – Strategic Plan*, DSS: Canberra, p. 1.
[12] Livable Housing Australia (2017) *Livable Housing Design Guidelines (fourth edition)*, Livable Housing Australia: Paramatta, pp. 18–59.
[13] Livable Housing Australia (2017) *Livable Housing Design Guidelines*, *Livable Housing Design Guidelines (fourth edition)*, Livable Housing Australia: Paramatta, p. 12.

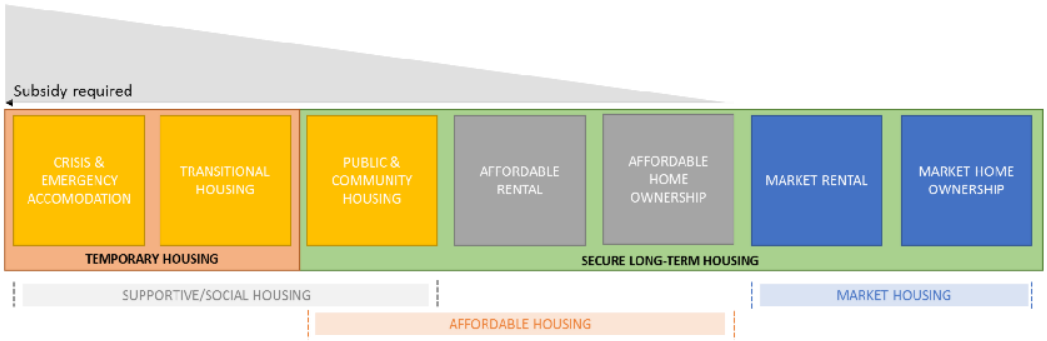

1. Context

1.1. Introduction

There is a housing crisis across the country, manifesting primarily in urban centres with access to jobs, facilities and services. Across Australia dwelling prices have grown much faster than incomes, rising steeply from the mid-1990s. In Melbourne, house prices have increased by 50 percent from 2012 to 2018.[14]

House prices in the City of Yarra (Yarra) have increased at a rate of 130 percent between 2006 and 2016, as compared to a 63 percent increase in salaries. Overall, the Yarra population has become increasingly wealthy, and lower and moderate income households have gradually become priced out of the local housing market. This has affected a range of income groups, from the increase in those sleeping rough on our streets, to key workers who are forced to travel ever longer distances to work in our municipality, or who are placed under financial stress to remain here. What is clear is that the private market is unable to adequately address these issues, and that there is a need for a spectrum of subsidised housing products to accommodate the range of affordable housing needs – with social housing best placed to support the most disadvantaged in our community and affordable housing providing much needed accommodation for lower income households.

Figure 1: Housing spectrum



Source: Adapted from Whitzman, Newton & Sheko, 'Transforming Housing: Affordable Housing for All', 2015, in conjunction with Kate Breen, Affordable Development Outcomes, 2019

It is estimated that 3,570 households in Yarra have an unmet need for affordable housing. This represents about nine percent of the current population and is based on the number of persons who are homeless, marginally housed and households in long-term rental stress.[15]

In order to maintain a socio-economically diverse population it will be important to consider this spectrum of affordable housing needs and products, and aim to ensure that affordable and accessible options are available to a mix of income ranges. In addition to supporting our most vulnerable in the community to have a safe and stable home, housing affordability is also about ensuring that those who are vital to our community and economy – including key workers – have local housing options that are affordable and appropriate to their needs.[16] Providing options and opportunities for people on moderate incomes to live affordably takes pressure off the system, and further, it addresses the polarised nature of the current municipal housing market where there is a finite supply of social housing and the balance is only affordable to those with high incomes.

Access to safe, secure and affordable housing is a right that should be afforded to all of our citizens and it is a pressing issue that all three levels of government need to work together to address. None of the current policy measures proposed by the state and federal governments to improve the supply of social housing

[14] Daley, J & Coates, B for Grattan Institute (2018) 'Housing Affordability: Re-Imagining the Australian Dream', Grattan Institute: Carlton, p. 3.
[15] ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016, analysis by .id Consulting. Further explanation is available in Section 3.3.
[16] Further analysis on key workers is presented in Section 3.3.

will be sufficient to meet the ever-growing need in our city, and a shared effort is needed to find creative solutions.

Recent changes to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* signal the Victorian Government's intent for local governments to play a part in contributing to affordable housing supply through its role as a planning authority. The impact in terms of dwellings provided through this process will likely be modest and will test the efficacy and capacity of partnerships between developers, housing agencies, councils and other players in providing affordable housing in the coming years.

In Yarra's Council Plan (2017–2021), Council affirms its ongoing commitment to social justice, diversity and inclusion. Affordable housing is a prime contributor to ensuring a diverse community in Yarra. Council has a long and proud tradition of advocating for better social and affordable housing outcomes and continues to support our current social housing residents, of which Yarra has the highest proportion in the state. Council will continue to research, educate, partner and directly invest to improve access to safe, appropriate and secure affordable housing.

1.2. Document outline and scope

This document outlines the strategies Council will employ to increase the supply of social and affordable housing and mitigate the inequities in the contemporary local housing market. These strategies are positioned within the context of current data and public policy and focus upon those issues where Council can have the most significant impact.

The Strategy focusses specifically on *increasing the supply of long-term social and affordable housing*, because it is this hard infrastructure that provides the foundation for people to participate in society and engage with other supports, networks and services, which can be added once housing is in place.

Accordingly, the following aspects of housing and homelessness are *in scope* of the Strategy:

- Long-term social and affordable housing, including:
  - Affordable Housing products that are affordable, appropriate and allocated to very low, low and moderate income households
- Aspects where there is an identified role for Council

The following aspects of housing and homelessness are *out of scope* of the strategy:

- Private rental market
- Private market ownership
- Broader support services and underlying causes of homelessness
- Assessing the merits of specific housing models (e.g. co-housing, co-ops, commons, et.al)

Local governments are not a main player in the provision of social and affordable housing.

The Commonwealth Government controls the policy levers impacting on housing demand, provides Commonwealth Rent Assistance and allocates funds to state and territory governments through the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement. State and territory governments fund and provide public housing in their jurisdictions to householders on welfare or low incomes and enable community housing providers to manage and increase levels of social housing.

Nonetheless, this Council is strongly committed to social justice and through this Strategy seeks to contribute to improving the situation of the many people in our community who are struggling to afford a permanent roof over their heads.

1.3. Review

Annual updates will be provided to Council on the policy environment and on Council's own actions and initiatives arising from this Strategy. When there is a change in policy or legislation at other levels of government that has a substantial material impact on the Strategy, it will be revisited accordingly.

1.4. Why Social and Affordable Housing matters in Yarra

Council has long advocated for housing that best ensures the wellbeing of its community and has supported diverse models of housing suitable for households on low incomes within its municipality. Yarra was one of the first councils to witness the rise of large public housing estates in the 1960s and 1970s, in what were then the cities of Collingwood, Richmond and Fitzroy, and the later development of smaller, walk-up housing estates. The residents who live there are valued members of our community and Council has seen first-hand the fantastic outcomes that affordable housing can offer individuals, families and communities. As a result, Council has been a leader in advocating for the state government to deliver improved housing conditions for existing tenants, and to further increase the local supply of social housing.

Council has also contributed its own funds and assets to facilitate an increase in affordable housing and improved outcomes for social housing tenants in the municipality. For example, a 40-year lease was granted to Yarra Community Housing (now known as Unison) to enable the redevelopment of a Council-owned building at 239 Brunswick Street into 14 studio-apartments. The project received funding under the Australian Government's Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan and was completed in early 2011. The lease to Unison includes an option to renew for another 40 years.

Council administers a $50,000 per annum Community Housing Grant through our annual grants program. Launch Housing has been the recipient for the past four years and in 2019 they are delivering a Community Housing Tenants Support Program (CHTSP). This is an assertive outreach program, which aims to support community housing residents to remain in their tenancies and prevent homelessness. The target population are people experiencing housing stress or who are at risk of homelessness. The program will support 21 disadvantaged people in 2019.

Social and affordable housing is important because:

- Access to housing is a human right.
- A socially, culturally and economically diverse population requires a diversity of housing, including dwellings that are affordable to households with very low, low, or moderate incomes.
- Access to safe, secure and affordable housing is a cost-effective way of achieving social and economic benefits.
- The decline in affordable housing in Yarra has placed an unfair burden on those households who can least afford to pay.

There is strong community support for an increase in subsidised housing in Yarra. Results from Yarra's 2019 annual household customer satisfaction survey showed 59 percent of the 800 respondents strongly agreed that 'there must be more subsidised housing in Yarra for people on low incomes', and only seven percent disagreed with this statement. Previous community engagement also showed support for an increase in affordable housing in the municipality as a way of maintaining economic and social mix, with 72 percent of a 2014 survey supporting the inclusion of affordable housing at new developments.[17]

Geographic locations have different levels of access to employment, education, retail, recreation and services and lower income households may find themselves having to sacrifice better access to services for an affordable home.[18] Social and economic disadvantages can only be addressed when people have access to transport, support services and employment options. Inner-city locations like Yarra have all of these essential amenities, whereas locations further away from the Melbourne CBD will not be able to provide these critical infrastructure. Without this access, disadvantage is compounded, not improved.

> Declining housing affordability…has spatial implications, as lower income households are pushed to areas with lower access to employment, services and infrastructure – often at the city periphery.[19]

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[17] Yarra City Council (2014) Liveable Yarra deliberative engagement and 'Planning for the Future: 2015' baseline survey, City of Yarra: Richmond, pp. 23–24.
[18] Wulff, M and Reynolds, M (2010) 'Housing, inequality and the role of population mobility', AHURI Final Report No.158. Melbourne: Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute.
[19] Raynor, K, Dosen, I & Otter, C, for the Parliamentary Library & Information Service (2017), 'Research paper: Housing Affordability in Victoria', No. 6, December 2017, Parliament of Victoria: Melbourne, p. 2.

Introducing a range of housing products in well located areas such as Yarra can help to ameliorate the effects of socio-spatial polarisation in Melbourne. Providing safe, secure and affordable housing can also have positive economic, social, safety and health impacts at an individual and societal level.

A study by SGS Economics & Planning has demonstrated that there are measurable economic and social benefits for maintaining the supply of social housing in areas such as Yarra that are well located for employment and services. The avoided social costs (such as health, crime, family support and other welfare services) further support the argument that social and affordable housing are a critical part of Yarra's economic viability.[20]

1.5. Alignment with other State and Council policies

Yarra's Social and Affordable Housing Strategy sits within a state and local policy and legislative context as outlined below.

Table 3: State and local legislative and policy context

Legislative	• Planning & Environment Act • Housing Act • Residential Tenancies Act
State policy	• Homes for Victorians • Plan Melbourne • State Planning Policy Framework
Local policy	• Housing Strategy • Local Planning Policy Framework • Social and Affordable Housing Strategy • Policy Guidance Note: Affordable Housing Outcomes at Significant Developments • Homelessness Strategy (forthcoming)
Local strategies	• Planning negotiations • Direct investment • Partnerships • Advocacy

At a local level, this Social and Affordable Housing Strategy will sit within and respond to initiatives and resolutions in Council's strategies and plans as follows:

[20] Spiller, M (2013) 'Social division, social housing and productivity: a Brisbane case study', SGS Economics & Planning: Melbourne, pp. 8–9.

1.6. Local government's role in supporting Social and Affordable Housing

As previously stated, local government is not a main player in increasing social and affordable housing but it still has a part to play. Across Victoria, Councils are committing to this topic in various ways and to varying degrees, with approaches ranging from advocacy programs through to the gifting of council assets. Increasingly, innovative ideas are sought to respond to the growing demand for affordable housing, and given that this is an evolving area, a level of flexibility is required to capitalise on new information and approaches.

Local government has a critical role in shaping the spatial distribution of new housing in the municipality and influencing the diversity of dwelling types. Local government can support social and affordable housing through a number of routes, including its role as a planning authority, by contributing land and buildings, by partnering with and facilitating the work of other stakeholders, and through advocacy to other levels of government.

Figure 2: Council's roles in supporting Social and Affordable Housing

Yarra City Council has a longstanding interest in and commitment to increasing and improving social and affordable housing and will continue to position itself as a leading local government in this space.

1.7. Policy context and initiatives

Governments impact the housing market at two levels. At a structural level they determine the system in which the market operates and at a direct level they intervene in the market where it is unable to provide for particular groups, or to achieve specific outcomes. [21]

These two aspects, and the way they interplay, is important because:[22]

> Social housing is an important piece of a broader housing continuum in Australia … Each section of the housing continuum has interdependencies with the rest of the continuum, which means that gaps or pressures in one part of the housing market can impact the rest of the system … High costs and high demand at the top of the system places downward pressure on all other sections of the housing continuum. As more people are unable to obtain home ownership, they will seek private rental accommodation, pushing the lower end of the private rental market into housing vulnerability. When people slip out of the private rental market they require some kind of housing assistance, whether that is in the form of affordable housing, rent support, social housing or crisis accommodation.

The following section outlines the housing assistance schemes, initiatives and funding streams of the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments.

Commonwealth Government

The Commonwealth Government provides national policy and funding to the social and affordable housing sector. Given the potential taxation and funding levers available to the Commonwealth Government, it has a principal role in capital funding for social housing and individual rent assistance schemes. A bi-lateral housing policy and funding arrangement has also existed between the Commonwealth and State governments since 1945.

Funding initiatives

In 2018, the Commonwealth and state and territory governments developed a National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) to cover the period from 2018 to 2023. This agreement aims to improve the supply of new housing across the housing spectrum, including social and affordable housing and the homelessness service system.

The NHHA will combine funding previously provided under the National Affordable Housing Specific Purpose Payment (NAHSPP) and the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) and will provide around $1.5 billion per annum to state and territory governments from 2018–19. Under the NHHA, funding to state and territory governments will target jurisdiction-specific priorities including supply targets, planning and zoning reforms and renewal of public housing stock while also supporting the delivery of frontline homelessness services.

It also commits to the Commonwealth Government's National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC) to deliver:

- an affordable housing bond aggregator to provide lower cost and longer tenor finance to community housing organisations by encouraging greater private and institutional investment, and
- the National Housing Infrastructure Facility to provide grants, equity investments and concessional loans to build the supporting infrastructure needed to bring forward the supply of housing.

Tax concessions and assistance schemes

There is a variety of monetary and taxation programs at the Commonwealth level to provide housing market incentives, which can impact on affordability both positively and negatively. For example, the First

[21] Australian Government, Department of Social Services (2019) 'Housing Support', available at: https://www.dss.gov.au/housing-support/programmes-services/housing (Accessed on 22 Oct 2018)
[22] Infrastructure Australia (2019) 'Chapter 6: Social Infrastructure' in the *Australian Infrastructure Audit 2019*, Infrastructure Australia: Sydney, p. 454.

Home Owners Scheme, which is also supplemented by a state level scheme of Stamp Duty Concessions, increases the purchasing power of individuals but can result in increased market prices.

Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) provides a capped 'top-up' income support for households on income-support payments, based on the rent households pay in the private market or community housing. It is not available to people in public housing. CRA does not contribute to new supply, and affordability is not guaranteed.

The National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), which commenced in 2008, provided financial incentives to developers to encourage development of housing that is available to rent at 80 percent or below of market rent. NRAS homes are not social housing – they are affordable private rental homes. The incentives were offered annually over a period of ten years. The original ten-year period has now come to an end, and under the current government NRAS is being wound down, with the first properties to participate losing their subsidy shortly.

Victorian Government

The Victorian Government incentivises, plans for, produces policy, and is the main supplier and manager of social housing in the state. In June 2018 there were 64,295 public housing dwellings in Victoria (owned and managed by the state government).[23]

The two key policies outlining the plans of the state government with regard to affordable housing are *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050* and *Homes for Victorians* (2017). The two documents outline a number of initiatives and funding streams to increase the number of social and affordable housing dwellings in Victoria, largely through public-private partnerships, but crucially they set no target of how many dwellings that need to be added in the coming period.[24]

The *Homes for Victorians* strategy aims to increase the supply of affordable housing in Victoria through:

- a $1 billion Social Housing Growth Fund,
- the development of 6,000 social housing dwellings,
- renewal of 2,500 ageing public housing dwellings,
- $100 million in low cost loans, and
- $1 billion in government guarantees to housing associations to enable them to expand their stock.

Acknowledging the increasing number and proportion of households who are renting, the Victorian Government is rolling out a range of rental reforms, starting by 1 July 2020 and including new long-term lease arrangements and other changes focussed on strengthening tenants' rights.[25]

In addition, the government has identified 52 parcels of land across the state for development into social housing. These development opportunities are all intended to increase supply of social housing in partnership with the private sector.

The Victorian Government has also committed $209 million in the 2019–20 budget for 1,000 new public housing dwellings over the next three years, in Geelong and Ballarat, as well as within the municipalities Darebin, Maribyrnong, Stonnington and Whitehorse in metropolitan Melbourne.

Plan Melbourne 2017–2050, also includes a focus on increasing affordable housing, including opportunities to expand the supply of social housing. It outlines how the Victorian Government will:

- utilise government land to deliver additional social housing via trialling an inclusionary housing pilot on six surplus sites,
- streamline decision-making processes for social housing proposals,

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[23] Australian Productivity Commission (2019) *Report on Government Services 2019*, Part G, Chapter 18: 'Housing', Table 18A.3.
[24] Infrastructure Victoria (2016) have estimated a need for approximately 30,000 new affordable dwellings across Victoria within 0–10 years, in 'Victoria's 30-year Infrastructure Strategy', Infrastructure Victoria: Melbourne, p. 104.
[25] Further information available at: https://www.vic.gov.au/rentfair-rental-reforms-victorians (Accessed 27 May 2019)

- strengthen the role of planning in facilitating and delivering the supply of social and affordable housing, and
- create ways to capture and share value uplift from rezoning.

Funding initiatives

The Victorian Property Fund (VPF) grants program is a two-stage funding round to support housing development projects that will increase the supply of affordable and environmentally sustainable community housing for low income and disadvantaged Victorians. Over three years (2018 to 2021), $21 million has been reserved for grants.

The Social Housing Growth Fund is an initiative where the Victorian Government will act as guarantor for up to $1 billion in loans for private and philanthropic developers who wish to develop social housing. The $1 billion fund will be used as leverage, and investment returns will underpin funding agreements for projects.

The Social Housing Growth Fund provides an ongoing mechanism for the Victorian Government to partner with the community, private, not-for-profit and local government sectors to deliver housing assistance to Victorians. It has two underlying programs to support this: the Build and Operate Program (BOP) and the New Rental Developments Program (NRDP). [26]

The BOP applies to the construction of new social and affordable rental housing on non-Victorian Government land. The new social and affordable dwellings could be part of mixed developments including private housing, or any other form of development that a consortia may wish to propose. It is comparable to the commercial 'Build to Rent' model, with the difference being that rental dwellings will be affordable and operated by registered housing agencies. The Director of Housing is listed on any certificate of property title and there are regular competitive funding rounds.

The NRDP involves recurrent funding to lease new dwellings from the private sector to registered housing agencies to increase the availability of social housing rental stock and facilitate investment in new social housing for the rental market. The Victorian Government, through DHHS, will provide funding to cover the gap between private rent income and affordable rent income.

There is also $100 million in low-cost loans to be made available to registered housing associations.

The Social Housing Investment Planning (SHIP) Grants provided up to $200,000 to local governments for work on strategies, feasibility studies and affordable housing projects. There has been one funding round in 2018.

Victorian Government Inclusionary Housing pilot

As part of the initiatives announced in *Plan Melbourne* the Victorian Government will be piloting inclusionary zoning for affordable housing on limited surplus government land to create 100 new social housing units. This process will market-test the capacity of both property developers and housing agencies to work together on different sites and provide an indication of the possible community housing yields. Pilot sites went onto the market at the end of 2017, with an expression of interest process for the development and sale of the sites taking place in late 2018. Each site will have an advisory committee to give recommendations on the appropriate rezoning and to consider the concept plan.

It is intended that these pilot projects will inform the government's development of future planning legislation, policy development and statutory controls to support greater provision of affordable housing. The outcomes of these pilot projects may result in changes in planning policy and powers to achieve affordable housing and at that time it will become clearer what further planning measures are possible for Council to consider. It will be important to monitor the work being undertaken and determine how it can provide an improved planning policy framework and controls.

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[26] From the Department of Health and Human Services at https://dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-social-housing-growth-fund (Accessed 17 December 2018)

Public Housing Transfer

The State Government has committed to transferring 4,000 public housing dwellings to the community housing sector.[27] This will enable community housing providers to gain additional revenue from the Commonwealth Rent Assistance, which tenants in public housing are not eligible to receive. Conditions for tenants are expected to be unaffected, however it needs to be carefully monitored at the local level to ensure that no tenant is disadvantaged by the process. Concern about the discrepancy between public and community housing service and maintenance standards and regulation were raised by Yarra's Active Ageing Community Advisory Group during the consultation process for this Strategy.

Public Housing Renewal Program

The Public Housing Renewal Program (PHRP) is part of a long-term plan of the Victorian Government to renew rundown and poor standard residential buildings on and around housing estates, especially walk-up stock, by introducing new private housing on site with the profits generated to pay to refurbish or replace dwellings. The earmarked assets are purported to be beyond maintenance and are not accessible, meaning clients who are older or who have a disability cannot use them.

The Government has committed $185 million for renewal of nine public housing estates. In total, eleven sites will be renewed in Stage 1 (including two that are funded by the DoH) all in prime locations near social and health infrastructure and jobs and transport. These estates make up 2.9 percent of Victoria's public housing.

The Government had originally committed to delivering an additional ten percent in social housing across these sites. The first three renewals to progress are at North Melbourne, Northcote and Preston and are being delivered by developer MAB Corporation in collaboration with registered housing association HousingFirst (formerly Port Phillip Housing Association). The increase in social housing post redevelopment is 50 percent and a portion of the private housing is also to be priced for First Home Buyers. Tenants who return will go from public housing to community housing and will need to claim Commonwealth Rent Assistance. The new housing is also expected to have fewer multi-bedroom dwellings.

DHHS consulted with tenants and stakeholders in 2017 to inform the redevelopment of a walk-up housing estate in Noone Street, Clifton Hill, but the redevelopment of this site has not progressed.

The PHRP could deliver additional social housing, however, there are likely to be some detrimental aspects for existing tenants and community. In a submission to the Legislative Council's Legal and Social Issues Committee (LSIC) Inquiry into Public Housing Renewal, Council communicated its reservation about the form of private investment on public land posited in the PHRP and expressed its concerns that the then proposed uplift of ten percent in social housing slated for Noone St and other sites was not large enough to warrant the loss of public ownership of the land. Council also expressed its concern about the net loss of social housing bedrooms and the disruption of tenants in the process, as well as the lack of overall financial transparency and community input into the design and planning implications.

The LSIC report recommended that there be greater transparency regarding the financial implications of the program and evidence that any funds received from sales to private developers are cordoned off for investment in more social housing. It also questioned the adequacy of the proposed ten percent uplift in social housing dwellings. LSIC reported that the consultation process with tenants, neighbours and other stakeholders had been poorly handled because of the continually unclear parameters of the redevelopment program. These are all issues that Council identified in its submission.

A critical policy analysis of the PHRP by researchers at RMIT and Deakin expressed concern over the loss of public land to private developers through the 'real-estate development model', the loss in total number of bedrooms, the impacts on residents of displacement and the evidence base supporting purported 'social

[27] From the Department of Health and Human Services at https://dhhs.vic.gov.au/management-transfers (Accessed 28 May 2019).

mix' benefits. The authors also question 'the capacity for the program to genuinely address the "housing crisis" with small increases in unit numbers.'[28]

The Victorian Government response to the LSIC report was tabled in Parliament on 6 June 2019. It outlines the outcomes at North Melbourne, Northcote and Preston being a 50 percent increase in social housing dwellings (instead of the original 10 percent) and states that any profits from the sale of land will be returned to the Director of Housing and used to support the provision of public housing. The Government suggests that any income from the PHRP would be reported in the State Budget and DHHS Annual Report. All the recommendations suggesting better and increased engagement with tenants have been supported in full.

[28] From the final report on a research project with Moreland, Darebin and Yarra Councils: Kelly, D and Porter, L (2019) *Understanding the assumptions and impacts of the Victorian Public Housing Renewal Program*, RMIT University Centre for Urban Research: Melbourne, p. 7.

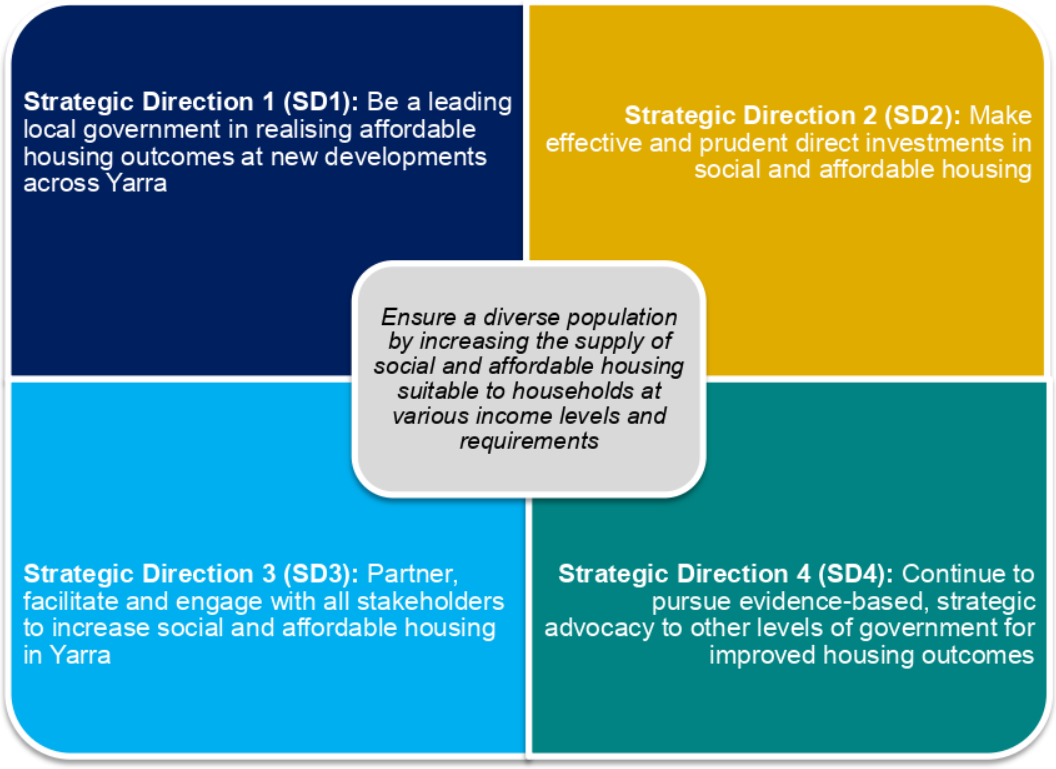
Attachment 1 - Yarra Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2019

Council's overarching strategy is to:

Ensure a diverse population by increasing the supply of social and affordable housing suitable to households at various income levels and requirements

The four strategic directions stated in this plan flow from this overarching strategy and are based on the roles identified for local government to support an increase of social and affordable housing supply at the municipal level.

Figure 3: Council's Four Strategic Directions



Strategic Direction 1 (SD1): Be a leading local government in realising affordable housing outcomes at new developments across Yarra.

Council has had success in achieving affordable housing outcomes at several major development sites. Council will continue to use the statutory means at its disposal and in doing so, will seek outcomes that increase the supply of affordable housing and promote the viability of the community housing sector.

SD1 will be realised through the following strategic directions:

SD1.1 Enhance Council policy and practice in regards to affordable housing agreements at significant developments

Direction 1.1.1	When land is rezoned to allow residential use, this positively impacts the site value and Council considers that it is reasonable to capture some of this value and direct it towards improving the provision of affordable housing in the municipality. Council will continue to seek provisions for at least 10% affordable housing to be transferred to a registered housing agency, or an alternative of equal or better benefit, to the satisfaction of Council, at the rezoning of land for residential use that allows more than 50 dwellings. The *Policy Guidance Note: Affordable Housing Outcomes at Significant Developments* (the Policy Guidance Note) has been updated and is included at Appendix A.
Direction 1.1.2	Council expects that an affordable housing agreement will be reflected in the Development Plan Overlay (DPO) or a S173 until the conditions are met, or for a predefined number of years. The specific expectations are articulated in the Policy Guidance Note.
Direction 1.1.3	Council will continue to request Housing Diversity Reports from proponents and that these reports provide the information necessary for informed consideration. The specific expectations are articulated in the Policy Guidance Note.
Direction 1.1.4	As articulated in the Policy Guidance Note, a range of households have been identified that fall within the definition of affordable housing and are unable to afford safe, secure and appropriate housing in the local market. These groups have specific needs – number of bedrooms, accessibility, supportive services etc. – which Council wants addressed at significant developments in Yarra. These households are: • homeless persons, • lower income renters, • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, • people with disabilities, and • key workers in the local economy. Further details about these groups and implications for housing products are explicated in Section 3.3 of the Strategy.
Direction 1.1.5	To demonstrate strategic justification, Council will publish up-to-date statistics on demand for affordable housing for the municipality to its website and make reference to these within the Policy Guidance Note.
Direction 1.1.6	Council will investigate new assessment criteria for considering when an affordable housing requirement has been triggered (e.g. based on residential floor area, dollar value or dwelling yield).

	Upon completion, Council will consider whether the Policy Guidance Note is to be amended to include these assessment criteria.
Direction 1.1.7	Council will investigate whether there are particular circumstances where cash-in-lieu of dwellings delivered in-situ is either warranted or advantageous and how such funds could be managed (for instance a trust). Upon completion, Council will consider whether the Policy Guidance Note is to be amended to include this option.
Direction 1.1.8	Council will continue to be responsive and proactive with regards to any changes from other levels of government that open up new mechanisms or opportunities for achieving affordable housing outcomes through the planning system.

SD1.2 Seek quality, 'tenure blind' outcomes at developments which are to include affordable housing

Direction 1.2.1	Council expects that any affordable housing should be tenure blind and integrated with market housing, meaning that subsidised and private dwellings should not be able to be readily differentiated through either their appearance, quality or amenity and should have equal access to all communal indoor and outdoor spaces.
Direction 1.2.2	Council expects affordable housing dwellings to promote high accessibility standards by being in accordance with *Livable Housing Design Guidelines'* Silver level or higher.
Direction 1.2.3	Council expects affordable housing dwellings to be built to a high standard in terms of durability and energy-efficiency to decrease ongoing maintenance costs.

Strategic Direction 2 (SD2): Make effective and prudent direct investments in social and affordable housing.

Council owns land and buildings across the municipality. This strategy proposes to investigate Council contributing its own assets, such as buildings or air space above car parks or community facilities, for social and affordable housing. Additionally, Council will continue to contribute grants or other seed funding to support projects contributing to affordable housing.

Council has a track-record of leasing its own assets. As part of the Australian Government's Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan, funding was secured to enable the redevelopment and 40-year lease of 239 Brunswick Street to Yarra Community Housing (now known as Unison). In 2011, 14 studio apartments for social housing tenants were completed. Additionally, the Community Housing Grant is allocated annually through Council's grants program. In 2019, Launch Housing are delivering a Community Housing Tenants Support Program (CHTSP). This is an assertive outreach program, which aims to support community housing residents to remain in their tenancies and prevent homelessness.

Council understands that many different community needs are to be met through the use of Council land and buildings. The best way to manage any potential development on Council land would be determined by the *Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale, Exchange and Transfer of Land* (2009). The process would be subject to careful Council deliberation to ensure the best outcome for the municipality is achieved.

Direct investments by Council for affordable housing outcomes demonstrate that affordable housing is a significant priority for this Council.

SD2 will be realised through the following strategic directions:

SD2.1 Continue the Community Housing Grant

Direction 2.1.1	Council recognises the benefits for our vulnerable communities that arise from the annual Community Housing Grant and will continue to support it. The Community Housing Stream sits within the broader Council Community Grants Program, with $50,000 provided annually to support local affordable housing initiatives.

SD2.2 Investigate the merits of gifting Council assets

Direction 2.2.1	Provide information to Council on the financial and practical feasibility of developing affordable housing through Council property assets, including air space, considering community benefit.
Direction 2.2.2	Within the framework of its Property Strategy, Council will give due consideration as to whether any assets earmarked for renewal or disposal could be suitable for affordable housing, and on what terms (commercial or non-commercial).

Strategic Direction 3 (SD3): Partner, facilitate and engage with all stakeholders to increase social and affordable housing in Yarra.

Effective relationships are key to good outcomes. Council will continue to play its role as facilitator of direct outcomes and as a valued partner in research and advocacy. Working across regions and sectors produces synergies, scale and impact.

To date Council has facilitated industry workshops, produced research with academic institutions and collaborated with our peers in the Victorian Government and at other councils.

SD3 will be realised through the following strategic directions:

SD3.1 Work in partnership with key stakeholders

Direction 3.1.1	Council will continue to create the platforms and forums by which all principal stakeholders (e.g. registered housing agencies, developers, bankers, academics and government representatives) can forge relationships and establish a clear understanding of each other's roles and requirements.
Direction 3.1.2	Council will continue to facilitate connections between developers and registered housing agencies, both opportunistically and proactively.

SD3.2 Learn from and collaborate with our peers and partners

Direction 3.2.1	Council will continue to be an active participant in inter-Council forums and work with peak bodies such as the MAV and VLGA to address the shortage of affordable housing.
Direction 3.2.2	Council is steadfast in its commitment to achieve Strategy 3.1 of the Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP) – that is, the Councils of IMAP will work with others and advocate for a substantial increase in the supply of affordable housing in Inner Melbourne.
Direction 3.2.3	In partnership, the Cities of Melbourne and Port Phillip, continue to support the Inner Metro Partnership (IMP) initiatives to address rough sleeping and housing affordability. In regards to rough sleeping, continue efforts to deliver additional affordable housing options using the proven Common Ground model. In relation to housing affordability, complete the project to investigate and advance a planning mechanism which enables affordable housing in the Inner Metro Region.[29]
Direction 3.2.4	Council will maintain a courageous and constructive dialogue with the Victorian Government and its agencies (especially DHHS, DELWP and DTF) to enable sharing of information and achieve the best outcomes for the community, especially low income households.
Direction 3.2.5	Council will continue its proud tradition of effective collaborations with academics and academic institutions.

[29] The Metro Partnerships superseded the Regional Management Forums and are facilitated by Regional Delivery Coordinators in the Office for Suburban Development within the Department Of Jobs Precincts And Regions. Other state government departments are engaged depending on the topic (DELWP, DHHS, etc.). The Inner Metro Partnership (IMP) includes the Cities of Yarra, Port Phillip and Melbourne (see: https://www.suburbandevelopment.vic.gov.au/partnerships/metropolitan-partnerships/inner-metro-partnership). Metro Partnerships have resources allocated by the Victorian Government to deliver projects relating to the priorities determined following stakeholder and community engagement. Councils provide in-kind and other material support at their discretion.

Direction 3.2.6	Council will remain open to new partnerships that enable creative solutions to achieving more social and affordable housing in the municipality.

SD3.3 Engage and educate the Yarra community

Direction 3.3.1	Council will continue to measure community sentiment with regard to affordable housing at regular intervals as needed.
Direction 3.3.2	Council will update the Yarra Council website to incorporate current information and data on social and affordable housing for the community, and provide information on applying for social and affordable housing.

SD3.4 Facilitate planning applications for registered housing agencies

Direction 3.4.1	Council will investigate options to support planning applications from registered housing agencies, including: • the streamlining of planning approvals, and • exemptions from third party appeals, parking requirements and/or height provisions. Upon completion a report will be provided to Council for its consideration.

Strategic Direction 4 (SD4): Continue to pursue evidence-based, strategic advocacy to other levels of government for improved housing outcomes.

To be effective in planning for our strategic advocacy in the area of social and affordable housing it is vital to understand the main issues, opportunities and challenges, stay up to date on policy changes and maintain constructive relationships with our peers and partners.

Council has long been an advocate for better social and affordable housing outcomes in the municipality, and continues to support our current social housing tenants. An example of previous advocacy efforts is the 2017 submission to the Legislative Council's Legal and Social Issues Committee (LSIC) Inquiry into the Public Housing Renewal Program, where Council presented its position on the proposed model.

Council will seek to make well-informed decisions in the interest of our current and future community and capitalise on any opportunities that arise through new grants and programs. Council will prioritise fair treatment of current residents, particularly those who are vulnerable, and seek to influence other levels of government to make sound decisions that support social and affordable housing outcomes.

SD4 will be realised through the following strategic directions:

SD4.1 Proactively monitor the statistical, legislative, policy and funding environment

Direction 4.1.1	Council will continue to monitor population changes, including demand for social and affordable housing.
Direction 4.1.2	Council will continue to respond to relevant federal and state government reviews and inquiries in relation to affordable and social housing as they arise.
Direction 4.1.3	Council will monitor the performance of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) and the initiatives of the Commonwealth Government (e.g. National Housing Infrastructure Facility and the Aggregator Bond, First Home Loan Deposit Scheme) and Victorian Government (the Victorian Inclusionary Housing Pilot on government land, Social Housing Growth Fund, HomesVic Shared Equity Initiative, Victorian Property Fund, Public Housing Transfer and Public Housing Renewal Program).
Direction 4.1.4	Council will stay well-informed as to the different models (such as Tiny Houses, Build-to-rent, Rent-to-Buy, Co-housing etc.) for increasing social and affordable housing stock and any implications with regards to their practical application locally.

SD4.2 Advocate for public housing

Direction 4.2.1	Council recognises that there are differences between the types of social housing and values the role that public housing plays in supporting the most vulnerable in our community.
Direction 4.2.2	Council supports opportunities to grow the stock of public housing in Yarra.

SD4.3 Advocate for appropriate tenant services and management that puts the tenants' needs first, irrespective of the landlord

Direction 4.3.1	Council supports a no disadvantage standard for social housing tenancies. Over the coming years, many tenants of social housing will be residing in dwellings managed by community housing providers and not the Director of Housing (through DHHS). Tenants of community housing should be afforded the same rights as tenants of public housing.

Direction 4.3.2	Council believes wraparound services (social, health and financial) should be readily accessible for social housing tenants. Tenants of social housing live with social inequities and many tenants are living with complex physical and/or mental health conditions.
Direction 4.3.3	Council supports initiatives that help people at risk of becoming homeless to maintain their tenancies, and seeks continued and adequate resourcing for programs like 'Tenancy Plus' (formerly known as the Social Housing Advocacy Support Program) and 'More than a Landlord'.

SD 4.4 Ensure community benefit from any renewal of public housing is maximised

Direction 4.4.1	The Public Housing Renewal Program (PHRP) is a $185 million program led by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to redevelop ageing public housing estates into 'modern, mixed-tenure neighbourhoods'. Council acknowledges that some public housing stock, especially 'walk-ups', is rundown, of poor standard and lacks accessibility, and that housing should be fit for purpose.
Direction 4.4.2	Council seeks the publication of asset management data in regards to the condition of the 1,100 dwellings within the PHRP, along with any other dwellings into the future. Data on the current occupancy or vacancy of the dwelling should also be published. Until such information is provided, Council believes there is no way for the community to feel confident that dwelling refurbishments were unfeasible or that the PHRP represents public value.
Direction 4.4.3	Council holds reservations regarding the social benefits of 'public private partnerships' (PPPs), as this method of redevelopment may generate quick wins and short-term revenue relief at the expense of gains for the community. Council asks that the Victorian Government articulate, and evidence, how future development value uplift is being captured by the government for public benefit. The Victorian Government should disclose the profit delivered to the government and developer consortia and be transparent about any future reinvestment of profits.
Direction 4.4.4	Council holds significant concerns that vulnerable public housing tenants will be negatively impacted by the PHRP in both the short and longer term. A principal objective of the PHRP or any future renewal program should be providing existing households with a sincere and genuine right of return. Council wishes to see a like-for-like housing commitment (i.e. replacing a three-bedroom with a three-bedroom dwelling) so that current households are not disadvantaged by the redevelopment and each has a genuine option to which they can return.
Direction 4.4.5	Council will research and learn from the outcomes of previous public housing renewals (such as Carlton and Kensington) and current public housing renewals (such as North Melbourne, Northcote and Preston) to inform its positions.

SD4.5 Advocate for the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments to close the funding gap

Direction 4.5.1	The funding gap is the difference in revenue that can be achieved from selling or renting something at market value as compared to selling or renting at a subsidised rate (which can range from high to low). Affordable housing is subsidised housing and Council requests that both the Victorian Government and Commonwealth Government provide the necessary grants to registered housing agencies for capital costs (developing and/or purchasing stock) or rental subsidy (long-term head leases of privately owned dwellings).

SD 4.6 Advocate for inclusionary zoning

Direction 4.6.1	Council continues to support the introduction of inclusionary zoning into the Victorian Planning Provisions, to be employed either at specific precincts and/or regions. Inclusionary zoning is a requirement for developers to supply a proportion of new developments as affordable housing. This can be seen as a form of legitimate value capture in that some of the benefits to a developer in rezoning land is returned to the community in the form of affordable housing.

3. Research

3.1. Social statistics

The forecast population of Yarra in 2019 is estimated at 100,305.[30] There are approximately 47,500 dwellings in the municipality in 2019, with an average household size of 2.1.[31]

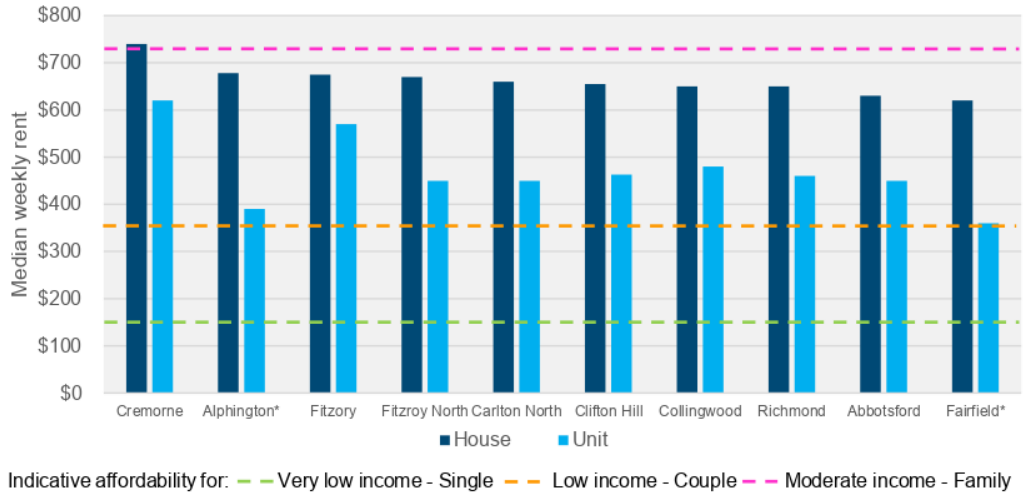
Yarra has had high levels of new apartments and town houses supplied via the private market, and the total number of dwellings is projected to rise to more than 62,000 by 2029. This represents an increase of 14,500 dwellings over 10 years, or an average of 1,450 new dwellings a year, and equates to a forecast residential population of 126,462 in 2029.[32]

The majority of these new dwellings will be apartments catering to smaller households, with a large proportion anticipated to be rented on the private market. Close to half of all apartments and units in Yarra are currently rented privately and most of Yarra's recent population growth is made up of private renters (+3,565 households between 2011 and 2016), a large proportion of whom were rental households in the highest rental quartile (paying more than $417 per week).[33]

Local rental housing remains expensive with virtually no new private rental houses or apartments in Yarra that are affordable to households with very low and low incomes. There are, however, opportunities to leverage this housing growth to generate social equity by encouraging social and affordable housing to be included in the new stock that is built.

Figure 4, below, compares median weekly rents across Yarra's suburbs against affordable price points for very low, low and moderate income.[34]

Figure 4: Median weekly rents in Yarra's suburbs (May 2019)



**This incorporates all of Fairfield and Alphington, including outside of Yarra*

Source: realestate.com.au suburb profiles and 30% of income of Greater Melbourne income limits for a selection of very low, low and moderate income households

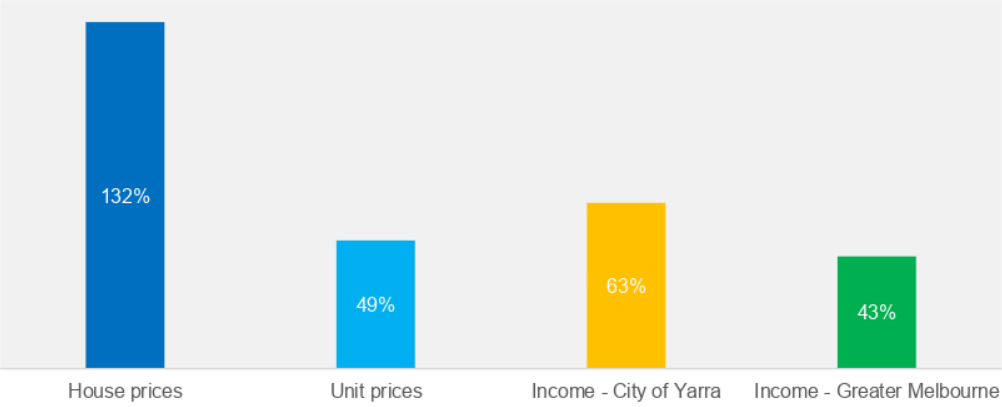
Figure 4 shows that moderate income families can afford a majority of rentals at the median price point, however, when looking to purchase the results are considerably more stark. The only affordable dwellings

[30] Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2041, prepared by .id the population experts, August 2018.
[31] Yarra City Council rates database, April 2019, counting general rates residential.
[32] Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2041, prepared by .id the population experts, August 2018.
[33] ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2011 and 2016.
[34] Based on analysis of realestate.com median weekly rent prices from May 2018–2019 and Greater Melbourne income limits for very low, low and moderate income households, assuming 30% of income is available for rent.

to purchase at the median price point are apartment units in Abbotsford, which are likely to be unsuitable to family living.[35] A more appropriate option for a family – a three bedroom house in Fitzroy – is renting at a median price point of $878, which would be considered unaffordable to even a moderate income family, let alone a family on a low or very low income. As the figure above shows, there is likely to be very little that is affordable to very low and low income singles and couples in Yarra, given that median rents are generally well above what is considered affordable. Housing affordability for families and moderate income workers is explored further in Section 3.3.

Figure 5 shows the change in property prices and household incomes in Yarra and Greater Melbourne between 2006 and 2016. In this period, prices for medium and high density dwellings (units) increased considerably but this trend seems modest when compared with the growth in house prices. Incomes in Yarra, as opposed to Greater Melbourne, have increased faster than purchase prices for medium and high density dwellings, however, this could be reasonably explained by the rising cost of housing attracting higher income earners to the municipality.

Figure 5: Income growth and dwelling cost growth – Percentage change 2006–2016, Yarra



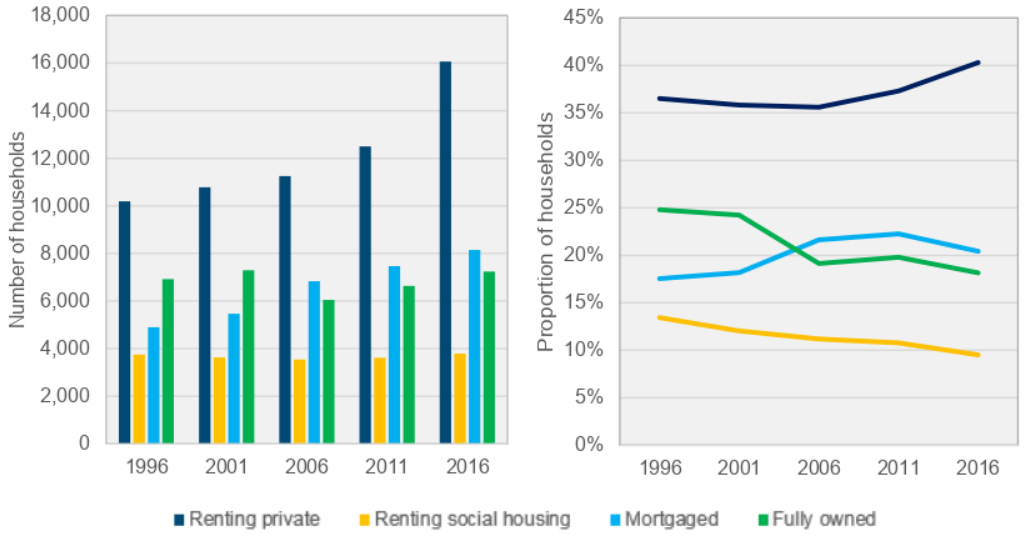
Source: Valuer-General Victoria, 2018 and ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2006 and 2016[36]

As a result of home ownership becoming unaffordable to larger cohorts of the population, Yarra has seen long-term trends in household tenure shifting towards greater proportions of private rentals, a considerable decline in those who fully own their homes and a proportional decrease in social housing households.

Between 1996 and 2016, almost all of the population increase has been from households who are either renting or paying a mortgage, while the number of households that are fully owned or renting in social housing have remained fairly static. Households renting privately have increased by almost 6,000 (N) or 58 percent. The number of households with mortgages has also increased substantially, by 3,000 (66 percent), and this has become more common than owning outright. The proportion of households living in social housing has decreased from 13.4 percent of households in 1996 to 9.5 percent in 2016. Figure 6: Change in household tenure in Yarra, 1996–2016 (N and %) illustrates these trends.

[35] Based on analysis of realestate.com median property prices from April 2018–2019 and affordable purchase points as estimated by Affordable Development Outcomes based on 30% of income being available to service a mortgage with an assumed 10% deposit, 25 year loan term and 7.2% interest rate over the life of the loan.
[36] As prepared by .id Consulting for Yarra City Council, August 2018.

Figure 6: Change in household tenure in Yarra, 1996–2016 (N and %)



Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 1996–2016

There have been recent reforms which have recognised that there will be a greater number of households who will be renting permanently. For example, there are the amendments to the Victorian *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* (mentioned above in Definitions and Section 1.4) that are premised on offering greater control for private rental tenants by ensuring security of tenure and offering tenants more control over a range of issues, as well as recognising the specific needs of people experiencing family violence who are renting.

Social housing in Yarra

Despite only nominal growth in the number of social housing dwellings over the last 20 years, Yarra still has the highest number and proportion of public housing dwellings and residents of any local government in Victoria.

As of mid-2018, 11 percent (5,233) of the 45,887 residential dwellings in Yarra were social housing dwellings.[37] Of these, 4,625 dwellings had the Director of Housing on the title (mostly public housing), 581 were owned by community housing organisations and 27 were rooming houses.

Current households and affordability

Yarra is characterised by the socio-economic divergence of its residential community. While more than a third of households earn more than $2,400 per week, and 60 percent of employed workers are in managerial and professional occupations, 20 percent of households earn less than $740 per week and many are living with economic hardship and social disadvantage.[38]

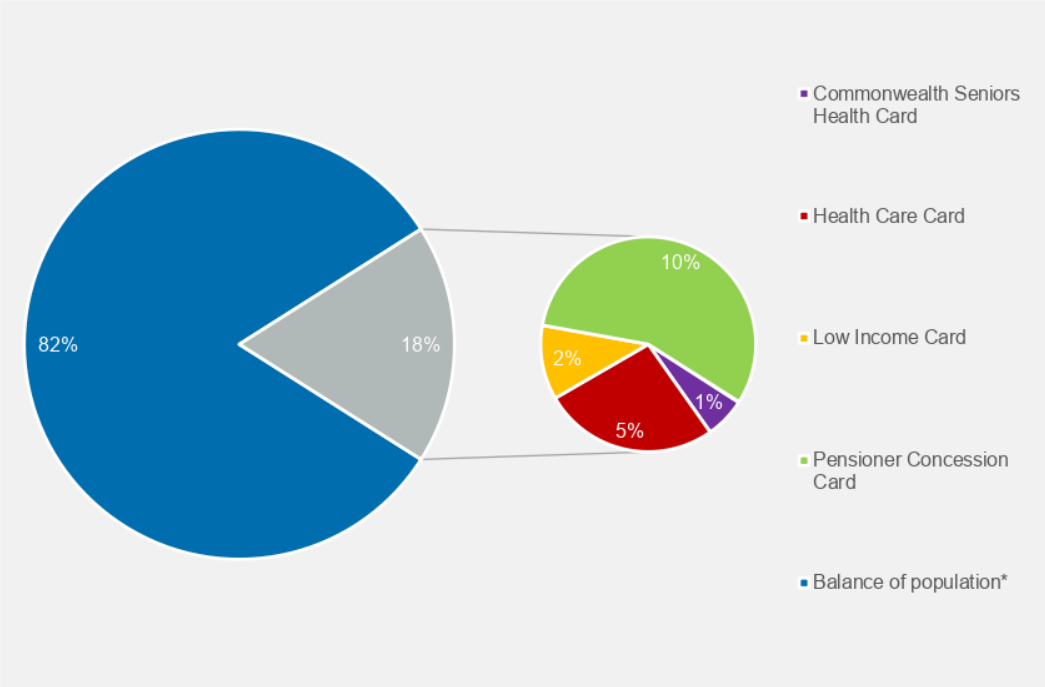
[37] Based on the City of Yarra rates database as at June 2018, including rooming houses (each bedroom in a rooming house is counted as a separate unit). N.B. There is a notable difference between the count (and proportion) of social housing from the 2016 Census and the 2018 Yarra rates database. The difference in numbers can be accounted for by the one-in-ten households who did not record a response for housing tenure in the Census, particularly renters. Therefore, the Yarra rates database is considered the more accurate source.
[38] ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016.

As of December 2018, there were: [39]

- 4,745 recipients of the age pension
- 4,612 health care card holders
- 2,452 recipients of Newstart Allowance
- 2,526 recipients of the Disability Support Pension and
- 1,955 low income card holders living in Yarra.

Figure 7 further illustrates the polarity of Yarra's current population, with about one-in-five residents currently in receipt of a Commonwealth Concession Card – implying very low or low incomes.

Figure 7: Yarra residents in receipt of Commonwealth Concession Card, December 2018



Source: Department of Social Services (DSS) Payment Demographic Data, December 2018

Figure 8 (overleaf) illustrates the stark decline in the proportion of private rentals affordable to persons on Centrelink incomes over the past decade across Greater Melbourne and the consistent lack of affordable rentals in Yarra.

The best period for affordability during this period was the December quarter of 2015 when 40 dwellings could be afforded (just 2.4 percent). By the June quarter in 2019, the percentage of private rental properties advertised in Yarra that could be afforded by persons on Centrelink incomes was 0.6 percent (N=9) versus metro Melbourne at (also a very low) 5.3 percent. By comparison, almost half of the rental housing in non-metropolitan areas was affordable (47 percent), creating a social divide between the city and regional areas because of the cost of housing.[40]

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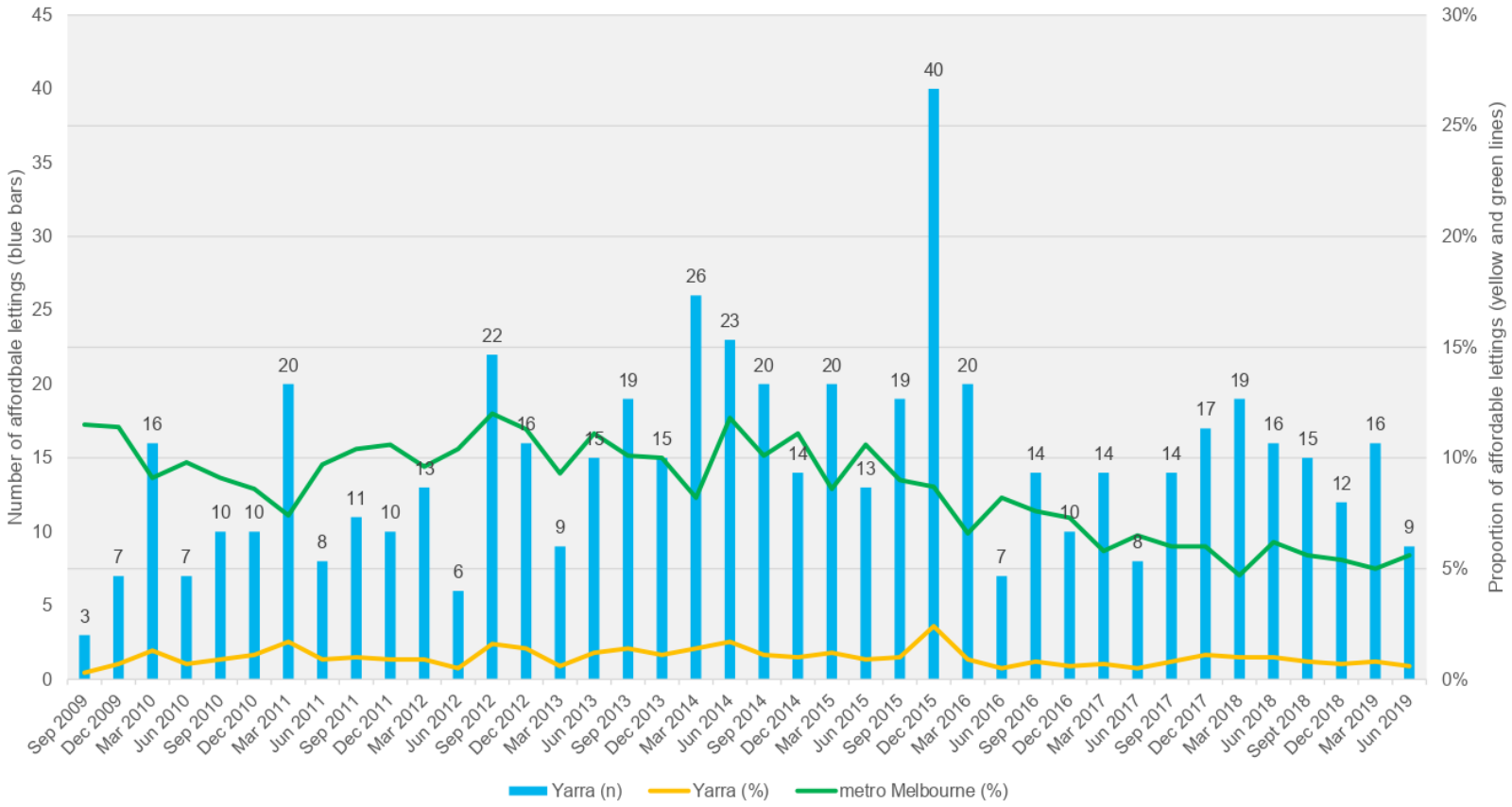
[39] Department of Social Services (2018), Payment Demographic Data, December 2018, available at: https://data.gov.au/dataset/ds-dga-cff2ae8a-55e4-47db-a66d-e177fe0ac6a0/details (Accessed April 2019)

[40] Department of Health and Human Services, Affordable lettings by local government area, June 2019 quarter. Based on the supply of affordable new lettings as per Rental Tenancies Bond Authority data. The affordability benchmark used is that no more than 30 per cent of gross income is spent on rent.

Figure 8: Rental dwellings affordable for households on Centrelink incomes (2009-2019)



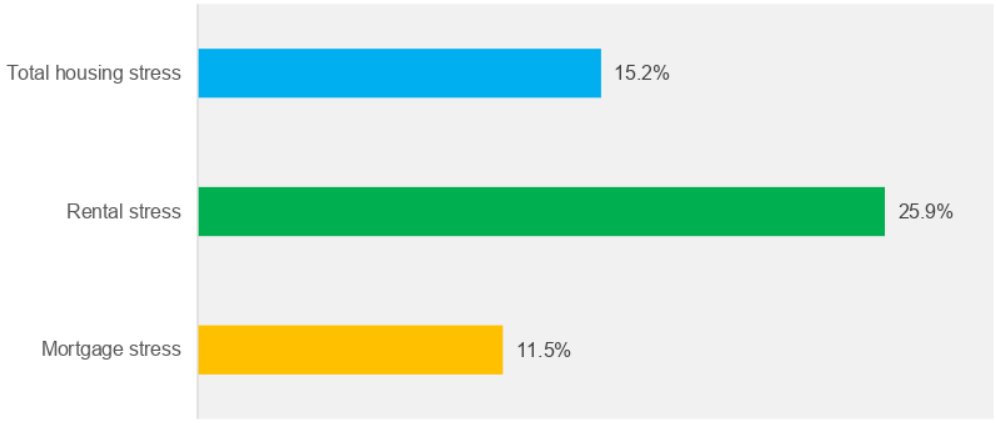
Source: DHHS, Affordable lettings by local government area, June 2019 quarter

Households in housing stress

Lack of affordability, although most apparent at the lowest incomes, impacts households on a range of incomes. Housing stress occurs when housing costs rise too far above incomes and households end up paying a large proportion (generally more than 30 percent) of their income on housing. This reduces their capacity to spend on other household essentials, such as food and health.[41]

In 2016, 15.2 percent (or 6,065) of Yarra's households were in housing stress. This is based on very low, low and moderate income households[42] spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs (mortgage or rent). For renting households, this figure goes up to 25.9 percent as compared to 11.5 percent of households with a mortgage, as illustrated below.[43]

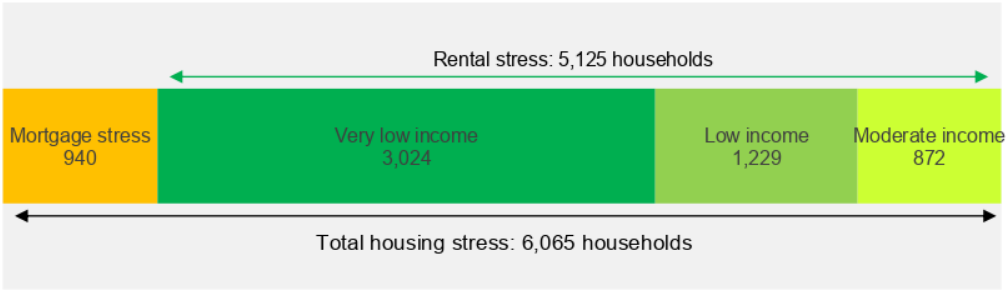
Figure 9: Housing stress in Yarra



Source: .id Consulting Report 'Analysis of Housing Demand and Affordability', 2019. Data from ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Of the 6,065 households spending more than 30 percent on housing, more than 5,000 were renting and more than 3,000 were rental households with very low income levels (see Figure 14 overleaf).

Figure 10: Breakdown of Yarra households in housing stress



Source: .id Consulting Report 'Analysis of Housing Demand and Affordability', 2019. Data from ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

[41] AHURI (2016) Brief: 'Understanding the 30:40 indicator of housing affordability stress', available at: https://www.ahuri.edu.au/policy/ahuri-briefs/2016/3040-indicator (Accessed 20 May 2019)
[42] As defined in Section 3AB – Specifications of Income Ranges in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* for Greater Capital City Statistical Area of Melbourne.
[43] From .id Consulting Report (2019) 'Analysis of Housing Demand and Affordability', based on data from ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016.

In Yarra, particular household types are more susceptible to housing stress. Lone person households in the area are more likely to be in housing stress, with close to one-in-four of this household type in stress (2,712 households). This is compared with one-in-eight family households (1,114), and one-in-fifteen couple only households (676).

Of the 2,712 lone person households in housing stress, 88 percent were rental households and almost half were rental households with very low incomes. The other household types showed similar splits with the greatest proportion of those in housing stress being very low income renters. When looking at households with a mortgage who are spending more than 30 percent on housing costs, a greater proportion are moderate income earners.[44]

Despite apparent need, there have been few opportunities to develop permanent, safe and affordable housing, at volume, in the municipality. The long-term stagnation of social housing growth, coupled with ever increasing costs of private rental, let alone purchase, has meant those living on fixed incomes such as the pension, or whose incomes derive from lower paid and/or casual employment, would experience difficulties remaining in or entering the housing market in Yarra.

3.2. Promoting diversity and equity through social infrastructure

According to the *Local Government Act 1989*, the 'primary objective of a local council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions'.[45]

Maintaining economic diversity has been linked to positive community benefits such as stronger levels of social trust between different economic groups, higher perceptions of local safety, and greater social acceptance of difference. Conversely, international evidence suggests that increasingly stark economic divisions, can lead to significant physical, psychological and social costs to the local community.[46] The housing market dictates where people live in a city and can consolidate or intensify inequalities between different social groups. The continuing socio-spatial polarisation of Greater Melbourne due to the cost of housing is rightly a source of major concern.[47]

Recent discourse is attempting to position social housing as essential infrastructure rather than a form of welfare. This is to highlight the wider benefits to society that come from ensuring stable and affordable housing to households, and is hoped to support increased investment into the system. A recent Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) report emphasises the economic and social benefits of social housing in promoting engagement in education and employment, and suggests developing a robust business case including cost-benefit analyses in order to re-position social housing as a form of infrastructure.[48] This position is supported by Infrastructure Victoria's inclusion of social housing as one of their top three recommended priorities for the state government in their 30-year Plan.[49]

Additionally, the Australian Infrastructure Audit 2019 states that:[50]

> Social housing is an important piece of social infrastructure in Australia that serves both a social and economic purpose and contributes to the effective functioning of society … It is a type of social infrastructure that improves the social and economic wellbeing of the people that use it by providing them with safe, adequate and affordable homes.

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[44] From .id Consulting (2019) Report 'Analysis of Housing Demand and Affordability', based on data from ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016.
[45] *Local Government Act* (Vic), 1989, Section 3C.
[46] Pickett and Wilkinson (2011), *The spirit level: why more equal societies almost always do better*, Penguin Ltd: UK, p. 136.
[47] As outlined in Bill Randolph & Andrew Tice (2017) 'Relocating Disadvantage in Five Australian Cities: Socio-spatial Polarisation under Neo-liberalism', in *Urban Policy and Research*, 35:2, 103–121.
[48] Flanagan, K, Martin, C, Jacobs, K and Lawson, J (2019) *A conceptual analysis of social housing as infrastructure,* AHURI Final Report No. 309, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited: Melbourne, p. 63.
[49] Infrastructure Victoria (2016) *Victoria's 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy*, Infrastructure Victoria: Melbourne, p. 43.
[50] Infrastructure Australia (2019) 'Chapter 6: Social Infrastructure' in the *Australian Infrastructure Audit 2019*, Infrastructure Australia: Sydney, p. 454.

There are a number of examples that support the cost-benefits of subsidising housing to those in need, for example:

- Economic studies in Western Australia have identified health-related cost savings of up to $13,273 per person per year in providing social housing to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.[51]
- In England, a large-scale evaluation of the provision of affordable housing found that tenants identified improved health, life satisfaction, perceptions of safety and greater levels of social contact.[52]
- The City of Port Phillip has conducted a cost-benefit analysis of their Council's committed $26.6 million investment in community housing over the next 26 years and has estimated it would return $79.2 million worth of benefits. This included avoiding costs associated with health, justice and welfare, labour force engagement, and community diversity and strengthening.
- A review of the Social Housing Initiative under the federal government's Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan found that for every dollar spent on construction, there was $1.30 benefit for the economy.[53]

Social mix and tenure-blind developments

While the benefits of social and affordable housing are well documented, the mere existence of it is not sufficient in and of itself to produce good community outcomes. The existence of physically decaying public housing alongside concentrations of wealth can contribute to social divisions that lead to mistrust, community fragmentation and stigma.[54] The current physical separation of much of the social housing stock in Yarra therefore risks stigmatising its tenants if the quality of this housing is poorly maintained.[55]

There is a significant body of work on the concept of 'social mix' in high density public/private developments – meaning a mix of social and private tenures. This principle seeks to minimise any stigma attached to subsidised housing, ensure equality of outcomes in terms of dwelling standards and amenity and may also increase the likelihood of community cohesion and increased social capital for social housing tenants. [56] Ultimately it aims to reduce segregation between rich and poor.

Tenure-mixed developments should be tenure blind, meaning that private and public dwellings should not be able to be readily differentiated through either their appearance, quality or amenity and should have equal access to all communal indoor and outdoor spaces. This can be achieved through a variety of configurations including unit-by-unit (also known as 'salt and pepper'), floor-by-floor, building-by-building or block-by-block mixing of public and private tenancies. Given the physical proximity and lack of differentiation between public and private in a unit-by-unit mixed development, this is more likely to result in social mixing, however from a practical tenancy management, strata fee or fit-out perspective, some level of separation can be favourable (i.e. floor-by-floor or building-by-building). This is because it can be more expensive or inefficient for a community housing organisation or service provider to service tenants who are physically spread out.[57]

Social mix cannot be guaranteed by tenure mix however it reverses traditional approaches to development that have led to socio-economic segregation.

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[51] AHURI (2016) 'What are the health, social and economic benefits of providing public housing and support to formerly homeless people?' Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited: Melbourne, p. 76.
[52] Frontier Economics (2014), 'Assessing the social and economic impact of affordable housing investment', Frontier Economics Ltd: London, p. 73.
[53] KPMG (2012) 'Social Housing Initiative Review', Housing Ministers' Advisory Committee, p. 2.
[54] Pawson, H., Hulse, K. and Cheshire, L. (2015) *Addressing concentrations of disadvantage in urban Australia*, AHURI Final Report No.247, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited: Melbourne, p. 6.
[55] Morris, Jamieson and Patulny (2012) 'Is social mixing of tenures a solution for public housing estates?', in *Evidence Base*, p. 2.
[56] Van den Nouwelant, R & Randolph, B (2016) 'Mixed-tenure development', UNSW: Sydney, p. 9.
[57] Ibid

> The mixture of social groups in urban neighbourhoods can create vibrant, dynamic and sustainable communities; whether the variance amongst people differ on the basis of their household type, income, tenure, age, education, ethnicity or gender.[58]

Critics of the social mix approach however point to potential negative impacts of either displacement or gentrification.[59] It is important to note the subtle differences of its use when (1) introducing a subsidised housing component on an otherwise private development, versus (2) selling public land and introducing market housing alongside subsidised housing.

In the report, *Understanding the assumptions and impacts of the Victorian Public Housing Renewal Program* (2019), researchers from RMIT and Deakin argue that the use of a social-mix argument to justify the Public Housing Renewal Program enables the introduction of private housing on public land that was originally just for public housing, under the guise that this will benefit public/social housing residents through increased social capital, when it is in fact gentrifying neighbourhoods at a broader level and displacing current residents (temporarily if not permanently).[60]

3.3. Understanding need, promoting access

Unmet need for affordable housing

An indication of local need for affordable housing can be gained from looking at data on:

- demand for services,
- incidence of homelessness,
- household incomes relative to housing costs, and
- other local knowledge.

The following section helps give an understanding of the need for affordable housing in Yarra.

Social housing applicants

The March 2019 Victorian Housing Register showed a social housing waitlist of more than 41,600 applications across the state, of which about half were priority access applications. There were 697 people in the DHHS North Eastern Melbourne area (Collingwood, Fitzroy, Richmond) recorded on the Victorian Housing Register, with 355 of those applicants meeting the requirements for priority access. There were also 422 tenants currently in Collingwood, Fitzroy and Richmond who had applied to transfer to another location, suggesting that their current housing may be inappropriate to their needs.[61]

Despite this immense demand across the state, the recent Australian Productivity Commission report on government services showed that the number of social housing dwellings in Victoria had decreased in the ten years from 2009 to 2018. Furthermore, the Victorian Government was found to be spending the least per head of population on social housing of all the states and territories in 2017–18 at $82.94, as compared to the national average of $166.93.[62]

There is simply not enough social housing to meet the current need, let alone the growing need related to estimated population increase in Yarra and across Victoria.

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[58] Higgins, D & Moore, T (2016), 'Mixed Tenure Housing Developments: Salt and Pepper versus Silo Design', RMIT University: Melbourne, p. 2.
[59] Ibid
[60] From the final report on a research project with Moreland, Darebin and Yarra Councils: Kelly, D and Porter, L (2019) *Understanding the assumptions and impacts of the Victorian Public Housing Renewal Program*, RMIT University Centre for Urban Research: Melbourne, p. 52.
[61] Victorian Housing Register and transfer list by local area, March 2019. N.B. The Victorian Housing Register now combines public and community housing through a centralised waitlist. While community housing applicants are being transferred there may be some changes to numbers and HousingVic notes that numbers will increase in the second half of 2019 as the merging is completed.
[62] Australian Productivity Commission (2019) *Report on Government Services 2019*, Part G, Chapter 18: 'Housing', Table 18A.1.

Despite this, the Victorian Government has not published any estimates of the projected social housing needs in the coming period, nor have they committed to any targets. In their 30-year Plan, Infrastructure Victoria however estimate that 'approximately 30,000 new affordable dwellings within 0–10 years could be an appropriate infrastructure response to contribute to the current unmet demand for access to housing'[63].

In Victoria, where there is a relatively small proportion of social housing relative to need (as illustrated by the VHR waitlist and other data), allocation has come to be prioritised with eligibility access not only based on households with a housing problem (affordability, overcrowding, poor quality etc.) but most often overlayed with a range of complex issues such as mental illness, addiction and family violence.

Data from the Australian Productivity Commission shows that 90 percent of allocations to public housing in Victoria in 2017–18 were to households with greatest need (people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness) and 53 percent was to households with special needs (i.e. main tenants younger than 25 or older than 75, people who are Indigenous and people with disability). Community housing allocations for the same period were 85 percent to greatest needs and 51 percent special needs.[64] Registered housing agencies are required to allocate at least 75 percent of their social housing dwellings to applicants on the VHR priority waitlist.

These trends are a result of a long-term shift in the role of social housing:

> In recent years, social housing has been targeted less to low-income working families and more to those in greatest need, including people who are homeless, live with a disability, or are experiencing family or domestic violence.[65]

The implications of this is that VHR 'register of interest' applicants (i.e. those who meet the financial eligibility requirements for social housing but do not have the greatest, or special, needs) are currently likely to be waiting a very long time to be housed through the social housing system.

Homelessness and Housing Stress

The commissioned .id Consulting report on housing demand and affordability defines housing need as 'the aggregate of households unable to access market provided housing or requiring some form of housing assistance in the private rental market to avoid a position of rental stress.'[66] Based on this definition, an unmet need for affordable housing is estimated for households that are homeless and marginally housed, and very low, low and moderate income households in long-term rental stress.

The most severe form of housing stress is homelessness, which is the inability to maintain an adequate standard of shelter for day-to-day life. In 2016, the ABS estimated a total of 1,008 homeless or marginally housed persons in Yarra, most of whom were living in over-crowded dwellings or boarding houses.

A longitudinal study of the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey found that between 2013–2016 49.2 percent of those in housing stress remained in housing stress for multiple years.[67] Temporary housing stress can be due to a number of factors such as short-term unemployment, a period of parental leave or households looking for more affordable housing following a separation. Based on the HILDA study, it is estimated that 50 percent of rental stress is households in temporary stress. Using these assumptions, it is expected that around 2,563 rental households have a need for affordable housing in Yarra.

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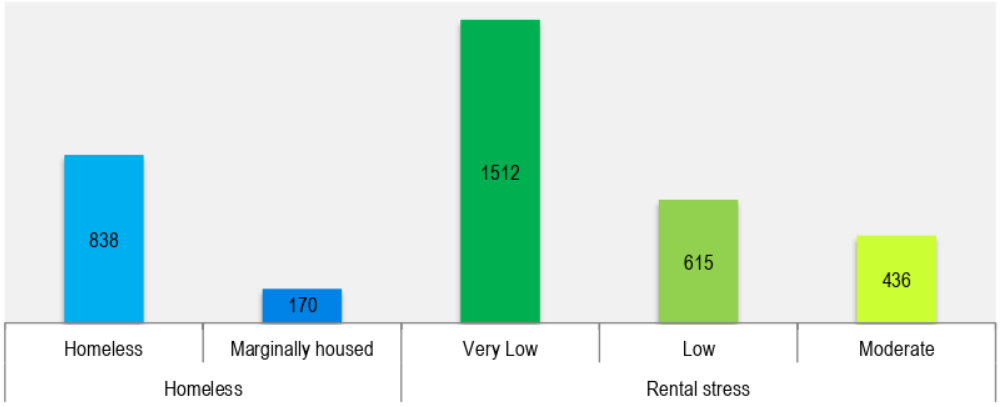
[63] Infrastructure Victoria (2016) *Victoria's 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy*, Infrastructure Victoria: Melbourne, p. 104.
[64] Australian Productivity Commission (2019), *Report on Government Services 2019*, Part G, Chapter 18: 'Housing', Attachment 18A. N.B. Special needs and greatest needs categories are not mutually exclusive, and tenants may fit into a number of categories within each group or across groups.
[65] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2019), National Social Housing Survey 2018, Key Results, available at: https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/housing-assistance/national-social-housing-survey-2018-key-results/contents/table-of-contents (Accessed 12 Sept 2019)
[66] Rowley, S., Leishman, C., Baker, E., Bentley, R. and Lester, L. (2017) *Modelling housing need in Australia to 2025*, AHURI Final Report 287, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Melbourne, p. 1.
[67] Wilkins, Roger and Inga Lass (2018) The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey: Selected Findings from Waves 1 to 16. Melbourne Institute: Applied Economic & Social Research, University of Melbourne, p. 50.

The total unmet need for affordable housing in Yarra in 2016 is estimated to be about nine percent (3,571) of all households (see Figure 11 overleaf). Given the expected population growth for Yarra in the coming ten to 20 years, and without any major supply increases for social and affordable housing, this unmet need is likely to increase in future years.

Figure 11: Total unmet affordable housing need in Yarra



Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2016, as prepared by .id Consulting

Community housing organisation perspective on need

Interviews with five registered housing agencies with a presence in Yarra further clarify the local need for housing.[68] The participating community housing organisations identified an expressed demand (i.e. based on current clients and applications) in Yarra coming from single people in receipt of a Disability Support Pension, followed by those accessing Newstart. Currently, the highest number of community housing tenants in Yarra are between 25 and 54 years of age. Young people aged 15 to 24 are the smallest cohort of community housing tenants in Yarra.

More recently, housing agencies have also seen increased demand from women (including older and younger women), older singles, people with a disability, moderate-income households, low-income workers and key workers.

Table 4 shows some of the comments made by the community housing representatives.

Table 4: Selected quotes from interviews with housing agencies (2019)

Selected quotes (de-identified)
Older women in larger housing are wary of 'downsizing' due to their fear of not finding affordable housing in Yarra.
There is a road block, there is limited long-term affordable, secure housing for women in Yarra.
There is nowhere for younger women to go to be housed in Yarra.

[68] Beverly Kliger & Associates (2019) *Housing Needs in the City of Yarra: Consultation Report with Community Housing Organisation.*

Selected quotes (de-identified)
Yarra is a preferred location for low income people with a disability, as the municipality has an extensive range of health and community services as well as good transport networks.
The casualisation of many occupations of the low income workforce [such as cleaners and hospitability workers] results in their lack of certainty regarding capacity to pay rents.
Consideration is being undertaken as to how to house low and moderate income workers who will be, or are, unable to afford to live in Yarra, and emerging lower paid occupations that will be in Yarra over the next 10 years.

Source: Beverly Kliger & Associates, 'Housing Needs in the City of Yarra: Consultation Report with Community Housing Organisations', April 2019

The report notes, however, that demand is often linked to what is available. In other words, larger families won't apply to community housing providers that are known to have mainly smaller dwellings. A number of the community housing providers remarked on the lack of family housing in Yarra that is affordable and appropriate, and noted that the costs for them to acquire housing were too prohibitive.

> [it's a] challenge to purchase or build three-bedroom properties in Yarra, as it is too costly. We can develop larger housing in the West but not Yarra. (Interviewee)[69]

An important factor to consider is that housing in and of itself is not the only need that households have. They may also need to live near social and service supports and networks, require a particular type of dwelling, e.g. accessible for people with a disability or appropriate in terms of size for a family.

The following section identifies a range of vulnerable groups in Yarra and illustrates some of the particular requirements for each of these groups.

Spectrum of needs and implications for housing products

Council has identified a range of households in Yarra that are struggling with housing affordability. These groups represent a spectrum of needs, from homelessness to key workers, and highlight the breadth of the housing crisis.

Council recognises that the following situations represent points of housing vulnerability:

- **Homelessness**
- **Low income and renting privately**
- **Persistent disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people**
- **Persistent disadvantage for people with a disability**

Council also believes that it is important that **Key Workers** in the local economy should be able to afford to live near their place of work.

These situations, and the groups mentioned below, are not mutually exclusive. The categories do however illustrate some of the different scenarios and pressure points that can impact upon a person or household's need for safe, secure and affordable housing. By highlighting the situation of particular groups and demographics a line of sight can be drawn between housing need and the implications that this has for different affordable housing products, types and services. Council believes that an increase in social

[69] Beverly Kliger & Associates (2019) *Housing Needs in the City of Yarra: Consultation Report with Community Housing Organisation*, p. 11.

housing will support the most vulnerable in our community whilst more affordable housing can help households on low incomes.

The following section looks at each of these situations and profiles, the particular housing needs and implications for affordable housing products by outlining:

- Key data
- Housing issues
- Housing products
- Supportive/community services
- Specific demographics and their needs

Together this information suggests that a range of affordable housing products and a mix of typologies is required in Yarra to support a diversity of needs. It is important to note that Yarra offers good access to most of the supportive and community services identified.

Council acknowledges that there are other groups who are more likely to experience homelessness and housing stress (than those outlined below). An example includes people who experienced institutional or other out-of-home care as children in the 20th century in Australia, also known as the 'Forgotten Australians'. Forgotten Australians are known to have faced multiple complex issues as a result of their experiences in out-of-home care, including mental and physical health issues, homelessness and substance abuse.[70]

HOMELESSNESS

Key data:

The rate of homelessness in Yarra is 95 per 10,000 population, the fourth highest rate for any Victorian municipality, and more than double that of Victoria as a whole (42 per 10,000).[71]

In Victoria, the top three reasons for clients seeking homelessness assistance in 2017–18 were:

1) 47% domestic and family violence
2) 40% financial difficulties
3) 37% housing crisis

In 2017–18, 1,070 Specialist Homelessness Services clients were recorded in Yarra, of which 547 were female and 523 male.

As estimated in the 2016 ABS Census, the largest homeless group in Yarra was persons living in boarding houses, followed by persons living in over-crowded dwellings, with an estimated 64 people experiencing primary homelessness (i.e. living in tents, improvised dwellings, or sleeping out).[72]

Most homeless or marginally housed people in Yarra are relatively young – aged 20–29, followed by the 30–39 years age bracket. Notably, about 160 children were recorded in both the ABS estimates and specialist homelessness services client data for Yarra.[73]

Housing issues:

The causes of homelessness are complex and homeless people often face a number of health and wellbeing issues, including finance, unemployment, addiction, family violence and mental health issues.

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[70] Department of Social Services, 'Apology to the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants', Australian Government, available at: https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/programs-services/apology-to-the-forgotten-australians-and-former-child-migrants (Accessed 28 Oct 2019).
[71] ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016.
[72] ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016.
[73] ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016 and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Specialist Homelessness Services Collection – LGA data cube, 2017–18.

Contemporary approaches to homelessness in many countries, including Australia, are based on securing stable housing first, and then addressing additional complex needs through targeted 'wraparound' services. This is known as the 'Housing First' model (see the Definitions section for further information).

Appropriate housing products:

Although short-term housing products can support people at a point of crisis, ultimately what is needed across the homelessness spectrum is long-term, secure, social and affordable rental housing.

Supportive services:

Flexible and individual support service needs may include support to maintain tenancies, alcohol and drug treatment, health and wellbeing supports, and employment and education pathways.

Specific groups and needs:

Data and research suggests that there are specific circumstances and groups with an increased risk of homelessness:

Family violence

- Data: family violence is the number one cause for seeking homelessness assistance in Victoria.[74]
- Housing type and size: women with dependents may require larger, family-friendly dwellings.
- Additional needs: housing that has high safety standards.

Young people

- Data: 20 to 29 year olds are the largest age cohort of people who are homeless in Yarra.[75]
- Dwelling size: housing needs can be adequately met through smaller dwellings.
- Housing type: could include co-housing models.

Older women

- Data: women over 55 years are the fastest growing cohort of people experiencing homelessness in Australia.[76]
- Dwelling size: housing needs can be adequately met through smaller dwellings.
- Additional needs: accessible, or adaptable, homes to support comfortable ageing.

Asylum Seekers

- Housing issue: Recent changes to eligibility for Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) – a safety net for vulnerable people seeking asylum who are excluded from mainstream support services in Australia – has put thousands of vulnerable people at risk of homelessness. SRSS includes a small amount of income support, about 89 percent of Newstart, for rent and food, as well as subsidised medication and torture and trauma counselling. The tightening criteria for eligibility has increased reliance on community and charitable organisations to provide basic supports, in particular housing. Organisations such as the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre report a vast increase in demand for housing services since the new rules came into effect and are unable to meet the demand.[77]
- Dwelling size: mix of smaller and larger dwellings. May require larger dwellings to accommodate large families.

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[74] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 'Specialist homelessness services 2017–18: Victoria', Australian Government, available at: https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/46473685-40d3-471b-b28d-ae6aaac81e84/aihw-hou-299-vic.pdf.aspx (Accessed 5 Sept 2019).
[75] ABS Census of Population and Housing (2018), 'Estimating Homelessness, 2016', and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Specialist Homelessness Services Collection – LGA data cube, 2017–18.
[76] ABS Census of Population and Housing, Estimating Homelessness, 2016.
[77] Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (2019) *Cutting the Safety Net: The Impact of Cuts to Status Resolution Support Services*, available at: https://www.asrc.org.au/resources/publications/ (Accessed: 24 Sept 19).

- Additional needs: legal support around visas, employment pathways, English language training.

LOW INCOME AND RENTING PRIVATELY

Key data:

In 2016, one in four renters in Yarra were in housing stress. Of those with very low and low incomes, there were 4,253 rental households in housing stress.[78] This constitutes 70 percent of all the households in Yarra that are in housing stress.

There are very few affordable private rental properties available in Yarra. For the June quarter 2019, only nine advertised rentals would have been affordable to people on Centrelink incomes.

Housing issues:

As home-ownership becomes increasingly unattainable for large portions of the community there has been an increase in households that are life-time or long-term renters. Many lower income rental households in Yarra struggle to live affordably and would benefit greatly from more affordable options – both to rent and buy.

Appropriate housing products:

Long-term social and affordable rental and purchase.

Community services:

Access to a range of community services will benefit lower income households, including health and wellbeing services, public transport, child care and schools. There is very good access to these services across Yarra.

Specific groups and needs:

There are a number of lower income groups that are particularly susceptible to rental stress:

Older people

- Data: Yarra's older population have significantly lower earnings than the broader population with almost half earning less than $500 a week (roughly aligned with 'very low' income bracket for singles), as compared to one in four for the broader Yarra population aged 15 years and over.[79]
- Issues: financial insecurities can occur when people have reached the end of their working lives, rely on the age pension for income, lack future earnings potential, and have increased health costs. Older single women may face additional financial disadvantage due to lower superannuation or as a result of changed circumstances such as divorce, or death of a partner.
- Housing type: could include co-housing models and affordable nursing homes.
- Dwelling size: needs can be adequately met through smaller dwellings.
- Additional needs: accessible, or adaptable, homes to support comfortable ageing and independent living.

Lone person households

- Data: almost one-in-four lone person households in Yarra is in housing stress, with a majority of these being rental households on very low incomes.[80]
- Housing issue: A 2017 Victorian Auditor-General's Report on Victoria's public housing states that current public housing stock is not configured to meet the growing demand for one and two bedroom dwellings, accounting for about 80 percent of applicants in 2016.[81]

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[78] ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016.
[79] ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016.
[80] ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016.
[81] Victorian Auditor-General's Office (June 2017) 'Managing Victoria's Public Housing'.

- Housing type: could include shared equity schemes.
- Dwelling size: needs can be adequately met through smaller dwellings.

Single parent families

- Data: single-parent families – primarily women with children – have the highest rate of housing stress out of any household type.[82]
- Issues: Housing instability and housing stress are often a more pressing issue for lower socio-economic groups and single parent families in particular. A recent report highlights the detrimental effects of housing instability, particularly for children in the first three years of life. Impacts are seen on a range of fronts including behavioural issues, education outcomes, parental stress and capacity, social support networks and health.[83]
- Housing type: family-friendly dwellings, could include shared equity schemes.
- Dwelling size and type: may require larger dwellings.

PERSISTENT DISADVANTAGE

Persistent disadvantage in Australia:

It is estimated that four to six percent of Australians experience 'chronic or persistent poverty or deprivation'.[84] Disadvantage is complex, consisting of the interplay of multiple elements, including:[85]

1) Poverty: low economic resources compared to the average (e.g. less than 50 percent of the median household disposable income).
2) Material deprivation: unable to afford or access things that are essential to achieving a basic acceptable standard of living.
3) Social exclusion: unable to participate economically and socially in the community.

In Australia, some groups are more vulnerable to disadvantage than others, including **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people** and **people with a disability**.[86]

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Key data:

Data on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people relating to housing and homelessness in Victoria demonstrate the enduring disadvantage of this community:

- 43 percent of Aboriginal people in Victoria own their homes as compared to 68 percent of Victorians.[87]
- 18 percent (almost 11,000) Aboriginal people in Victoria, were in contact with homelessness services in 2017–18, as compared to 1.8 percent of Victorians.[88]
- Aboriginal people are over-represented as homelessness clients – 10.4 percent of homelessness clients in Victoria are Aboriginal yet they only make up 0.9 percent of the population.[89]

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[82] Wilkins, Roger and Inga Lass (2018), *The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey: Selected Findings from Waves 1 to 16,* Melbourne Institute: Applied Economic & Social Research, University of Melbourne, p. 44.
[83] PricewaterhouseCoopers Consulting for the Strong Foundations collaboration (2019) *The first thousand days: A case for investment*', PWC: Sydney, pp. 28–29.
[84] Committee for Economic Development of Australia (2015), *Addressing entrenched disadvantage in Australia*, Melbourne, p. 7.
[85] Productivity Commission (2018), *Rising inequality? A stocktake of the evidence,* Commission Research Paper, Canberra, p. 109.
[86] The Senate Community Affairs References Committee (2014) *Bridging our growing divide: inequality in Australia The extent of income inequality in Australia*, Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra, p. 103.
[87] ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016 (as presented in Aboriginal Housing Victoria 'Key Data' graphic, available at: https://ahvic.org.au/cms_uploads/docs/web-key-data-housing-and-homelessness-victoria-.pdf)
[88] Productivity Commission (2019) Table 19A.4 in *Report on Government Services* (as presented in Aboriginal Housing Victoria 'Key Data' graphic, available at: https://ahvic.org.au/cms_uploads/docs/web-key-data-housing-and-homelessness-victoria-.pdf)
[89] Ibid.

Housing issues:

A recent paper produced by Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) highlights some of the particular housing requirements of Aboriginal households, including cultural needs, caring for extended families and pathways from homelessness to long-term secure housing. They also note the need for specific supports around elements such as the legal system, disability, alcohol and drugs, and family violence. AHV places a strong focus on self-determination for Aboriginal housing.[90]

There is currently no dedicated Aboriginal social housing stock in Yarra.

Appropriate housing products:

Long-term social and affordable rental and purchase.

Dwelling size: mix of smaller and larger dwellings. May require larger dwellings to accommodate extended family.

Additional needs: culturally appropriate housing. Older Aboriginal people and those with disabilities will require accessible or adaptable housing.

Supportive services:

Culturally sensitive support services to maintain tenancies, alcohol and drug treatment, legal support, mental health and general health supports, employment and education pathways.

People with a disability

Key data:

There are more than 6,000 Australians with a disability under the age of 65 living in aged care facilities. [91]

In Victoria, as of 30 June 2018, there were 1,585 people under the age of 65 living in permanent residential aged care (RAC), accounting for 3.3 percent of all permanent residents in RAC in Victoria.[92]

The 2016 Census recorded slightly more than 3,000 people or 3.5 percent of the population in Yarra who need help with their day-to-day lives due to disability (equating to a severe or profound disability).

The vast majority of working age people (15 to 60 years old) with need for assistance are not in the labour force, and only eight percent are employed as compared to 75 percent for people who do not require assistance.[93] Lower earnings coupled with higher expense housing needs can lead to an array of housing challenges.

> People with disability are seven times more likely to be living in public housing, reflecting lower incomes and the need for housing assistance.[94]

Disability correlates strongly with age and as many as one in five Yarra residents 65 years or older reported need for assistance with core activities.[95]

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[90] Aboriginal Housing Victoria (2019) Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Summit – Documents and Background Papers, available at: https://ahvic.org.au/communications-and-resources/vahhf (Accessed 30 May 2019).
[91] As at 30 June 2018. Based on data obtained from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) National Aged Care Data Clearinghouse and presented in Summer Foundation (2019) *Young People in Residential Aged Care 2017–18: A Snapshot*. Available at: https://www.summerfoundation.org.au/documents-category/for-policy-makers/# (Accessed 24 Sept 2019)
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.
[94] AHURI (2019) Brief: 'How can shared equity schemes help people living with disability?' Available at: https://www.ahuri.edu.au/policy/ahuri-briefs/how-can-shared-equity-schemes-help-people-living-with-disability (Accessed 25 Sept 2019)
[95] ABS Census or Population and Housing, 2016.

Housing issues and opportunities:

People with disabilities face additional barriers to accessing suitable and affordable housing that are different to other cohorts of the population. They require homes that:

- are accessible and adaptable,
- enable informal support as well as independent living,
- encourage social inclusion and economic participation, and
- promote health and wellbeing.[96]

The Commonwealth Government recently committed to the National Action Plan for Younger People in Residential Aged Care which involves getting all young people under the age of 45, who wish to leave, out of nursing homes by 2022 and those under the age of 65 by 2025. The plan will be funded under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) which, when fully rolled out, is estimated to provide more than $700 million annually in funding for Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA).

A small proportion of NDIS participants with 'extreme functional impairment' or 'very high support needs' will be eligible for additional SDA funding (estimated at 6 percent or 28,000 NDIS participants nationally). The funding is allocated to the individual to enable them to either live in already existing SDA housing or to design or modify mainstream housing to suit their needs. It is intended that this funding stream will stimulate investment in the development of new high quality, accessible dwellings.[97]

Appropriate housing products and features:

Long-term social and affordable rental and purchase.

Dwelling size: May require additional space for live-in carers.

Additional needs: Accessible homes that support independent living.

Supportive and community services:

Flexible and individual support service needs may include health and wellbeing supports, employment and education pathways, services that encourage social inclusion, and access to public transport.

Accessible Housing:

Although accessible housing is often equated with the needs of people with current disabilities, the benefits of designing new homes to universal design standards has broader application.

Council recognises that accessible housing benefits a range of situations including:

- people with disability and their families,
- people who sustain a temporary injury that limits mobility,
- the future needs of Australia's ageing population, and
- families with young children.

International research suggests that there is a 60 percent chance that a new home will be occupied by a person with a disability over the course of its life.[98] Designing new homes to accessible standards can also

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[96] Wiesel, I and Habibis, D (2015) *NDIS, housing assistance and choice and control for people with disability*, AHURI Final Report 258, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute: Melbourne, available at: http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/projects/p71053 (Accessed 24 Sept 2019)

[97] NDIS, Specialist Disability Accommodation webpage. Available at: https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/essentials-providers-working-ndia/specialist-disability-accommodation (Accessed 24 Sept 2019).

[98] Smith, S, Rayer, S, & Smith, E (2008) Ageing & disability: 'Implications for the housing industry and housing policy in the United States', in *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 74:3, 289 – 306. As referenced in Livable Housing Australia (2012), *Livable Housing Design Guidelines*, second edition.

involve considerable cost-savings. It is 22 times more cost-efficient for home-owners to include Livable Housing Design features at the time of building, as compared to retrofitting a home when need arises.[99]

KEY WORKERS

Yarra's key workers:

Key workers have been defined based on traditional key worker occupations (providing essential human services to the community), as well as a selection of occupations specific to the role and function of the Yarra economy.

Traditional occupations defined as key workers:

- Automobile, Bus and Rail Drivers (to help access to jobs)
- Defence Force Members, Fire Fighters and Police
- Health and Welfare Support Workers (includes ambulance officers and paramedics)
- Midwifery and Nursing Professionals
- School teachers

Additional key worker occupations specific to the Yarra economy:

- Artists, Musicians and other Arts Professionals (to support the ongoing presence of the artistic and creative industries that characterise Yarra's cultural landscape)
- Hospitality Workers (to support the operation of Yarra's vibrant food, beverage and cultural scene)
- Child Carers (to support the continued delivery of services essential to Yarra families)
- Cleaners and Laundry Workers (to support operations of a multitude of local businesses, including the hospital cluster)

Key data:

85 percent of people who work in Yarra do not live here.[100]

Escalating house and rental prices mean that there are limited numbers of key workers who can afford to live in Yarra. Analysis of median incomes for the selected key worker groups located in Yarra as compared to property sale prices and advertised rentals in the lower quartile show a slight improvement from 2012 to 2017 in overall affordability (for dual income earners), which seems to suggest that the large numbers of new high density dwellings being constructed are having a positive impact on affordability for key workers, but masks some differences between dwelling types and key worker groups.[101]

Hospitality workers, who receive the lowest income, were significantly less able to afford housing (to buy or rent) as compared to higher income key worker groups. The 2018 report on Housing Demand and Affordability by .id Consulting notes that, '[for] lone person households in key worker occupations, the results are stark. Only defence force members, fire fighters and police could afford more than 1 percent of the houses and units on sale in 2017. For rentals the story is slightly better, with around 20 percent of rental units affordable to midwifery and nursing professionals.'[102]

Housing issues:

Research has shown that a poor relationship between housing and employment markets has an impact on local productivity.[103]

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[99] New Zealand Ministry of Social Development (2009) *Economic effects of utilising Lifemark at a National level*. As referenced in Livable Housing Australia (2012), *Livable Housing Design Guidelines*, second edition.
[100] ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016.
[101] Based on Hometrack property sales and rental data, 2017, and ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016, as prepared by .id Consulting. N.B. An assessment of affordability is most useful in showing affordability of first home buyers and their ability to enter the market.
[102] .id Consulting (2019), 'Housing Demand and Affordability', report prepared for Yarra City Council: Abbotsford, p. 78.
[103] AHURI (2015) *Making connections: housing, productivity and employment*, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute: Melbourne, p. 34.

Local industry faces additional costs without an adequate level of key worker labour supply meaning lost time in worker turn-over and recruiting when workers find jobs closer to home. Workers also suffer when they have additional expenses in the form of transport costs, resulting in a fall in disposable income. The local area faces congestion and air pollution from workers driving to work. It is incumbent on municipalities such as Yarra which has a high concentration of skilled jobs to provide opportunities for key workers to live close to these jobs.

Appropriate housing products and types:

Long-term affordable rental and purchase.

Dwelling size: Mix of smaller and larger dwellings.

N.B. To qualify for affordable housing, key worker income must fall within the very low to moderate brackets.

Community services:

The most important factor for this group is proximity to jobs. Access to a range of community services such as health care, child care and schools, and public transport will also benefit key workers and their families.

3.4. Planning tools: Affordable housing in new developments

The two principal State Government policies outlining plans for housing and development in Victoria, *Homes for Victorians* (2017) and *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050* both signal the role of the planning system in facilitating the supply of affordable housing, whilst acknowledging that the planning system alone cannot address all the issues pertaining to housing affordability.[104]

Local government is the responsible authority for the processing of the majority of land-use and development plan applications, rezoning of land and seeking amendments to the local planning scheme from the Minister for Planning. At present in Victoria, affordable housing can be facilitated by the planning system through a voluntary planning negotiation with a developer or land-owner, generally expressed in a Development Plan Overlay (DPO) and/or a Section 173 Agreement (S173).

A DPO requires an overall plan to be prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority to co-ordinate land uses and development over a defined area or site. It requires the preparation of a Development Plan that sets out conditions for land uses and development. This has been used in some situations to negotiate the inclusion of provisions for affordable housing as part of the overall development outcome.

A S173 is the mechanism commonly used to facilitate the supply of affordable housing through the Victorian planning system. It is a voluntary agreement (made under section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*) between a planning authority and a landowner, and can be used to deliver affordable housing as part of new developments. The agreement sets out conditions or restrictions on the use or development of the land, or to achieve other planning objectives relating to the land. The agreement can be registered over the title to bind future owners and occupiers of the land to the agreement. The agreement is enforced in the same way as a permit condition or planning scheme requirement.

A S173 can be placed on a site in perpetuity, for a predefined number of years (e.g. 10–15 years) or until the affordable housing has been transferred to a registered housing agency. Notably, many registered housing agencies have expressed concern over S173s that are put on a site in perpetuity as this limits their borrowing capacity (which can impact project feasibility) and restricts their overall portfolio management as older assets may need to be sold when maintenance becomes too costly.

Voluntary Planning Negotiations

The Victorian State Government issued some important changes and clarifications with regard to social and affordable housing in June 2018. The Department of Environment Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) state

[104] Available at: https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/affordable-housing (Accessed 17 Dec 2018)

that the objective of the recent changes to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act) is to facilitate the supply of affordable housing through the planning system.

The changes to the Act are also intended to provide a framework that allows for innovative approaches to the delivery of affordable housing and flexibility for parties when reaching an affordable housing agreement.

Three changes were made to the Act that came into effect on 1 June 2018:

- Adding a new objective to the Act '*to facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria*' and thereby affirming that the facilitation of affordable housing is a legitimate concern of the planning system.
- Providing a definition of affordable housing – '*affordable housing is housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low, and moderate-income households*'.
- Affirming the use of Section 173 agreements for voluntary affordable housing agreements '*...a Responsible Authority may enter into an agreement with an owner of land for the development or provision of land in relation to affordable housing*'.[105]

Further guidance from DELWP outlines the requirements for a Responsible Authority to: [106]

- establish strategic justification for an affordable housing request,
- identify value to support the delivery,
- ensure clear land-owner agreement,
- not unduly impact commerciality of the development,
- give regard to a registered housing agencies support for the proposal, and
- test it against the definition and list of matters (as outlined by the Minister for Planning).

The Victorian Government is also considering how councils can provide support through measures such as reducing third party appeal rights, fast-tracking planning approvals and providing exemptions from some planning requirements such as car parking or enabling increased building heights.[107]

Implication for Council

The changes emphasise that the planning system has a role in facilitating affordable housing and provides a shared definition of what affordable housing means, including allocated income brackets defining very low, low and moderate incomes with respect to affordable housing that is not social housing. These categories are derived from calculations based on 50 percent, 80 percent and 120 percent of median incomes in Greater Melbourne (see Table 1). DELWP has also developed a sample S173 Agreement to assist councils in leveraging affordable housing through the planning system.

These changes do not give any power to councils to require allocation of affordable housing, nor does it specify preferred proportions (e.g. 5 percent or 10 percent) or specific triggers (e.g. dwelling yield, floor space or monetary value). What the changes do achieve is removing ambiguity by providing a statutory definition of affordable housing and further protection of the legitimate practice of requesting affordable housing outcomes by agreement that many councils, including Yarra, were already exercising.

It is notable that the sample agreement includes the possibility of cash contributions from developers to be considered as an affordable housing contribution. These contributions could be to registered housing agencies or to approved trusts or bodies, in lieu of housing stock. This opens up possibilities for councils to direct cash funds to affordable housing providers or to create a trust to direct development funds toward affordable housing projects.

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[105] Available at: https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/affordable-housing (Accessed 18 Dec 2018)
[106] Ibid, including Ministerial Notice 'Specified Matters under Section 3AA(2)', (Accessed 17 May 2018)
[107] The state government has included this as an option in implementing *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050*.

Importantly, when considering a payment in lieu of on-site delivery a council needs to consider:

- the urgency of need (i.e. is it more likely that dwellings will be delivered faster in-situ),
- whether high local land costs and smaller cash contributions will result in difficulties/long-time frames for realising outcomes with cash, and
- the importance to the council of social mix (i.e. realising this goal at each respective development).

Cash contributions have traditionally been more common in an inclusionary zoning setting and applied in particular circumstances, such as if the number of dwellings is too few to realise on site, there are particularly high body-corporate costs or it is a non-residential building.[108]

Key stakeholders

There are three principal negotiators in the delivery of affordable housing through the planning process: developers/land-owners, councils and affordable housing owners/operators (generally registered housing agencies), as well as a number of supporting parties. The main stakeholders and their roles and requirements are outlined in Table 5.

Table 5: Key Stakeholders – Financing, Development and Management of Affordable Housing

Stakeholder	Role	Key financial requirements
Land-owner	May be planning applicant and developer or may own land for other purpose and sell a permitted or non-permitted site for others to develop	Appropriate return on land, reflecting value in market, cost of sale
Developer	• Commercial, profit-driven entity • Purchaser of land • Developer of land • Typically planning applicant	Development margin that supports a required Rate of Return on investment after costs and taxes, including financing costs
Affordable housing owner and/or operator	• Owner and/or manager of Affordable Housing • Housing low to moderate income households	• Positive revenue (rent) relative to costs to maintain a viable not-for-profit business • Access to subsidy • Access to low-cost, long-term financing
Council	• Planning authority • Facilitator • Balancing community needs	Maximum community benefit
State Government	• Legislative and policy • Owner and manager of Public Housing • Direct investor in Social and Affordable Housing • Provision of support for home owners	Value for money/public benefit for investment
Financier and/or investor	Provider of funds for land acquisition and/or development on expectation of financial return	Rate of Return on the investment that is commensurate to the level of risk, time and quantum of investment

[108] Kate Breen (2015) 'International approaches to facilitating affordable housing outcomes and their application to Victoria, Australia', 2014 AV Jennings Churchill Fellowship, p. 18.

Source: Adapted from Affordable Development Outcomes report for City of Yarra 'Affordable Housing Financing', April 2019

Increased awareness of other stakeholders' roles and requirements will help Council to understand and balance the needs of different players. Understanding the basic financials of development economics is also core to making informed and realistic requests for affordable housing outcomes. The following section explores this further.

Financing Affordable Housing

The main challenge in securing affordable housing at new developments is the funding gap – essentially the difference in revenue that can be achieved from selling or renting something at market value as compared to selling or renting at a subsidised rate (which can range from high to low).

> Affordable Housing that is appropriate, affordable and allocated to lower income households at a below-market rent or purchase price is not typically delivered by commercial property developers unless it has been directly or indirectly subsidised, typically by government.[109]

In order for affordable housing to be delivered through a private sector development it needs to be commercially viable for the owner/developer as well as commercially sustainable for the registered housing agency to both purchase in the first instance and to own and operate long-term. Therefore, there needs to be a recognition of the process, risks and capital costs required to build dwellings and to ensure the long-term management of a dwelling as affordable housing.

Property development is a complex commercial enterprise entailing significant costs and risks over a considerable period of time. Developers require an adequate rate of return of costs relative to risk and investor (equity and lender) requirements. Increases in costs – from for instance an affordable housing component – that are not countered by an increase or offset in revenue can mean that a project is no longer viable and therefore will not proceed.

Housing agencies must in turn receive an adequate income to meet all tenancy management and building operating costs (rates, owner corporation costs, insurance and property and tenancy management), as well as servicing debt, and all from below-market rental revenue. As charities, housing agencies can draw on taxation benefits such as GST exemptions to reduce costs, but this in itself is not sufficient. In instances where housing agencies have not received a subsidy, such as land at cost or a government grant, they will be incapable of delivering the highest subsidy affordable rental product (social housing). If instead they have to leverage their own assets and income, the likely best outcome that may be achieved is affordable housing products such as key worker housing or shared-equity schemes.

At the time of writing, the Victorian Government was providing some grants and alternate financing, complemented by lower interest borrowing facilities supported by the Commonwealth Government, which can help bridge the funding gap.

The Victorian Government has directed that there should be clear value generation coming from the planning process to improve development viability. Council can make contributions to offset the costs of affordable housing delivery through planning incentives, such as additional yield or streamlined decision making, or rezoning, enabling a higher value use of the site.

> Under voluntary planning negotiations the way the capital costs of a dwelling will be met must be clearly understood and agreed, which in part requires assurance that there is sufficient value available to the developer to offset costs.[110]

Where no value generation is present, other subsidy or funds will be required to meet the developer's costs and the developer and investor hurdle rates.

Kate Breen of Affordable Development Outcomes has produced a report for Council on Affordable Housing Financing, including modelling of different cost and foregone revenue implications of various delivery models. Table 6 (below) shows the different cost impacts for various models (gifting of land through to

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[109] Report for Yarra City Council by Affordable Development Outcomes (April 2019) 'Affordable Housing Financing', p. 4.
[110] Ibid, p. 6.

gifting of completed dwellings) and the flow on effects in terms of tenure, household allocation (very low to moderate) and the potential outcome in terms of dwelling yield.

Table 6: Potential outcomes arising from different delivery models

Model	Relative cost impact for developer	Potential Tenure	Likely Allocation/ Household targeting	Reliance on third party investment (indication of delivery certainty/ risk)	Potential number of dwellings (relative)
Gifting of Land	Low	Social and Affordable Rental and/or Affordable ownership (Shared Equity)	Mix very low, low and moderate income	High – depends on Housing Agency funding construction which is likely to also require government funding	High
Sale at 30% discount/ developer contribution	Low	Affordable Rental and/or Affordable ownership (Shared Equity)	Low to moderate income	High – depends on Housing Agency securing significant funding and/or finance or an individual securing a mortgage	Moderate
Sale at 40 – 50% discount	Moderate	Social and/or Affordable Rental	Low to moderate income	Moderate to high – depends on Housing Agency securing funding and/or finance. Less reliance on government funds if financing can be secured	Low to moderate
Gifting of completed dwellings	High	Social and/or Affordable Rental	Very low to low income	Low/none	Low

Source: Affordable Development Outcomes report for City of Yarra 'Affordable Housing Financing', April 2019

The report also models cost impacts based on the median unit value in Yarra. Assuming a development with a total yield of 100 units, each with a market value of $582,000,[111] the indicative total cost to the developer of providing ten of these dwellings for affordable housing under various delivery models is:[112]

- Gifting of land without dwellings: $417,000
- Sale of dwellings at 30% discount to market value: $640,000
- Sale of dwellings at 40–50% discount to market value: $1.22–1.8 m
- Gifting of completed dwellings: $4.3 m

This is a very useful starting point to begin considering when and what Council can aim for in a negotiation with a developer on a site-by-site basis, understanding that there are very different price implications for the delivery model, with flow-on effects in terms of the quantity that can be delivered and to whom.

[111] Median unit value in City of Yarra in 2018, from Victorian Valuer-General (2018) 'Guide to Property Values'.
[112] Costs are highly indicative and do not take into account site specific considerations or the foregone opportunity cost to the developer, which is greater than the cost impact.

Inclusionary zoning

Inclusionary zoning generally refers to statutory planning controls requiring development proponents to incorporate certain facilities or features on their site, or pay a cash-in-lieu contribution for this obligation to be discharged off-site. It is often used to mean that property developers are required to set aside a percentage of their final dwellings for use as affordable housing. Inclusionary zoning is not currently applied in Victoria.

Council has long been an advocate for inclusionary zoning and has been part of previous efforts to introduce inclusionary zoning approaches in inner-city Melbourne. In 2007, the Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP), which at the time included the Cities of Melbourne, Port Phillip, Stonnington and Yarra, developed a model of inclusionary zoning to maintain at least six percent of housing in the inner city for low income households through a contribution rate to apply to new developments.[113] This proposal was not accepted by the Victorian Government.

Inclusionary zoning is currently used to cover affordable housing provisions in other jurisdictions in Australia, including:

- City of Melbourne – 15 percent affordable housing target but only applies to the development of Council-owned land.
- South Australia – a state affordable housing target announced in 2005, for achieving 15 percent affordable housing in all new significant developments, including 5 percent high needs (public) housing. The planning provisions were initially restricted to the redevelopment of government sites, but are increasingly applied when major new residential areas are released or rezoned to allow higher density development.
- Queensland – site-specific affordable housing initiatives were delivered under the auspices of its Urban Land Development Authority (ULDA) who applied a combination of land supply, barrier reduction, affordable housing incentivisation and inclusionary zoning to large renewal sites in Brisbane.
- New South Wales – two percent of housing in specified zones to comprise of affordable housing. Developers can include affordable housing on site or pay an affordable housing levy.

Inclusionary zoning has also been applied extensively and with significant outcomes in the United Kingdom and United States of America. In England between 2015 and 2016, 12,866 affordable housing units (43 percent of total affordable housing output) were delivered through inclusionary planning requirements and about 12 per cent of annual housing completions in San Francisco are affordable dwellings produced through inclusionary zoning or impact fee requirements. Similar schemes apply to more than 500 cities across the United States.[114]

Yarra: current policy and recent outcomes

Council has already achieved affordable housing outcomes by negotiating during the rezoning process with the development proponent for the inclusion of a proportion of affordable housing through Development Plan Overlays and supported by a Section 173 Agreement.

In addition, Yarra has developed a *Policy Guidance Note: Affordable Housing Outcomes at Significant Redevelopments* (Policy Guidance Note), which sets out Council's intentions with regard to facilitating social and affordable housing at major redevelopment sites.

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[113] http://imap.vic.gov.au/index.php?page=affordable-housing, viewed 23 January 2017
[114] Gurran, N., Gilbert, C., Gibb, K., van den Nouwelant, R., James, A. and Phibbs, P. (2018) Supporting affordable housing supply: inclusionary planning in new and renewing communities, AHURI Final Report No. 297, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, http://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/final-reports/297, doi: 10.18408/ahuri-7313201.

Yarra's Policy Guidance Note

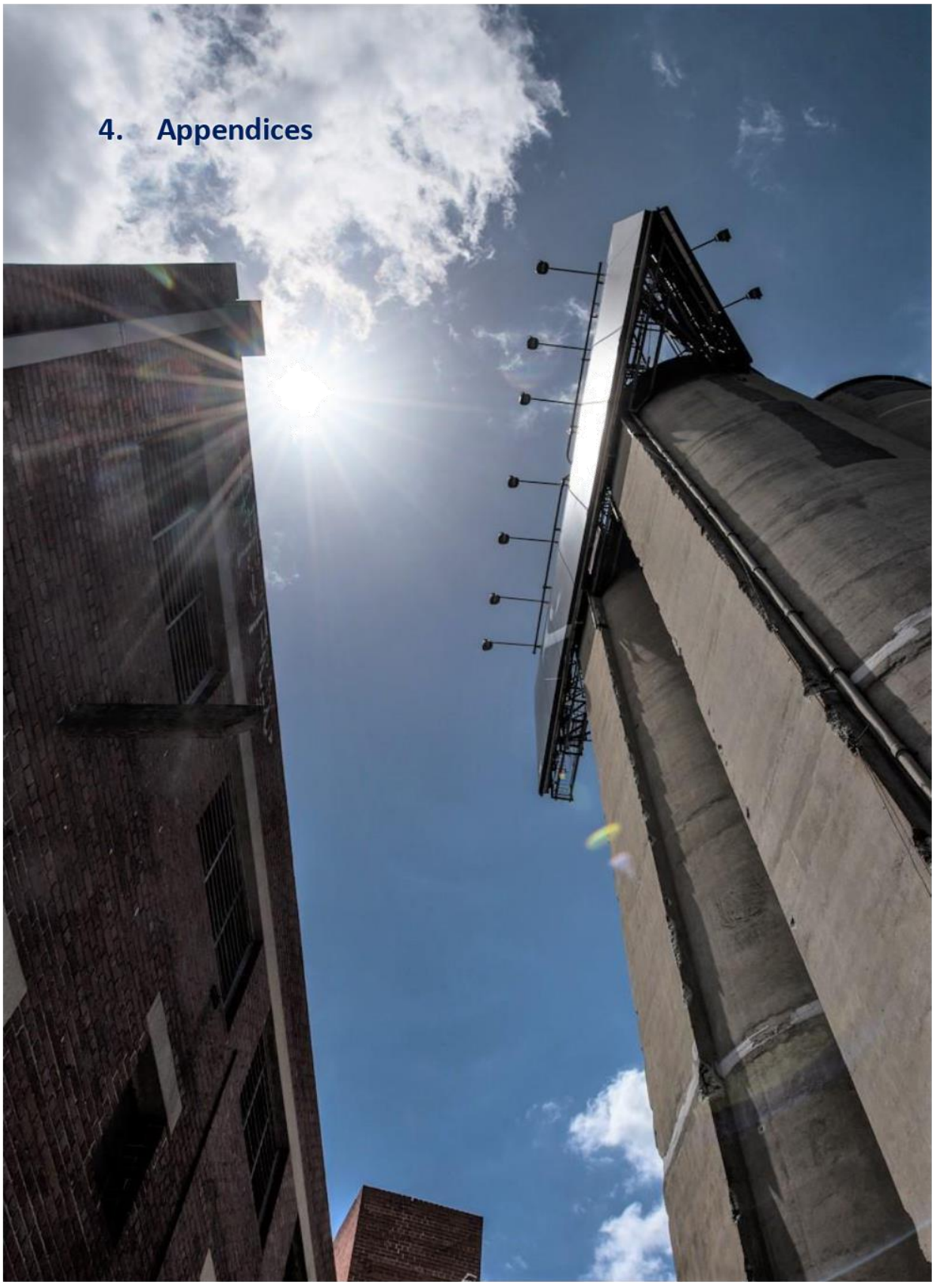
In order to stimulate development of additional affordable housing, Council endorsed a *Policy Guidance Note* in 2017, with a first update in 2018 and subsequent update in 2019.[115] The Guidance Note communicates Council's expectation to realise a percentage of affordable housing units, to be managed by registered housing agencies, in sites of rezoned land likely to yield around 50 dwellings or more. The Guidance Note informs developers of Council's rationale and vision for affordable housing contributions and was first endorsed at the Council meeting of 21 November 2017 after community and stakeholder consultation and updated by Council resolution in October 2018 to increase the percentage of affordable housing from 5 percent to 10 percent and update the definitions. The Guidance Note has been further updated to align with this Strategy.

Council has already had success in securing affordable housing through the planning process. Major sites where negotiations for affordable housing have been secured with developers and community housing agencies, include:

- Alphington Paper Mill Site
- GTV9 Richmond
- North Fitzroy Gasworks

Several additional sites are currently being negotiated.

[115] The Policy Guidance Note was updated in October 2018 following the changes to the *Planning and Environment Act* and in 2019 to align with the new Social and Affordable Housing Strategy.


4. Appendices

Appendix A: Policy Guidance Note: Affordable Housing Outcomes at Significant Developments

1. Purpose

1.1. The City of Yarra is a vibrant and diverse municipality. Through the Council Plan and other strategic documents, Council expresses its commitment to maintain and support a socially, economically and culturally diverse community.

1.2. Sustaining a diverse population requires a diversity of housing available at prices that can be afforded by households with very low, low and moderate incomes. Yarra City Council (Council) has a long and proud tradition of advocating for the best housing outcomes for its residents and is committed to working to increase the supply of social and affordable housing in the municipality.

1.3. Council wants to see effective partnerships between community housing providers and property developers to deliver affordable housing within the municipality.

1.4. This policy guidance note is provided so that applicants and other interested parties can understand Yarra City Council's expectations relating to **affordable housing** outcomes at **significant developments** (providing 50 or more dwellings).

1.5. This policy guidance note includes information on **Registered Housing Associations** and **Registered Housing Providers** in the state of Victoria.

1.6. This note may be updated from time-to-time by Council as and if required.

2. Context

2.1. Data shows a consistent and worsening shortfall of housing in the City of Yarra that can be afforded by **very low to moderate income households**:

2.1.1. 15 percent (6,000) of Yarra households are in housing stress[1]

2.1.2. More than 3,000 of those in housing stress are rental households on very low incomes[2]

2.1.3. Nine percent of households are estimated to have an unmet need for affordable housing (homeless, marginally housed and households in long-term rental stress)[3]

2.1.4. There are 9 advertised private rental lettings in Yarra that are affordable to people on statutory (Centrelink) incomes[4]

[1] ABC Census of Population and Housing, 2016
[2] ABC Census of Population and Housing, 2016
[3] Based on analysis of ABS Census data (2016) by .id Consulting
[4] DHHS, Affordable lettings by local government area, June quarter 2019

2.1.5. It is estimated that there are 1,000 or more homeless people in Yarra[5]

2.1.6. 85 percent of those who work in Yarra live outside the municipality[6]

3. Guidance

3.1. When land is rezoned to allow residential use, this positively impacts the **site value** and Council considers that it is reasonable to capture some of this value and direct it towards improving the provision of affordable housing in the municipality.

3.2. When considering proposals for the rezoning of land for residential use that would allow the development of 50 or more dwellings, it is Council policy that a requirement (or requirements) will be included in the planning scheme provisions that secure at least 10% of the dwellings as affordable housing, which are to be transferred to a registered housing agency, or an alternative arrangement of equal or better benefit, to the satisfaction of Council.

3.3. A requirement for affordable housing that is imposed on the land when it is rezoned will attach to the land and must be considered by individuals, corporations or government entities in the purchase of the land for development.

3.4. In securing the delivery of affordable housing, Council will seek to ensure that the affordable housing will:

3.4.1. Meet identified local needs both initially and subsequently, once constructed and into the future.

3.4.2. Be affordable – as per the State government legislated income bands – both initially and subsequently, once constructed and into the future.

3.4.3. Be tenure-blind and integrated with market housing, meaning that subsidised and private dwellings should not be able to be readily differentiated through either their appearance, quality or amenity and should have equal access to all communal indoor and outdoor spaces.

3.4.4. Promote high accessibility standards by being in accordance with Liveable Housing Design Guidelines Silver level or higher.

3.4.5. Be built to a high standard in terms of durability and energy-efficiency to decrease ongoing maintenance costs.

3.5. Council encourages developers to meet their affordable housing obligations by forming partnerships with Registered Housing Agencies (see list below).

3.6. Council planning officers will offer the following services to developers to assist in the successful delivery of affordable housing:

[5] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2017-18: 1,070 homelessness services clients, ABS Census 2016: 838 estimated homeless, and StreetCount 2018: 29 rough sleepers

[6] ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016

3.6.1. Interpretation and advice of planning policy and guidance, and what this means for an individual site.

3.6.2. Assistance in calculating the required amount and mix of affordable housing.

3.6.3. Advice on the standard and quality of the proposed housing, design, layout and other development control matters.

3.7. Affordable housing will often be secured through a requirement in a Schedule to the **Development Plan Overlay** (DPO) and/or an agreement made under **Section 173** (s173) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. A s173 is placed on the title to a site until the conditions are met, or for a predefined number of years, as agreed between Council, the developer/landowner and a registered housing agency.

3.8. As part of a DPO, Council will also require a **Housing Diversity Report** to be submitted for Council's consideration and approval. A Housing Diversity Report will need to include information such as:

3.8.1. A demographic analysis of the types of people and households anticipated to live within the development based on the proposed dwelling design and bedroom mix.

3.8.2. A response to the 'Specified Matters under Section 3AA(2)' of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* with regard to the affordable housing that is proposed for the site.

3.8.3. An outline of a preferred delivery model for achieving the agreed affordable housing outcome.

3.8.4. Evidence of genuine discussions that have been had with registered housing agencies.

3.8.5. Financial information as it pertains to project feasibility.

3.9. Council has identified a range of **households** that fall within the definition of affordable housing (as per the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*) and are unable to afford safe, secure and appropriate housing in the local market. These groups have specific needs – number of bedrooms, accessibility, supportive services etc. – that Council wants addressed at significant developments in Yarra. These households are:

3.9.1. homeless persons,

3.9.2. lower income renters,

3.9.3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,

3.9.4. people with disabilities, and

3.9.5. key workers in the local economy.

3.10. Further information about these groups, including implications for housing products and support services is available in the *Yarra Social and Affordable Housing Strategy, 2019*.

4. Policy basis

4.1. According to the *Local Government Act 1989*, the 'primary objective of a local council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions'.

4.2. Plan Melbourne 2017–2050 – the Victorian Government strategy for the growth of Melbourne – aims to increase the supply of social and affordable housing through the following policies:

4.2.1. 'Strengthen the role of planning in facilitating and delivering the supply of social and affordable housing ' (Policy 2.3.3)

4.2.2. 'Create ways to capture and share value uplift from rezoning' (Policy 2.3.4)

4.3. The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* was amended effective 1 June 2018 to add a new objective for the planning system 'to facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria'.

4.4. In Victoria, affordable housing can be facilitated through a voluntary planning negotiation between a developer or landowner and the Responsible Authority (generally a local council).

4.5. The Victorian Planning Policy Framework (VPPF) includes the objective to 'deliver more affordable housing closer to jobs, transport and services' (Victorian Planning Provisions 16-01-4S).

4.6. A number of local plans and policies support the increase of affordable housing in Yarra, including:

4.6.1. The Yarra City Council Plan 2017–2021, which states that Council will: 'Actively Plan for Yarra's projected growth and development and advocate for an increase in social and affordable housing.'

4.6.2. Strategic Direction 4 of the Yarra Housing Strategy (2018), which is to: 'Facilitate the provision of more affordable housing in Yarra.'

4.6.3. The Yarra Social and Affordable Housing Strategy (2019), which has an overarching strategy to: 'Ensure a diverse population by increasing the supply of affordable housing suitable to households at various income levels and requirements.'

4.7. This Policy Guidance Note demonstrates Council's clear and unwavering commitment to translate these local plans and policies into action. That is, through the delivery of affordable housing.

5. Key definitions

Affordable housing

Affordable housing is 'housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of very low, low and moderate income households'.[7]

Development Plan Overlay

A Development Plan Overlay (DPO) requires an overall plan to be prepared to co-ordinate land uses, development and redevelopment change over a defined area. It requires the preparation of a Development Plan that sets out conditions for land uses and the new built form. The specifics for such a plan are laid out in the Schedule. A schedule to the overlay specifies what the Development Plan must include and can include requirements about all manner of things connected with development, including pedestrian and road connections, where different land uses should be located, and the design of new development on the land among other things.

Household

One or more persons, usually resident in the same dwelling.

Housing Diversity Report

A Housing Diversity Report explains the mix of housing on the site including how it is proposed to provide 10% of the overall housing stock as affordable housing and the diversity of households likely to be housed.

Registered Housing Agency

Registered housing agencies are experienced not-for-profit organisations that provide and/or manage affordable rental housing for low income households. They are registered under the *Housing Act 1983* as either housing associations or housing providers and are regulated by the Victorian Registrar of Housing Agencies. Registered agencies seek to balance affordability for tenants and financial viability for the agency in a fair and transparent way. The rent paid by tenants enables registered agencies to largely pay for the costs of owning, maintaining and managing the agency's rental housing.

Victorian Policy is that 75 percent of housing agencies' social housing tenants must come from the Priority List of the Victorian Housing Register.

Registered Housing Association

There are currently a total of ten Registered Housing Associations (RHAs) in Victoria who own and manage affordable rental housing to lower income households. Housing associations are larger, more complex businesses with the skills, expertise and resources to manage, maintain and grow a viable social housing portfolio. They expand new housing through construction, purchase or

[7] Victorian *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

acquisition, using a mix of government funds and private sector investment. They also manage housing properties owned by them or leased from other parties, such as the Director of Housing.[8]

Registered Housing Provider

There are currently 29 Registered Housing Providers operating in Victoria. They range in size and primarily manage rental housing portfolios for other parties, such as the Director of Housing (DoH). Some housing providers own properties, however their growth is small in scale compared with housing associations. Housing providers often specialise in particular client groups which may include housing for people with disability, older people and young people.

Section 173 Agreement

The mechanism commonly used to facilitate the supply of affordable housing through the Victorian planning system. It is a voluntary agreement (made under section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*) between a planning authority and a landowner, and can be used to deliver affordable housing as part of new developments. The agreement sets out conditions or restrictions on the use or development of the land, or to achieve other planning objectives relating to the land. The agreement can be registered over the title to bind future owners and occupiers of the land to the agreement. The agreement is enforced in the same way as a permit condition or planning scheme requirement.

Significant development

This policy applies to sites to be rezoned which will yield a development of a sufficient size to create on-site provision of affordable housing. These are defined as sites likely to yield 50 or more dwellings.

Site value

Site value (SV) of land means the sum which the land, if it were held for an estate in fee simple unencumbered by any lease, mortgage or other charge, might in ordinary circumstances be expected to realise at the time of the valuation if offered for sale on such reasonable terms and conditions as a genuine seller might be expected to require, and assuming that the improvements (if any) had not been made. [9] SV is commonly known as the market value of the land only.

Very-low-to-moderate income households

The Victorian Governor in Council Order (the Order) specifies the income ranges for very low, low and moderate income households for affordable housing that is not social housing. The Order is published annually in the Government Gazette.

Social housing eligibility differs from affordable housing and is managed through the Victorian Housing Register.

[8] Victorian Housing Registrar, http://www.housingregistrar.vic.gov.au/Who-we-regulate/Housing-associations (accessed 10 Dec 2018)
[9] *Valuation of Land Act 1960* (Vic) s 2

6. Registered Agencies in Victoria

Registered Housing Associations

The following are the contact details of Registered Housing Associations currently registered in Victoria:

Aboriginal Housing Victoria Limited
Telephone: 03 9403 2100
Website: http://www.ahvic.org.au

Common Equity Housing Limited
Telephone: 03 9208 0800
Website: http://www.cehl.com.au

Community Housing (Vic) Ltd
Telephone: 03 9856 0050
Website: http://www.chl.org.au

Housing Choices Australia Limited
Telephone: 1300 312 447
Website: http://www.housingchoices.org.au

HousingFirst Limited
Telephone: 03 9534 5837
Website: http://www.housingfirst.org.au

Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd
Telephone: 03 5444 9099
Website: http://www.havenhomesafe.org.au

Rural Housing Network Limited
Telephone: 02 6055 9015
Website: http://www.beyondhousing.org.au

Unison Housing Limited
Telephone: 03 9349 0250
Website: http://unison.org.au

Wintringham Housing Ltd
Telephone: 03 9376 1122
Website: http://www.wintringham.org.au

Women's Housing Ltd
Telephone: 03 9412 6868
Website: http://www.womenshousing.com.au

Registered Housing Providers

The following are the contact details of Registered Housing Providers currently registered in Victoria:

Active Community Housing Ltd
Telephone: 03 9314 8555
Website: http://www.activecommunityhousing.com.au

Baptcare Affordable Housing Ltd
Telephone: 13 22 78
Website: https://www.baptcare.org.au/services/housing/affordable-housing

BAYSA Ltd
Telephone: 03 5221 4466
Website: https://www.bcyf.org.au

Centacare Housing Service Inc
Telephone: 03 5337 8999
Website: https://www.centacareballarat.org.au

EACH Housing Ltd
Telephone: 03 8720 2753
Website: http://www.each.com.au/service/each-housing/

Eastcoast Housing
Telephone: 03 5127 7160
Website: http://www.eha.org.au

Eastern Suburbs Rental Housing Co-operative Limited
Telephone: 03 9890 9477
Website: http://www.esrhc.org.au

Inner East Social Housing Group Limited
Telephone: 03 9853 7501
Website: https://www.ieshg.com.au

Launch Housing Ltd
Telephone: 03 9288 9600
Website: https://www.launchhousing.org.au

Mallee Accommodation & Support Program Ltd
Telephone: 03 5021 6500
Website: http://masp.org.au/

Mission Australia Housing (Victoria)
Telephone: 03 8615 2218
Website: http://www.mahousing.com.au

Northcote Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd.
Telephone: 03 9482 5998
Website: http://www.nrhc.coop/

Northern Geelong Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd
Telephone: 03 5277 9993
Website: http://www.ngrhc.org.au

Prahran/Malvern Community Housing Inc.
Telephone: 03 9826 5194
Website: https://pmch.org.au/

Salvation Army Housing (Victoria)
Telephone: 03 8878 2320
Website: http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/sah

Servants Community Housing
Telephone: 03 9819 6073
Website: http://www.servants.org.au/

South Port Community Housing Group Inc
Telephone: 03 9696 1128
Website: http://www.spchg.org.au/

SouthEast Housing Cooperative Ltd
Telephone: 03 9706 8005
Website: http://www.sehc.org.au

St Kilda Community Housing Ltd
Telephone: 03 9534 1809
Website: http://www.stkch.org.au

Sunshine/St Albans Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd
Telephone: 03 9312 6904
Website: https://www.sunrhc.org.au/

The Haven Foundation Ltd
Telephone: 03 9455 7000
Website: http://www.havenfoundation.org.au/

United Housing Co-operative Ltd
Telephone: 03 9689 8157
Website: http://www.unitedhousing.org.au

Uniting Housing Australia Limited
Telephone: 03 9251 5960
Website: http://unitinghousing.org.au/

Victorian Women's Housing Association Limited
Telephone: 03 9664 7800
Website: http://www.wpi.org.au

VincentCare Community Housing
Telephone: 03 9611 9200
Website: http://www.vincentcare.org.au

WAYSS Limited
Telephone: 03 9791 6111
Website: http://www.waysltd.org.au

West Turk Housing and Elderly Services Co-operative Ltd
Telephone: 03 9366 3856

Williamstown Rental Housing Co-operative Ltd
Telephone: 03 9391 9267
Website: https://www.williamstownhousingcoop.org.au/

YWCA Housing
Telephone: 03 8341 8700
Website: http://www.ywca.net/pages/ywca-housing

7. Further information

Phone:	03 9205 5555
Email:	info@yarracity.vic.gov.au
In Person:	Richmond Town Hall 333 Bridge Road, Richmond Hours: 8.30am–5.00pm, Monday – Friday

Attachment 2 - Consultation report_draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy_Jul-Aug 2019

Attachment 2 - Consultation report_draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy_Jul-Aug 2019

Public Consultation – draft Social and Affordable Housing Strategy

Summary

Period: 23 July – 23 August 2019

Methods: Targeted stakeholder consultation and broad community consultation, both anchored through a Your Say Yarra page - https://yoursayyarra.com.au/social-and-affordable-housing.

- Targeted stakeholder consultation:
  - Direct email invite to known stakeholders including state government, community housing organisations, peak bodies, property developers, community banking, academics, not-for-profit organisations and resident groups.
  - Presentations and feedback at Yarra advisory groups.
- Broad community consultation promoted through:
  - Yarra Life eNews,
  - social media posts, and
  - hard copy outreach (postcards) at the 10 neighbourhood houses, libraries and Council service centres.

Number of responses: Feedback was received through the Your Say Yarra survey, direct submissions to officers, in-person meetings and at advisory group meetings.

- 42 survey responses from the community
  - Representing Yarra residents, ratepayers, business-owners and workers.
  - 26 were broadly supportive of the strategy, 8 were negative and 8 were neutral or mixed.
  - The majority of respondents were home-owners (33).
  - There was a good spread across the municipality. The most well represented suburb was Richmond with 15 respondents, followed by Carlton North – Princes Hill (8) and Fitzroy North (6).
- 12 submissions from organisations
  - Input from the not-for-profit sector, community housing, developers, community banking, peak-body and advocacy organisations.
  - Strong support for overall strategy with specific feedback relating to their industry perspective or interest areas.
- 6 advisory group presentations
  - Aboriginal Advisory Group, YAARTS, Active Ageing Advisory Group, Disability Advisory Committee, Multicultural Advisory Group and Yarra Housing and Homelessness Network.
  - Feedback related to groups represented as well as broader affordability issues.

Questions: The Your Say Yarra survey had five open-ended questions, asking what respondents thought of each of the headline strategic directions and the overarching strategy. An opportunity was also given to submit further comments. Additionally, questions were asked about the respondents' connection to Yarra and if they were affiliated with any particular organisation. Respondents had the option to submit their comments anonymously.

General feedback:

- There is clear and strong support for the overall Strategy expressed throughout the stakeholder, community, peer and committee feedback.
- There was also praise for the practical focus of the Strategy, which is centred on actions that are evidence-based and within Council's control.
- A sense of urgency is apparent through many of the responses that these are important actions that need to be taken now.

- A handful of community respondents did not think that it is within Council's role to engage with this issue and a few expressed their strong opposition to increasing social and affordable housing in the municipality.

Feedback on draft strategies

Overarching Strategy: Ensure a diverse population by increasing the supply of affordable housing suitable to households at various income levels and requirements

Summary of responses

- There was general support for the overarching strategy. For example: 'I applaud the vision. I think it is just and fair and congratulate Council for acknowledging the lack of housing and being prepared to address the issue.' (Resident, Clifton Hill)
- Respondents expressed support for maintaining diversity in Yarra, however individual opinions were articulated that diversity is not the main issue (safe and permanent shelter is); and that diversity needs to be more clearly defined (it is often conflated with ethnic diversity).
- Some community members expressed concerns for impacts on safety and amenity, and a few preferred there to be less social housing in Yarra rather than more.
- Community housing providers and other respondents supported the notion that there is a definite need for more permanent long-term social and affordable housing, and in particular in areas such as Yarra.

Summary of changes to strategy

No changes necessary.

Officer comment: Diversity is explored and defined more in the broader document alongside other aspects of the importance of affordable housing, including human rights and equity. Council's expectations with regard to building quality, standards and safety are expressed in SD1.2 or in more detail through the *Yarra Housing Strategy*.

Strategic Direction 1: Be a leading local government in realising affordable housing outcomes at new developments across Yarra

Summary of responses

- Housing quality came up a number of times in the community feedback, views were expressed that new apartments need to be of a high standard, inclusive of energy-efficient features and that affordable housing should blend in (no 'dog-box' developments).
- There was support for target groups to be housed through this process with particular mention of key workers and low-paid workers. Queries were raised over being able to house tenants who require intense supports through this process.
- Support was expressed for the current 10% ask in the policy guidance note (submission mentioned that it is considered best practice).
- Request that developers should be given flexibility to respond to affordable housing inclusion (in terms of delivery model, built form, housing typologies and potential tenants) in recognition of the differing costs associated with each (1.1.1).
- Would like Council to take in account the number of bedrooms in the dwellings that are negotiated in order to get some outcomes with 2–3 bedrooms that could realistically house families and in particular women with children. Need to be flexible in percentage of

dwellings sought in order to achieve a mix of bedroom numbers, or shift to floor-area model.

- A number of specific models were mentioned to pursue including Nightingale, rent-to-buy etc. It was also proposed that more flexibility should be granted to provide affordable housing through a variety of models.
- A clearer definition is required for 'tenure-blind'.
- Request for clarity of how presence or absence of subsidy will be considered (1.1.2). Ideally certainty with regard to funding outcomes would be available at the pre-approval stage to enable parties to determine a viable and appropriate inclusion.
- Accessible standards for housing should be expressed through Livable Housing Standards (silver, gold or platinum) as opposed to DDA. Feedback was that we should aim above minimum standards for disability as this benefits the broader community, particularly as we age.
- There was support for the continued use of diversity reports but it was considered excessive to provide feasibility studies. Some feasibility can be included in diversity report.
- Further clarity was requested around incentivisation and basis for negotiating what type or amount of stock is requested.
- A particular concern of the community housing sector is around s173s 'in perpetuity' as this significantly limits their capacity to acquire loans, which is a requirement for the viability of many of the projects. They also require some flexibility to sell and reinvest in new stock when a dwelling comes to the end of its useful life-cycle. Preference was for either a limited time-frame (e.g. 15 years) or not to require a S173 agreement in situations where outcomes can be secured without it.
- Different community housing organisations expressed different capacity, interest and requirements in taking on affordable housing at new development sites. Some very positive to taking on a smaller share of housing, others would require greater numbers of dwellings to make it work. Level of discount required also varied.
- Questions were raised around what types of incentives Council will offer to support viable outcomes.
- Questions around eligibility for affordable housing and whether key workers are in addition to affordable housing or part of.
- Suggestion to investigate:
    - Shared equity strategies with Council taking a minority equity stake in properties sold.
    - Council raising a municipal long-term bond with funds used to acquire land for redevelopment into social and affordable housing.
- Support for clearer framework and guidelines including the 'trigger' (whether by number of dwellings, floor-space or dollar value) and that contains specifics around built form, locations, dwelling types etc., and considers Council incentives and outlines a process for negotiation. Recommendation to translate agreed percentage of dwellings to a floor-space equivalent to enable different outcomes (e.g. number of bedrooms, disability standards).
- Support for cash-in-lieu model.

Summary of changes to strategy

- The directions under Strategic Direction 1 have been consolidated, clarified and simplified to illustrate Council's position.
- The 10% 'ask' has been maintained, adding an option for 'an alternative of equal or better benefit, to the satisfaction of Council'.
- The Policy Guidance Note has been updated in accordance with the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and appended to the final Strategy.

- Yarra's intention for affordable housing to be of a high and equal standard, inclusive, integrated and accessible is expressed in SD1.2:
    - Universal Housing Standards as expressed through the Livable Housing Guidelines have replaced any reference to DDA compliance. A definition has been added and a small section on Accessible Housing (in Section 3.3).
    - A reference to energy-efficiency has been added.
    - The expectations under 'tenure-blindness' have been expanded and are explored in further detail in Section 3.2 of the document.
- Broader standards for building and housing are expressed in the Yarra Housing Strategy.
- Council's target groups have been amended quite significantly to shift the focus to households in need and implications for housing products as shown in Section 3.3 of the Strategy and expressed through SD1.1.5. Key workers are still included, but will only apply when household income falls within the legislated income brackets.
- Expectations as to what should be included in a Diversity Report have been listed in the updated Policy Guidance Note and referred to in SD1.1.4. Requests for a feasibility report have been removed, however some basic feasibility information should now be included in the Diversity Report.
- Officers note that the issue of S173s have been raised consistently by the sector and acknowledge the unnecessary encumbrance it places on community housing organisations. The Strategy has been updated to address this more clearly, as has the Policy Guidance Note.
- Directions kept to investigate:
    - cash-in-lieu of in-situ affordable housing, and
    - merits of new assessment criteria for affordable housing (e.g. based on residential floor area, dollar value or dwelling yield).

Officer comments: Strategic Direction 1 is built on the lever that Council has to enter in voluntary negotiations for affordable housing at redevelopment sites. Council is aiming to be clear on our expectations for this process allowing for some flexibility in how to achieve this, as such the focus is on the outcomes and not the models to achieve it. Within the guidelines that are proposed, appropriate delivery models will be considered on a site-by-site basis. Crucially, for an outcome to be considered affordable it needs to be no more than 30% of income, appropriate (type, size, tenure etc) and allocated to people who are eligible (as per the legislated Victorian Government income bands).

Council does not have significant powers to influence the allocation process for affordable housing at new developments. This is done by individual housing agencies who have specific requirements and specialised cohorts that they house. The language around target groups has therefore been softened but still included to guide developers, to show Council's understanding of need, and to illustrate implications for different housing types and products.

IMAP is exploring options for what councils can offer in terms of incentives to offset the costs of an affordable housing contribution. This work sits separate to the Strategy.

Strategic Direction 2: Make effective and prudent direct investments in social and affordable housing

Summary of responses

- This was the most polarising strategic direction based on community feedback as it involves Council resources in a more direct way. Some were concerned whether this was the best use of Council assets, considering all the other community benefits that could be

achieved. Many, however considered this to be the best and most effective of the four strategic directions because it would have direct and clear impact. For example: 'This is a good way to demonstrate the level of Council commitment.' (Resident-ratepayer, Fitzroy)

- There was some mention of specific models that could be employed, including 'tiny houses', and there were suggestions that we need to be creative in our approach.
- Specific ideas were presented around attracting philanthropic and private investment.
- Some community members flagged that Council needs to be strong in the face of opposition in order to achieve something in this space.
- Suggestion that this SD should prioritise public housing specifically as this caters to the most disadvantaged in our society. Proposed that there may be opportunities for joint developments with Council, Public and Community housing, as well as engaging private developers.
- Industry feedback was very positive, in particular amongst community housing providers who are keen to grow their affordable housing stock in a well-located area like Yarra. Any monetary or in-kind support greatly helps them achieve this.

Summary of changes to strategy

No significant changes were made to this direction other than some additions to the introduction.

Officer comments: This direction is a powerful way to show Council's commitment to increasing social and affordable housing in Yarra. Careful consideration will be given to community benefit, and it is probable that additional funding will be required from the state or federal government to deliver housing through Council assets.

Strategic Direction 3: Partner, facilitate and engage with all stakeholders to increase affordable housing in Yarra

Summary of responses

- This direction was considered a bit weaker in terms of its impact however many also identified the value of facilitating good relationships and collaboration across sectors.
- Some concern was expressed in terms of impact, clarity of direction and accountability in terms of outcomes.
- A number of additional stakeholders were suggested to be added or considered, including: the build-to-rent sector, residents and ratepayers, young people, NDIS, VAHS, homeless and social housing tenants, service providers, Department of Treasury and Finance etc.
- Suggestion that Council could have a role in matching Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) funding with developers.
- Recommendation to include development industry in any future advisory committee.
- Community education was suggested as an addition.
- Support for fast-tracking planning application from registered housing agencies:
    - The Moreland Design Scorecard was referenced as a good example of fast-tracking delegated planning decisions.
    - Another example in Footscray was mentioned as effective.
- Consider incentives (fast-tracking and exemptions) for private developments that provide affordable housing as well, as suggested for registered housing agencies.
- Community housing organisations suggested that Council could provide additional support through rate-exemptions or discounts. It was noted that South Australian councils offer a 75% rebate on council rates to community housing providers.

Summary of changes to strategy

- The directions under SD3 have been consolidated.
- SD3.3 has been added to 'engage and educate the Yarra community' and SD3.2.4 has been added to signal Council's openness to new partnerships.

Officer comments: Strategic direction 3 is a softer measure which will yield impact in the medium to long term. Council is in an optimal position to facilitate relationships between key players as well as collaborate with others to achieve more significant outcomes.

From 2004-2011, rates on properties owned by accredited housing associations were waived. In late 2011, this rate waiver superseded by a rate rebate of $130 per property (equivalent to the pensioner rebate). In 2013, the rate rebate was replaced by the Yarra Affordable Housing Fund (YAHF) within the broader Council Community Grants Program, with $50,000 provided annually to support local affordable housing initiatives. This fund continues to this day.

Strategic Direction 4: Continue to pursue evidence-based, strategic advocacy to other levels of government for improved housing outcomes

Summary of responses

- There was general support for this strategic direction with some community members considering it more within Council's role than the other directions. As one resident-ratepayer noted: 'Vital yes, this is my preferred option than direct investment'.
- Support for advocacy to other levels of government to:
  - improve safety for current social housing residents,
  - ensure a high quality of social housing,
  - 'close the funding gap', and
  - adopt inclusionary zoning.
- One industry submission expressed concern about inclusionary zoning as this may limit flexibility in developer agreements.
- Suggestion to consider successes and shortcomings of previous public housing renewals as a reference point for how to model current and upcoming renewals, e.g. Kensington v Carlton estates.
- There was a request for examples of previous work in this space.
- Suggestion that Council could use our advocacy role to encourage an increase in public housing specifically, as this tends to house the most vulnerable in our society. Concerns were expressed over increasing the proportion of social housing that is community housing more than it currently is, as they don't always house the people with the highest disadvantage, and don't have the same level of tenant rights. Specifically it was suggested that the current public to community housing ratio (2/3 and 1/3 respectively) is to be maintained.
- Mention of social housing support services program that was developed specifically for Aboriginal tenants – 'More than a Landlord'.
- Particular groups were mentioned in terms of their specific vulnerabilities that Council could address through advocacy. This included asylum-seekers (who have very few rights to public supports, including no Centrelink and ineligible for VHR), Forgotten Australians (children who grew up in out-of-home care). Mention was also made of people on the VHR who are not on the priority list, and therefore are unlikely to be allocated social housing, falling between the cracks of the system.
- The following groups were also explicitly mentioned as having a need for housing by respondents: key workers, working poor, homeless people, Aboriginal people, households

with a sudden loss of income or change in circumstances, Newstart recipients, older single women and single mothers.

Summary of changes to strategy

- SD4.2 added to advocate specifically for more public housing.
- SD4.1.4 added to investigate different affordable housing models as needed.
- SD4.4.5 added to consider outcomes of past public housing renewals in forming a position on the PHRP and other renewal processes.

Officer comments: Vulnerable groups and others in need of affordable housing have been reconsidered in Section 3.3. Officers have carefully considered the merits of including and grouping different demographics and situations and believe the new format is more effective in illustrating a range of needs and the implications of these needs on housing products, types and supportive services.

Although the concerns of current social housing residents are addressed through SD4.3 and SD4.4 the main focus of this Strategy is on increasing supply, therefore specific strategies around safety for current tenants have been considered out of scope, other than as they pertain to tenant services more generally.

Other comments and feedback

Summary of responses

- Residents and ratepayers who were opposed to the whole Strategy expressed the following sentiments:
  - Council's focus should be on providing for rate-payers/Council should stick to 3 R's/this is a state and federal issue.
  - People should live where they can afford to/it is cheaper to provide subsidised housing further out.
  - Concern over safety if there is an increase in social housing/perception that social housing brings crime and drugs.
  - Yarra is already pulling its weight when it comes to social housing/the municipality is diverse enough.
- More than half of the community respondents who were very critical of the Strategy live in Richmond (5 of 8). Particular concerns about the Richmond Estate and safety were apparent contributors to these views.
- Quality of housing was a concern of many community members, opinions were that new affordable housing needs to be of a high standard in terms of quality, amenity and energy-efficiency, and that private and subsidised housing should be integrated to avoid 'ghettoization'.
- A number of specific models were mentioned, including:
  - co-housing for seniors,
  - Nightingale,
  - tiny-houses,
  - pop-up shelters, and
  - Permanent Rental Affordability Development Solution (PRADS).
- Specific feedback about accessible housing and people with disabilities included:
  - To distinguish between accessible housing (a product that had broad public value) and the affordable housing needs of people with a disability (vulnerable group).
  - Accessible housing is for the whole community, not just people with a disability – Universal standards support the whole population, including ageing.

  - People receiving funding under NDIS with complex disability support needs may be eligible for additional SDA funding – expected to increase demand and investment in accessible housing.
  - Focus should be on allowing people with disabilities to live independently.
- Feedback for Council to consider affordability more broadly, including changing parking requirements to facilitate lower cost housing and decreasing transport costs to facilitate lowered overall household costs.
- A suggestion was made to prioritise/rank the four strategic directions to enable more effective implementation, it was suggested that the first two directions would be more likely to yield tangible outcomes and therefore should be a priority for Council.
- Concerns that this is contributing to population increase or might impact heritage precincts.
- Some notable comments from the community in support of providing more social and affordable housing were:

We own a home in Yarra. We are bringing up two small children in Yarra and one of the reasons we wanted to buy a home and raise our children here is because of the diversity that comes with public housing. I wholeheartedly support more public housing in Yarra and applaud the council for developing this strategy.
(Resident-ratepayer, Fitzroy North)

Yes. It is time as a wealthy, civilised and democratic country we really came to grips with this issue which should have meaningful, practical solutions to guarantee a humble roof over the heads of our most disadvantaged. Decades have been lost to inaction.
(Resident-ratepayer, Carlton North)

It fits with the ethos of our Yarra community. It is pleasing to see the Council's commitment to being inclusive and caring of everyone. (Resident, Fitzroy North)

Summary of changes to strategy

- Section 1.2 addressing scope has been added to the strategy to provide clarity on what is in or out of scope. Specific models are generally considered out of scope for the strategy, however, a direction had been added to investigate new models as relevant and needed (SD4.1.4).
- Section 1.4 of the Strategy has been expanded to highlight the value of providing more social and affordable housing in well-located areas like Yarra (as opposed to further out where land/property is cheaper).
- Section 3.3 expands on the housing situations and needs of people with disabilities, and includes a new sub-section on the broader value of accessible housing.

Officer comments: The four Strategic Directions are based on the roles identified for Council in this space – as such they are not considered beyond Council's role. The Strategy has purposefully taken a practical focus, based on achievable outcomes and approaches for increasing the supply of affordable housing in Yarra. It is worth noting that new social and affordable housing is unlikely to take the shape of large high-rise estates as this is no longer a preferred approach to delivering public housing. Specific concerns about safety in and around the Richmond Estate is dealt with by state government and other parts of the organisation.

Attachment 3 - Tiny Houses Overview

Tiny Houses: an overview

In response to Council resolution item 6318 (D19/157397).

Introduction

Tiny houses are small homes, often mobile and originally based on a minimalist lifestyle. According to the 2018 International Residential Code, a tiny house is 'a dwelling that is 400 square feet (37m2) or less in floor area excluding lofts'.[1]

In its various iterations, the 'tiny house movement' has centred on ideas of simple-living, energy-efficiency, mobility and affordability. The movement started in the United States and has been gaining momentum through television shows and social media. More recently it has been presented as a response to homelessness.

In the United States, many cities have tried to address homelessness through tiny houses. Some have developed tiny house 'villages' for the homeless, including for ex-service people, and cities such as Boston and Los Angeles are encouraging small backyard homeless units with incentives for home-owners to house low-income households on their properties.

Tiny houses appear to have been used specifically to house the homeless in Australia since about 2016. The recent media attention of Launch Housing's *Harris Transportable Housing Project* in Melbourne has raised interest in the opportunities associated with tiny houses and their ability to contribute to tackling homelessness in Victoria.

Tiny houses have also been promoted as an affordable private market alternative, with interested parties sometimes grouping together to secure land.[2] There are however challenges with individual purchases of tiny houses as many councils are not clear on permit requirements for this type of home and caravan parks don't always accept them.

Local examples

Kids Under Cover – Studio Program
https://www.kuc.org.au/what-we-do/how-we-help/studio-program/

Kids Under Cover is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to preventing youth homelessness. It has developed prefabricated one and two-bedroom studios that can be installed in the backyard of carers, to allow a vulnerable young person to live independently while maintaining connections to their family. These studios are coupled with a scholarship to the young person to give them the skills to become independent adults. Once the studio is no longer required, it is relocated to accommodate another young person in need. There is no cost to the young person or family.

[1] 2018 International Residential Code, Appendix Q Tiny Houses
[2] See for instance: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-29/are-tiny-homes-the-answer-for-older-women-facing-homelessness/11049272

Launch Housing - Harris Transportable Housing Project
https://www.launchhousing.org.au/harris-transportable-housing-project/

Launch Housing, in partnership with philanthropic organisation Harris Capital and funding from the Victorian Property Fund, is developing 57 tiny homes for people experiencing chronic homelessness. The prefabricated houses will be placed on unused VicRoads land in Maidstone and Footscray, with the first homes already built and tenants moved in.

The homes are 20 m^2 inside on a 60–90 m^2 block of land. Tenants will be allocated from the Victorian Housing Register with housing secured long-term. These particular VicRoads plots have been committed for about 10 years, after which Launch Housing will find new land to place the tiny houses on.

The project aims to illustrate how unused government land can be used to address homelessness.

Summer Foundation – Rapid Interim Housing Prototype
https://www.summerfoundation.org.au/project/rapid-interim-housing/

The Summer Foundation has developed an accessible housing product that addresses the gap between leaving hospital or rehab and finding appropriate permanent housing. The project was funded with a combination of philanthropic and TAC support. The home is designed as a quick, affordable, accessible and temporary solution to house people while they wait for long-term accessible housing or for home modifications to be made. The prototype is designed to meet the requirements of Livable Housing Australia's Platinum standard and requirements of NDIS Specialist Disability Accommodation with a focus on assistive technologies to increase the occupant's independence.

This house is still at the prototype stage and the Summer Foundation is looking for partners to scale it up. As with the Harris Project, they are looking to place the units on unused or surplus land.

Commentary

Tiny houses can be relatively low-cost, flexible in their design and location, and quick to build. There is potential for tiny houses to be used to house the homeless, however, much depends on the structure (quality and durability), management (including support services provided) and sustainability of the model (can housing be ensured long-term?).

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness urges groups that are considering tiny houses as a response to homelessness to consider the following:[3]

- amenity and housing quality standards,
- whether the housing suits the needs of the proposed tenants,
- where this fits into the broader systemic efforts to end homelessness (including short- and long-term housing, support services etc.),
- the best use of financial and land resources, and
- community integration.

[3] Available at: https://www.usich.gov/news/asking-the-right-questions-about-tiny-houses (accessed on 15 Oct 2019).

Mission Australia has responded to the trend in a cautionary way, suggesting that tiny houses can have a role as transitional housing to support people into long-term sustainable housing. However, Mission Australia is concerned that:

- tiny housing projects cannot be scaled so as to have a genuine impact on the issue of homelessness,
- support services are needed in addition to shelter, and
- standards may be lower than other dwellings.[4]

Additional considerations include:

- comparing the cost, quality and durability of a tiny house as compared to a permanent unit,
- efficiency of land use and availability of vacant land, and
- tenant management (incl. security, allocation process, services etc.).

Considering a Tiny House and/or *BoKlok* program in Yarra

Tiny Houses

Acknowledging the list of considerations above, the primary considerations in assessing the viability of tiny houses for homeless people in Yarra is the relative cost, permanency and value of this type of housing as compared to more traditional housing (for instance a smaller apartment) and the availability of appropriate land.

The cost of the Harris Transportable Houses has been reported at between $80,000 to $130,000 per house when fully connected and installed. Meanwhile, the cost to build a small permanent one bedroom unit could be in the order of $115,000 to $160,000.

As it currently stands, there is no vacant council-owned land in Yarra of suitable size and/or amenity that is not currently being used as open space. As in Footscray/Maidstone there may be some state government owned land in the area that would be appropriate, however the availability and appropriateness of any such land is not known to officers at the time of writing. Further conversations with the Victorian Government will need to be undertaken to establish if there is any appropriate and vacant state government land in Yarra.

BoKlok

The *BoKlok* affordable home-ownership housing model that has been adopted across the Nordic countries, and more recently in the UK is based on a public-private partnership between an affordable developer (*BoKlok*, part owned by IKEA and Skanska) and a local authority. The recently publicised partnership with Worthing council in the UK, proposes 162 homes to be built on council land, with 70% sold by the developer according to their affordability model 'left to live' and 30% given to the council at cost to be used for social (rental) housing. In this model, the savings that result from the developer not having to buy the land, and cross-subsidy that comes from 70% affordable sales, pays for the 30% social housing. The *BoKlok* homes are prefabricated, modular and designed to minimise construction and fit-out costs.

This is more in line with what could potentially be achieved at a Council owned-site in Yarra, such as the Collingwood Town Hall precinct that is currently being investigated for the feasibility of

[4] As expressed at: https://www.missionaustralia.com.au/news-blog/news-media/are-tiny-homes-the-solution-to-homelessness (accessed on 15 Oct 2019).

affordable housing. It is important to note the different roles of local government in the UK as compared to Australia, however, with local councils being the providers of public housing (known as 'council housing') in the UK, but not Australia. A similar scenario on Council owned land in Yarra would require an additional partner, most likely a registered housing agency, but could potentially also be the Director of Housing. Some larger registered housing associations may have the capacity to develop and build housing, without requiring support from a private developer.

Conclusion

In closing, there may be a role for tiny houses in providing affordable and quick solutions to house people who are homeless or have low income and would prefer a small home of their own, where they can bring their pets, and are provided appropriate supports. The portable aspect also provides opportunities for using vacant/unused land across Melbourne (as suggested in the 2018 Melbourne University 'Project 30,000' report[5]). But because of this, its most likely use is as a temporary housing option. In Yarra, there appear to be very limited opportunities for its use, with other models to achieve long-term secure social and affordable housing perhaps more appropriate.

Tiny houses as an affordable private market option, or long-term social housing, raises issues around building and planning approvals that are yet to be addressed. Similar concerns have been experienced by people who live in caravans, with lack of security of the land and title (see for instance ABC feature on Wantirna Caravan Park[6]).

[5] The University of Melbourne (2018) 'Project 3000: Producing Social and Affordable Housing on Government Land'.
[6] Available at: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-11-09/wantirna-caravan-park-out-of-house-and-home/9115736 (accessed on 15 Oct 2019).

11.9 Council Land Abutting Goodwood Street Richmond

Reference: D19/183576
Authoriser: Group Manager Chief Executive's Office

Purpose

1. To consider and approve the referenced Licence agreement between Council and the Owners Corporation of 11 Goodwood Street Richmond over adjacent Council-owned land required for drainage purposes.

2. To consider how applications involving Council land will be managed in future.

Background

3. Council received a planning application on 16 June 2014 for the development of the site for ten (10) dwellings; including a partial waiver of car parking requirements. The planning application for the development proposal included a request to construct private mailboxes, a bin receptacle and utility meters on adjacent Council-owned land (refer to Attachment A - Site Plan).

4. Council at its meetings of 14 May 2019 and 16 July 2019 noted the circumstances leading to the construction of a removable mailboxes and bin receptacle structure on adjacent Council-owned land.

   Noted in particular were;

   (a) the need to maintain Council's drainage infrastructure located on the adjacent Council-owned land known as Milkman's Way;

   (b) advice provided by Council's engineers precluding the location of service meters on Council's land and requiring that the mailboxes and receptacle structure located over Council's drainage infrastructure would need to be removable;

   (c) VCAT's direction on 6 May 2015 ordering the issue of Planning Permit PLN 14/0519; and

   (d) the presence of various structures encroaching onto Milkman's Way and previous discussions with owners of the abutting properties.

5. Construction of the development works under the approved Planning Permit is now complete and a Statement of Compliance for the final stage was issued 10 October 2019. An Owners Corporation will soon be created so a licence arrangement to address the use and obligations arising out of its occupation of part of Milkman's Way for the mailbox and garbage receptacle must be progressed.

6. This report seeks Council's formal approval of the key terms and conditions of a proposed licence agreement. The Agreement will require the Owners Corporation to accept responsibility for meeting the cost of preparing the agreement.

7. This report also provides some insight into how a corporate approach to assessing property requests may assist officers in future.

External Consultation

8. External consultation is limited to obtaining a fee proposal from Maddocks Lawyers.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

9. Internal consultation has involved the Planning and Place-Making and City Works and Assets directorates and the Office of the CEO.

Financial Implications

10. The cost or preparing the licence will need to be assumed by the Owners Corporation. There are therefore, no financial implications for Council.

Economic Implications

11. There are no direct economic implications if a non-exclusive licence is established.

Sustainability Implications

12. There are no sustainability implications

Social Implications

13. There are no social implications

Human Rights Implications

14. There are no human rights implications.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

15. No implications envisaged.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

16. There are no Council Plan, Strategy or policy implications

Legal Implications

17. The location of private mailboxes and a garbage receptacle on Council land and over drainage assets, requires that the licence agreement does not confer exclusive occupation and that Council maintains a right to remove private assets with little notice to undertake repairs.

Other Issues

18. All key issues have been addressed.

Options

Recommended key provisions of a licence agreement

19. A five (5) years initial licence period with a further five (5) year extension exercisable by Council only with an annual licence fee of $350 per annum indexed at CPI is recommended.

20. The licence agreement will also:

    (a) Stipulate that Council is acting in its corporate capacity;

    (b) Provide Council with authority to remove the Owners Corporation assets if they do not comply with standards or if access to the upgrade and/or maintain the drainage assets is required and to seek reimbursement from the Corporation for any costs incurred in removing and re-installing structure/s;

    (c) Allow for the termination of the agreement for the breach of an essential term or at Council's discretion with no penalty; and

    (d) Require the Owners Corporation to meet Council's reasonable costs in preparing the licence agreement.

Recommended treatment of applications involving Council Land in future

21. The entering into a private licence arrangement between Council and an occupier is necessary at times to achieve a manageable outcome, but the offering of such remedial solutions requires a value-judgment to be made that often attracts criticism because it is inconsistent with the expectation that a municipal authority is an institution, and there is limited scope to exercise discretion in providing 'tailored' outcomes.

22. The reconciliation of claims of private rights and public purpose is at the heart of an effective laneway policy (currently being developed) and Council's property portfolio and it is imperative that the assessment is approached with a view to defining a teleology and structuring a consultation process that leads to a solution/s that do not rely on the use of licence agreements other than as an interim arrangement.

23. It is suggested that any request to occupy Council land in future under similar circumstances, is firstly assessed by the Office of the CEO (representing Council in its corporate capacity only).

Conclusion

24. A private agreement between an Owners Corporation and Council under similar circumstances is not the preferred solution and particularly when the termination of same for non-performance of convenience may impugn the Planning Permit for use and development.

25. A reasonable separation between property as a resource (viewed as a corporate responsibility) and ensuring that active and passive representations that can be relied upon in any planning application in future without the formality that must always precede, will be maintained.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council:

   (a) approves the progression of a licence agreement between Council and the Owners Corporation of 11 Goodwood Street Richmond over adjacent Council-owned land to accommodate removable private mailboxes and a garbage receptacle. Such licence agreement will:

      (i) provide a five (5) years initial licence period with a further five (5) year extension exercisable by Council only;

      (ii) require an annual licence fee of $350 per annum indexed at CPI;

      (iii) provide Council with authority to remove the Owners Corporation assets if the Owners Corporation does not comply with standards or if access to the upgrade and/or maintain the drainage assets is required and to seek reimbursement from the Corporation for costs incurred in removing and re-installing structure/s; and

      (iv) provide Council with the ability to terminate the agreement for a significant breach or convenience; and

   (b) notes the measures to ensure the effective management of Council-owned and controlled land in future.

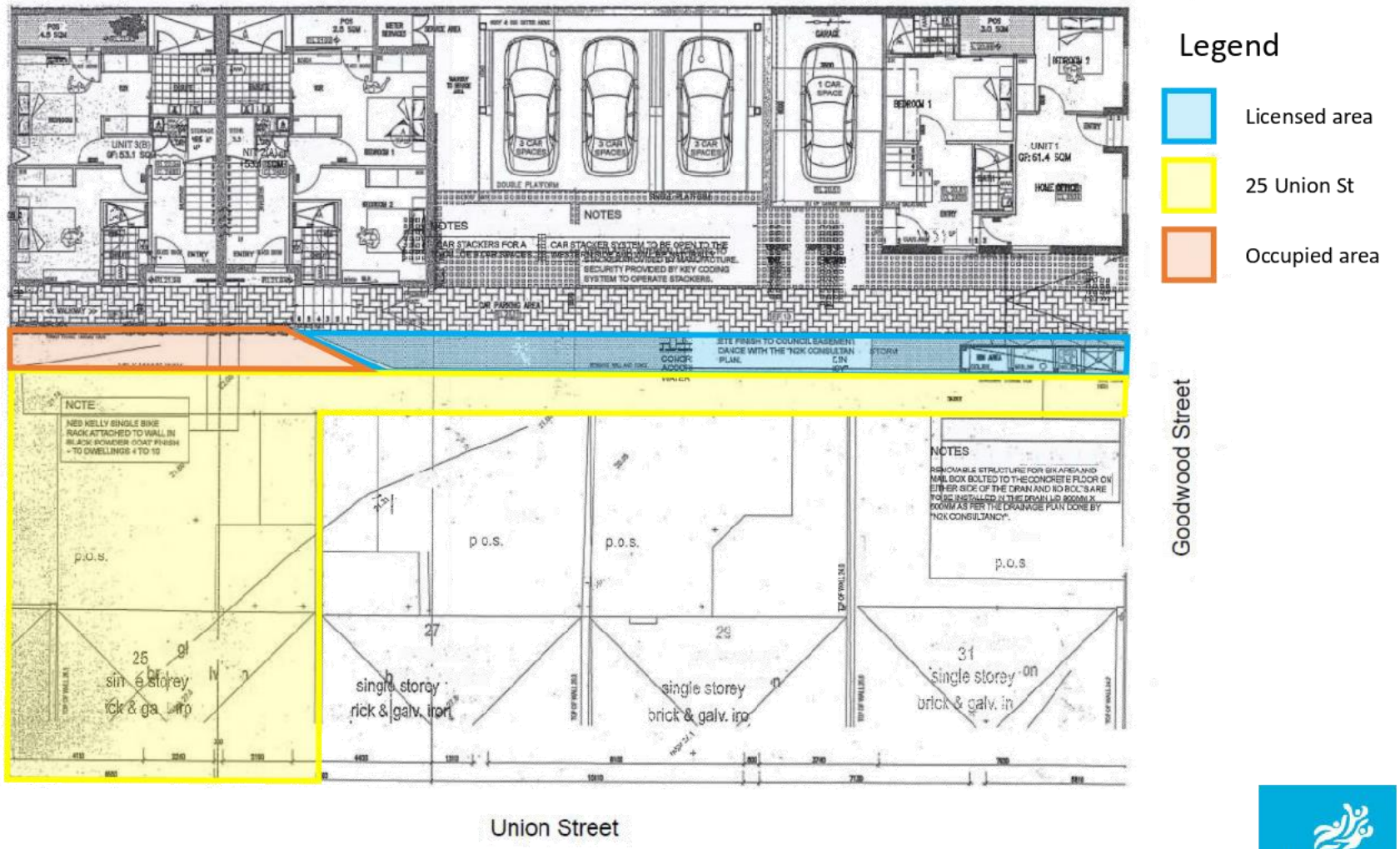
CONTACT OFFICER: **George Vass**
TITLE: **Senior Coordinator Property Services**
TEL: **9205 5097**

Attachments

1⇩ Site Plan_Goodwood St

Attachment 1 - Site Plan_Goodwood St

Site Detail



11.10 East - West access through former AMCOR site

Reference: D19/193827
Authoriser: Director City Works and Assets

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to advise Council on the costs and risks associated with negotiating alternative community access arrangements for the Yarra River bank at the Glenvill site (former AMCOR Paper Mill development site). This is as per the Council Resolution on 24 September 2019.

Background

2. The former AMCOR site in Alphington is currently being re-developed. In January of 2019, it was reported that a section of the river bank had slumped, causing a tree to fall into the river. A second tree fell into the river in May 2019 and a third was lopped in August 2019, following Council resolution to do so, as a matter of urgency to reduce public risk and further damage to the river bank.
3. There has been considerable community interest in the AMCOR development, and most recently in relation to the slumping of the river bank, the loss of mature trees and the closure of the river bank pathway to the public.
4. The river bank pathway is within the 30 metre wide corridor from the river bank to the top of the embankment that is proposed to be managed as public open space as part of the development agreement. Sections of the corridor are to be decontaminated, and the whole abuttal length is to be landscaped to provide public access for pedestrians and cyclists to the river and trails along the river.
5. Slumping of the river bank has occurred along sections of the path way on the lower terrace. The pathway is unsafe for pedestrian access and has consequently been closed off to the public by Glenvill since January 2019.
6. It should be noted that the pathway to the west of the Glenvill site approaching the Chandler Highway Bridge has been closed since the bridge works commenced. These works however are nearing completion and Major Road Projects Victoria (MRPV), who are responsible for these works have indicated that access may be restored by mid-November 2019.
7. Council officers have initially engaged an independent consultancy (Alluvium) to investigate the cause of the river bank slumping and its impact on river bank trees. Reports of their findings and recommendations have been reported to Council, informing the above resolution.
8. Further discussions have been held with Glenvill, who have agreed to undertake detailed investigations on the cause of the slumping and remediation measures, with Council officers to inform the scope, and Alluvium to peer review their investigations. These investigations are currently in progress.
9. Short term remediation measures as recommended in the Stage 1 Alluvium report are in progress:
    (a) Glenvill have undertaken a review of the site wide drainage management plan. Officers and Council's appointed specialist consultant (Alluvium) have peer reviewed the plan and have provided additional comments for Glenvill to incorporate. At the time of writing this report Glenvill have not confirmed those changes;
    (b) As part of the site wide drainage management plan, the existing abandoned sediment ponds will be progressively sealed;

(c) Diversion of ground water infiltration from the existing gravel car park adjacent to the steep embankment and at the east side of the subject site is to be engineered and actioned by Glenvill; and

(d) The river bank slump area at the tree locations described in previous reports as T1 and T2, has been backfilled by Glenvill contractors in September 2019 with approved soil as prescribed by Glenvill's geotechnical consultant. Two other slump locations will be similarly treated.

Glenvill response to alternative community access arrangements for Yarra River Bank

10. Glenvill and Council officers have agreed on a temporary pathway alignment which would provide safe access for the community from Lugton Street and through a section of the development site under construction to the section of river bank pathway which has not been affected by the slumping and fallen trees. The alignment for the temporary pathway is shown on **Attachment 1**.

11. Glenvill have agreed to provide a crushed rock surface to the temporary pathway which will be similar to the path that exists currently along the river bank. The pathway will also be protected by temporary fencing to ensure the safety of the public where the path crosses the development site construction zone.

12. Glenvill have agreed to provide the temporary pathway at no cost to Council subject to Council accepting public liability for the temporary pathway.

13. Council's primary liability insurer have confirmed they will provide public liability insurance coverage for the proposed temporary pathway solution, provided the pathway is checked by Council's engineers prior to any opening to confirm that it has been constructed to Council's specifications.

14. At the time of writing this report Glenvill have advised that construction of the path and installation of fencing to separate the path from the construction zone is nearing completion. Officers anticipate that the path will be open to the public at the time of this report being presented to Council. Officers will work with Glenvill to align the opening of the path with the completion of the works beneath the Chandler Highway as closely as possible

15. Glenvill is to undertake a regular inspection regime to ensure the path condition is maintained throughout its use.

External Consultation

16. Major Road Projects Victoria have advised that the works beneath the Chandler Highway bridge will be complete by the end of November 2019 and access along the river bank will be re-opened.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

17. Council's Risk Management Unit have been consulted regarding Council's primary insurer providing public liability insurance coverage for the temporary pathway through the Glenvill construction site.

Financial Implications

18. There are no direct costs to Council to facilitate the access path re-opening. Some additional costs are anticipated to enable the independent review of the work undertaken by Glenvill's consultants to determine the cause of the slumping and any necessary mitigation measures.

Economic Implications

19. Not applicable

Sustainability Implications

20. Not applicable

Social Implications

21. Providing a temporary pathway through the Glenvill site to the river bank pathway will restore an East West access route for public use. Members of the local community have been advocating this outcome, and provision of this path will have a positive social impact to the local community.

Human Rights Implications

22. Not applicable

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

23. Not applicable

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

24. Ensuring community safety and amenity is a key responsibility for Council. The actions within this report seek to maintain this for the residents of Alphington.

Legal Implications

25. Council insurers have accepted liability matters arising from public access across privately owned land.

Other Issues

26. Not applicable

Options

27. Not applicable

Conclusion

28. Glenvill and Council officers have agreed on a temporary pathway alignment which would provide safe access to the community through the Glenvill construction site to the Yarra Riverbank.

29. Glenvill have agreed to provide the temporary pathway at no cost to Council subject to Council accepting public liability for the temporary pathway.

30. Council's primary liability insurer have confirmed they will provide public liability insurance coverage for the proposed temporary pathway solution.

31. Officers advise that the temporary pathway alignment is the only viable and practical solution, and provides the community with a safe east west route through the development site to the Yarra River.

32. At the time of writing this report Glenvill have advised that construction of the path and installation of fencing to separate the path from the construction zone is nearing completion. Officers anticipate that the path will be open to the public at the time of this report being presented to Council. Glenvill is to undertake a regular inspection regime to ensure the path condition is maintained throughout its use.

33. Glenvill have undertaken a review of the site wide drainage management plan. Officers and Council's appointed specialist consultant (Alluvium) have peer reviewed the plan and have provided additional comments for Glenvill to incorporate. At the time of writing this report Glenvill have not confirmed those changes.

34. Glenvill have agreed to undertake detailed investigations on the cause of the slumping and remediation measures, with Council officers to inform the scope, and Alluvium to peer review their investigations. These investigations are currently in progress.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council:

   (a) note that the temporary path alignment (as per Attachment 1) provides safe access to the community through the Glenvill construction site to the Yarra Riverbank;

   (b) note that Council's primary liability insurer have confirmed they will provide public liability insurance coverage for the proposed temporary pathway solution; and

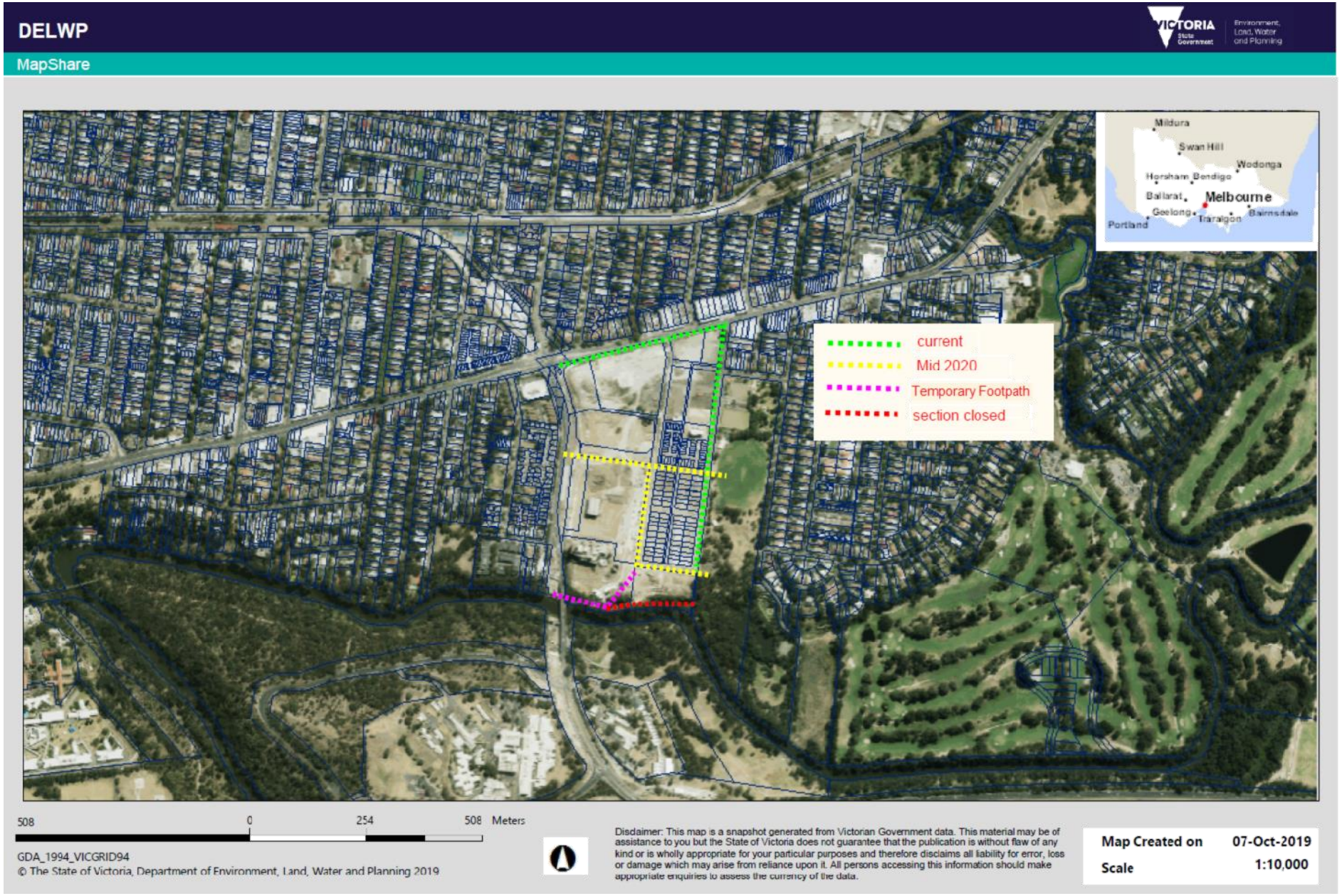
   (c) note that officers have advised Glenvill to proceed with the temporary pathway, and for Glenvill to undertake a regular inspection regime to maintain its condition throughout its use.

CONTACT OFFICER: **John Ghasperidis**
TITLE: **Coordinator Engineering Services**
TEL: **9205 5749**

Attachments

1⇩ Temporary pathway alignment

Attachment 1 - Temporary pathway alignment



11.11 Heritage Strategy - response to public exhibition and an amended strategy for council consideration for adoption

Reference: D19/201867
Authoriser: Group Manager Chief Executive's Office

Purpose

1. For Council to :
   (a) consider the revised draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030, which has been updated following receipt of submissions;
   (b) note the Officer's report; and
   (c) adopt the amended Heritage Strategy for implementation.

Background

2. Council's Heritage Strategy 2015-18 ended in 2018.
3. Officers' with the help of Extent Heritage Pty Ltd prepared a draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 (**Attachment 1**), following a consultative process.
4. On 27 August 2019, Council resolved to publicly exhibit the draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 for a period of four weeks. The exhibition occurred between in 5th September 2019 and 4th October 2019.

External Consultation

5. The external consultation of the draft strategy involved following steps:
   (a) Information on Your Say Yarra web page;
   (b) Information through Yarra Life E News-letter and social media;
   (c) Email to Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) members, stakeholder groups, key community groups, historical societies, participants of the previous workshop and survey who have provided their email contacts;
   (d) Information to the officers managing other advisory committees of the Council;
   (e) Information postcards placed in Yarra Libraries and Town Halls; and
   (f) A hard copy of the draft Strategy placed at the information counters of Richmond and Collingwood Town Halls, for community and visitors to view.
6. The HAC members have provided their comments throughout the development stages of the draft strategy. A HAC subgroup has been more closely involved in the development process.
7. The draft strategy was also presented to the Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) at their September 2019 meeting and no subsequent feedback was received from the Committee.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

8. The draft Heritage Strategy was developed in consultation with the different departments through individual and group meetings.
9. Those departments also provided their feedback on the initial list of implementation actions and associated time lines for their implementation.
10. Executive reviewed acknowledged the draft priority list of actions.

11. Post exhibition of the strategy, the Manager City Strategy has been consulted for resolving submissions relating to Planning Scheme matters as there were a number of submissions referencing the heritage policy and planning scheme and resultant changes to the strategy actions.

Submissions and responses

12. Public exhibition of the draft Strategy resulted in over 400 visitations to the Your Say Yarra web page on *Valuing Our Heritage*. 51 submissions were received.

13. The community submissions have indicated strong support for all the priority actions listed in the draft strategy.

14. One submission did not support the priority actions as the submitter did not want any further protection and felt that inner city areas should allow medium construction, especially Fitzroy North and Carlton North.

15. Whilst there has been a strong support for the Strategy, 27 submitters have provided detailed comments.

16. A summary of all submissions and officer's response to those, is provided in **Attachment 2.**

17. The detailed submissions received through emails are also attached as **Attachments 4-8** for Councillors to view.

18. Key issues raised in the submissions include:

    (a) Need for an overarching strategy that preserves the heritage character of the municipality.

        Officer Response

        The Strategy's Strategic Direction 2 on *Protecting and Managing Heritage* and priority actions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11 are focussed towards improved processes for documenting and protecting heritage character of different areas of Yarra.

    (b) Need to enhance culture and focus in the Council so that heritage is given greater emphasis and resourcing.

        Officer Response

        The Strategy's Strategic Direction 2 on *Protecting and Managing Heritage* and priority actions 3, 5, 9, 10, 12 and 13 are focussed towards improved processes for management of heritage by Council.

    (c) Overdevelopment and over emphasis on allowable development intensity should be recognised as presenting short term financial return whilst Yarra's loses heritage fabric and character.

        Officer Response

        This is both:

        (i) a strategic planning matter which can be addressed through planning policies and controls; and

        (ii) an issue which could be advocated to State Government to acknowledge and approve introduction of procedures for the monitoring of the impact of progressive development in a locality, as a precaution against over development and impacts on the neighbourhood character and heritage.

    (d) Maintaining character of the Inner City industrial areas.

        Officer Response

        Priority Action 8 of the strategy has a quantifiable action towards development of

        policies to protect the heritage character of Yarra's former commercial and industrial buildings.

(e) There is a need for a strategy that can create pathways for actionable policies.

Officer Response

The Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 includes a vision, strategic directions and priority actions with quantifiable targets that would provide pathways for stronger and actionable policies.

(f) The need for strengthening of Yarra's Planning Scheme, heritage policy, heritage controls.

Officer Response

Priority Actions 2, 8 and 11 would result in strengthening heritage policies and controls.

(g) Policy development to address the issues of:

- Token preservation;
- Building height;
- Over development;
- Facadism; and
- Inappropriate demolition of heritage buildings.

Officer Response

The quantifiable targets to Priority Action 8 of the strategy have been amended so that rewrite of the planning scheme and heritage policies address the above issues. See also comment in clause 19(c) (ii).

(h) There is a need to understand that heritage presents a layering of history.

Officer Response

This issue can be addressed through Priority Action 12 on in-house training and Action 18 on developing information sheets.

(i) Developing appropriate policies to protect significant building and heritage character in the World Heritage Environs Area.

Officer Response

Implementation of Priority Action 8 of the Strategy would address the above issue. Additionally, Council is also participating in the review of the World Heritage Management Plan that would review and potentially strengthen the policy controls in the precinct.

(j) Need to promote interpretation and place making initiatives for significant sites such as the Dight's Falls and nationally listed Abbottsford Convent.

Officer Response

Priority Action 26 has been amended to include Abbottsford Convent and Dight's Falls to provide a specific focus and priorities on those sites.

(k) Need for adequate resourcing of implementation of Heritage Strategy including establishment of a Heritage Department.

Officer Response

Council and Executives have considered and endorsed the Draft Heritage Strategy Actions, including looking at the processes and resources required for the implementation of the heritage strategy in the next 10 years.

(l) A strategic approach is required for identification and management of archaeological heritage.

Officer Response

A new priority action 14 has been added in the Strategy to address this.

19. Detailed submission are available for Councillors to view.

20. The strategy has been amended to respond to issues as raised in the submissions and an amended Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 (The Strategy) now appended - refer **Attachment 3**.

Financial Implications

21. Adoption of the Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 would require Council to make regular budget commitments over coming years.

22. Council's budget for the year 2019-20 provides:

    (a) $ 60,000 towards heritage information, promotion and the cost for completion and printing of the new heritage strategy;

    (b) $80,000 contribution towards Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund. This funding is to help the owners of heritage properties to restore the heritage elements of their building when following the Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund criteria; and

    (c) Two new initiative bids - $80,000 to prepare a framework for management of Yarra's own heritage assets and $60,000, to initiate a shared value heritage project.

23. The above provisions will implement some of the short term actions of the new Strategy.

24. Other departments also have budget for undertaking heritage actions relating to their areas of responsibility.

25. It is expected that implementation of this strategy in year two (*financial year 2020-21*) would also require a similar budget of $200,000 - $250,000, plus the ongoing contribution of $80,000 to the Victorian Heritage Restoration fund.

26. The implementation of the strategy also relies on additional staffing support in the area of heritage; which will be subject to new initiative Budget requests.

27. The implementation of actions relating to other departments would be managed through their regular services and the relevant departments would seek their own budgets as usual.

Economic Implications

28. The strategy promotes conservation of heritage which would result in direct and indirect economic benefits for the community.

Sustainability Implications

29. Conservation of built, cultural and natural heritage aligns with the sustainability principles.

Social Implications

30. A number of implementation actions of the strategy focus on improving the knowledge of local history and heritage within the local community and society.

Human Rights Implications

31. There are no known human rights implications of the draft strategy at this stage.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

32. Public exhibition and consultation process would involve Yarra's standard practices relating to CALD elements.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

33. The Strategy is consistent with the Council Plan 2017-2021 which includes:

    (a) Acknowledging and celebrating Aboriginal history (as a part of Strategy 2.3);

    (b) Supporting and empowering a more sustainable Council and Community (Strategy 3.2); and

(c) Protecting Yarra's heritage and neighbourhood character (Strategy 4.1) under which a main initiative (4.1.1) is to strengthen the protection of Yarra's heritage through the planning scheme, education, and resource provision.

34. The Strategy also links with many other strategies of the Council such as the Housing Strategy 2018, Property Strategy 2018, Economic Development Strategy 2015-2020, Yarra Libraries Strategic Plan 2017-2020, Multicultural Partnership Plan 2015-2018, Graffiti Management Framework 2015-2019, Yarra Open Space Strategy 2006, Arts and Culture Strategy 2016-2020, Access and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2024 and Volunteers Strategy 2019-2023.

35. The vision and directions of this Strategy will also influence Yarra Planning Scheme policies and provisions and needs to be considered while revising the existing provisions or preparing new policies and development controls.

36. The strategy is consistent with the Plan Melbourne and State Planning Policy Framework.

Legal Implications

37. The Strategy is consistent with the following legislations:

Commonwealth

(a) *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protection Act* 1984;

(b) *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* 1999;

State

(c) *Planning and Environment Act* 1987;

(d) *Heritage Act* 2017;

(e) *Aboriginal Heritage Act* 2006 & *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations* 2018; and

(f) *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murron) Act* 2017.

38. Implementation actions may also have other influences in specific cases such as *The Disability Discrimination Act 1992* for universal access of heritage buildings.

Other Issues

39. HAC members have raised following matters:

(a) A common theme in the public response to the draft Heritage Strategy is the need to strengthen the heritage provisions in the planning scheme. HAC were last consulted on a draft the local heritage policy however they have not been briefed on or advised of any further developments of the planning scheme draft; and

(b) The absolute importance of having strong, enforceable, sophisticated heritage policy/strategy needs to be recognised especially in areas where heritage overlays meet development precincts. Otherwise, there will be continual frustration with and opposition to development proposals in proximity to or associated with heritage overlays, in terms of heritage, heritage protection and good heritage practice.

40. There is a need to identify areas of archaeological significance in the municipality.

41. Having regard to the importance of having protections to heritage being enshrined in the planning scheme, HAC members have requested to see the heritage parts of the revised scheme, the MSS and local policy before it goes to Council for public exhibition so that they may make suggestions before it becomes virtually cast in stone.

42. HAC are concerned that success of the Strategy will also depend on development of appropriate heritage planning policies.

Officer Response

43. Whilst changes have been made to various parts of the Strategy (priority actions 1, 2, 8 and 11) requiring strong heritage provisions in the Planning Scheme, there is also an advantage in HAC having an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft heritage policy and the heritage related provisions of the Planning Scheme, which is being managed through a separate process by the City Strategy department.

Options

44. Councillors to note the submissions and consider adoption of the proposed amendments to Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 - **Attachment 3** as a response to the community issues and HAC members' individual concerns.

Conclusion

45. There is a strong support by the community for the draft Heritage Strategy.

46. The amended Heritage Strategy addresses the community feedback received through the exhibition process.

47. The revised Draft heritage policy (of the Planning Scheme) has been forwarded to HAC for their feedback as a separate process.

Proposal

48. That Council note the outcome of the public exhibition of the draft Heritage Strategy and adopt the amended Heritage Strategy 2019-2030.

49. That a hard copy version of the adopted Strategy be printed.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council:
   (a) note the outcome of the public exhibition of the draft Heritage Strategy;
   (b) adopt the amended Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 - **Attachment 3**; and
   (c) refer to the budget process, resourcing for the implementation of the adopted Heritage Strategy 2019-2020.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Richa Swarup**
TITLE: **Senior Advisor City Heritage**
TEL: **9205 5149**

Attachments

1⇩ Exhibited Draft Heritage Strategy 2019
2⇩ Summary of Submissions and Officer Response
3⇩ Amended Draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 for Council adoption
4⇩ Submission from Streets Alive Yarra
5⇩ Submission from FRA
6⇩ Email response from a resident
7⇩ Submission from Protect Fitzroy North
8⇩ Email response by a HAC member

Attachment 1 - Exhibited Draft Heritage Strategy 2019

Attachment 1 - Exhibited Draft Heritage Strategy 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

City of Councillors and Staff
City of Yarra Heritage Advisory Committee
City of Yarra Community
Extent Heritage Pty.Ltd.

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri as the Traditional Owners of this country pays tribute to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra and gives respect to Elders past, present and emerging."

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CoY City of Yarra

YCC Yarra City Council

HAC Heritage Advisory Committee

ESD Ecologically Sustainable Development

CMP Construction Management Plan

Introduction

The City of Yarra (CoY) has a vibrant and multi-faceted heritage, shaped by its rich history and diverse community. The Wurundjeri people are the Traditional Owners of the land on which the CoY is situated. Today evidence of the various layers of the City's natural, cultural and urban history can be experienced throughout the municipality.

Yarra City Council (YCC) fully appreciates the importance of its role in the management of the City's significant heritage, and it is committed to work with the wider community to conserve and enhance this heritage while embracing positive change in the municipality.

Purpose

The City of Yarra Heritage Strategy ('the Strategy') is a key document that defines YCC's strategic approach to the management of heritage. It defines key priorities that are important for developing and promoting a greater understanding of heritage within the community and recommends key actions and measures intended to achieve better protection and management of the City's heritage places and assets.

Scope

The Strategy builds on the previous Strategy (2015-2019) that set out the responsibilities of YCC in identifying, assessing, documenting and protecting its cultural heritage, both pre-settlement and post-settlement. The scope of the new Strategy has been broadened to include the natural heritage of the municipality, mirroring the holistic approach to heritage adopted nationally and internationally.

The Strategy is applicable to all elements of heritage, from tangible features such as historical buildings and precincts, landscapes, streetscapes, archaeological sites, objects, collections and records, to intangible elements such as cultural practices, stories, traditions, folklore and other knowledge that is inherited over generations. The Strategy focuses on those aspects of the City's cultural and natural heritage for which YCC has direct responsibility or the opportunity to positively influence.

The actions developed to fulfil this responsibility respond to four key Strategic Directions in accordance with Heritage Victoria's *Municipal Heritage Strategies Guide for Councils*. These are:

- Knowing our heritage;
- Protecting our heritage;
- Supporting our heritage, and;
- Promoting and Celebrating our Heritage

A number of departments at YCC are involved in the management of heritage in the CoY. The Strategy recognises that actions that are 'business as usual' will be continued by various departments. Therefore this Strategy focuses only on the strategic actions that are important for proactively improving the management of heritage in CoY in the coming years and sets out an action plan that is both achievable and accountable over the life of the new Strategy. The strategy also identifies that the implementation of some heritage outcomes requires support from key external organisations and service authorities

Process

Development of the Strategy followed a consultative process in which YCC's Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) has played an instrumental role. A subgroup from the HAC guided the structure and focus throughout the drafting process, and YCC also undertook several stages of wider community engagement. Internal departments responsible for different aspects of heritage management have provided input at different stages in the development of the Strategy to ensure that the implementation actions are achievable and so that they can be embedded in YCC's core business.

The development of the Yarra Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 has included the following steps:

- Review of the previous Heritage Strategy 2015-2018 and the implementation plan;
- Understanding the historical, legislative and policy, strategic and community context;
- Meetings with YCC's Heritage Advisory Committee;
- Liaison with YCC departments;
- Community survey, through YCC's web platform;
- Meetings and workshop with external stakeholders and interest groups;
- Discussion with YCC Executive; and
- Public Exhibition.

Timeframe

Timely implementation of the previous strategy has been challenging. Understanding the processes, time-frames and resource implications of the proposed actions this strategy adopts a 10 year implementation time frame with a proposal for the periodic review of the implementation plan after every four years.

Context

The CoY was formed following the 1994 amalgamation of the former cities of Collingwood, Fitzroy, Richmond, and parts of Northcote and Melbourne. It now incorporates the suburbs of Abbotsford, Burnley, Clifton Hill, Collingwood, Cremorne, Fitzroy, North Carlton, North Fitzroy, Princes Hill and Richmond, together with parts of Alphington and Fairfield. Areas of the municipality have been important gathering places for Aboriginal people for thousands of years. The CoY is bound by the Yarra River (traditionally known as 'Birrarung') on three sides. The river corridor has significant natural and cultural heritage values, especially for the region's Wurundjeri Traditional Owners.

The Historical Context

The Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation are the Traditional Owners of the place that we know today as the City of Yarra. Their relationship with the City extends back tens of thousands of years to when their creator spirit 'Bunjil' formed their people, the land and all living things. The Birrarung is a rich natural and now managed landscape that was and remains integral to Aboriginal people's sense of place. This is also true of other watercourses in the municipality, including the Merri Creek in particular.

Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal occupation can be found throughout the municipality, especially along its watercourses, together with scar trees. The banks of the Yarra River, once intensively used for industry, are now also highly valued green spaces for leisure and recreation.

The suburbs that are now part of the CoY initially developed from 1839 as residential areas to house the Colony's growing population. The establishment of industries along the Yarra River provided employment for the new arrivals in a period of rapid population growth. Industrial and commercial life grew and centralised around the early locales of Fitzroy, Collingwood, Abbotsford and Richmond.

The CoY includes some of Melbourne's earliest established suburbs, whose history remains evident in the significant nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture, subdivision pattern, street furniture, parklands, trees and other elements. Rows of cohesive streetscapes with single storey workers cottages and double storey terraces exist with middle class villas and landmark civic and religious buildings. The layout of the suburbs of Fitzroy, Richmond and Princes Hill is largely mid Victorian in design. However, the evidence of slum clearance in the form of 1960s–70s tower developments has dramatically changed the physical form of some of these areas. Abbotsford, Collingwood and parts of Richmond and Fitzroy developed largely as manufacturing areas with industry and residential development existing side by side. Following the Second World War, rapid growth and population change have brought diversity and physical transformation to the suburbs of Yarra.

The CoY also has a number of late Victorian and Edwardian shopping strips that exhibit consistent streetscapes of heritage facades and shop fronts. These centres contribute to the economic prosperity of the CoY. The population boom of the last two decades has added enormous pressure for redevelopment of underutilised ex-industrial and large sites, especially

in and around the shopping strips, and this has started to impact the character and feel of these places.

The municipal history of the CoY is reflected in its notable public and civic buildings, such as the Fitzroy Town Hall (1874), Collingwood Town Hall (1887) and Richmond Town Hall (1890). The Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens (located immediately adjacent to the CoY) witnessed the opening of the first Australian Parliament in 1901, as well as the great exhibitions of 1880 and 1888. It is important that the heritage of these places is celebrated and conserved.

The Legislative and Policy Context

Heritage places in Australia are protected by Federal, State and Local Government legislation or regulations. A list of the relevant legislation is attached in the reference section at the end of this report. The management requirements for such places depend on the level of their recognised heritage significance.

Local Government plays an important role in heritage conservation; from its identification and appropriate statutory protection, to the management of change in the urban environment and celebration of its diverse heritage. The Yarra Planning Scheme includes the vision and strategic directions for future planning and development of the municipality which are brought into effect through a number of planning provisions and the requirements of local planning policies (such as for built environment and heritage), zones and overlays such as Heritage Overlay, Design and Development overlay etc.

The Victorian Government has the main responsibility for managing and legislating for the protection and listing of State and Locally significant heritage. It also provides oversight and education through its relevant heritage agencies; Heritage Victoria and Aboriginal Victoria, and other agencies such as Parks Victoria are concerned with both the natural and cultural heritage of the State.

As independent statutory bodies, the Victorian Heritage Council and Aboriginal Heritage Council are respectively responsible for the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) – that recognises places of state level heritage significance – and the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR). The Commonwealth Government also has a responsibility for cultural and natural heritage through the National Heritage List and the World Heritage List.

Importantly, approximately 70% of properties in the CoY are included in the Heritage Overlay. These places include residential, commercial, industrial and civic buildings and are mostly located in one of the 54 heritage precincts in the CoY. The Heritage Overlay also applies to a number of parks and landscapes within the municipality. A substantial number of places are included in the Victorian Heritage Register by virtue of their State-level heritage significance. Abbotsford Convent is a significant asset in Yarra that has been recently included in the National Heritage List, while the UNESCO World Heritage listed Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens are located just outside the municipal boundary, with parts of Fitzroy in the south western corner of the municipality included in the World Heritage Environs Area buffer zone.

The State Government introduced the Yarra River Protection *(Wilip-gin Birrarung murron)* Act in 2017. There is a Yarra River 50 Year Community Vision prepared as a part of its

implementation which has a focus on understanding and respecting the history of the river, celebrating the vital and continued role of the Traditional Owners its custodians and recognising its role in their culture. The State Government is currently preparing a Yarra Strategic Plan with priority actions for the coming years. Once this plan is finalised, actions relating to protecting and commemorating cultural heritage of the river will need to be developed to supplement the action plans in this Strategy, to provide an integrated and collaborative approach to heritage conservation, enhancement and interpretation.

Strategic Context

Plan Melbourne (2017-2050)

Plan Melbourne (2017-2050) is the State Government's long term planning strategy to manage growth and development in metropolitan Melbourne. While Plan Melbourne advocates for accommodating new housing in activity centres near places that offer good access to jobs, services and public transport, it relies on preserving Melbourne's uniqueness as one of the key principles for planning for the future, and specifies its heritage as one of the city's distinctive qualities.

Direction 4.4 of Plan Melbourne undertakes to:

"Respect Melbourne's Heritage as we build for the future".

It also includes the following policy goals to help implement this direction:

- *Recognise the value of heritage when managing growth and change*
- *Respect and protect Melbourne's Aboriginal cultural heritage*
- *Stimulate economic growth through heritage conservation*
- *Protect Melbourne's heritage through telling its stories.*

Council Plan 2017-2021

YCC's Council Plan 2017-2021 sets out priorities and direction for the Council until 2021, and one of its key objectives is that development and growth are managed to maintain and enhance the character and heritage of the city. This is supported by several strategies, including relating to acknowledging and celebrating Aboriginal history (Strategy 2.3) and supporting and empowering a more sustainable Council and Community (Strategy 3.2). Strategy 4.1 is "Protect Yarra's heritage and neighbourhood character", under which a main initiative (4.1.1) is to strengthen the protection of Yarra's heritage through the planning scheme, education, and resource provision.

Other Strategies of the Council

A number of service areas of YCC include the management of heritage amongst their responsibilities. A list of the various YCC strategies of that relate to heritage is provided in the Reference section.

The Burra Charter

The *Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance* (2013)- the 'Burra Charter', and its practice notes provide conservation best-practice guidance and principles to inform decision making. More detailed information on the Burra Charter can be accessed at: https://australia.icomos.org/

As one of the three municipalities in Melbourne's Inner Metro Region (together with the Cities of Melbourne and Port Phillip) the CoY has been experiencing significant development pressure in activity centres, underutilised industrial sites and mixed use and employment precincts. In this scenario of growth and change it is important that Burra Charter principles of conservation are correctly applied to ensure a clear voice for heritage in planning and management decision making.

Achievements to Date

YCC and the Yarra community have been in the forefront of heritage identification and protection for many years, CoY having been one of the first municipalities in Victoria to systematically study its heritage and protect places of value.

A number of heritage studies have been undertaken in the past covering the entire municipality. The studies have also identified potential future heritage survey work to fill in the gaps. There are excellent local history collections in the CoY libraries, while Yarra's Arts and Cultural Services unit also maintains arts and objects of heritage significance. YCC has launched a web application (PastPort) to document Yarra's history and heritage through community participation.

To support the protection and management of CoY's heritage, the findings of its many heritage studies have been implemented into the planning scheme through the Heritage Overlay, covering buildings, precincts parks and gardens. YCC also has the responsibility to manage and maintain its own heritage buildings. YCC provides ongoing funding to the Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund (Yarra Restoration Fund) to provide financial assistance for restoration works, and also provides ongoing support to local historical societies.

Many departments of YCC are involved in the management of heritage in it many different aspects. A Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) has been re-established to advise on strategic heritage matters, whilst YCC employs three part-time heritage advisors to provide advice on planning applications and has an in house Senior Advisor City Heritage to advise on significant and strategic heritage matters. At the community level there are many community-based organisations and advocacy groups involved in a broad range of heritage activities.

YCC has initiated an Aboriginal History of Yarra website and the Aboriginal Heritage Walking Trail to further the understanding of the Aboriginal history of the area. Interpretative signage exists for some streets and buildings within the municipality, and the CoY website and Yarra Libraries provide access to YCC's heritage studies and other relevant heritage information. YCC participates in heritage festivals and Open House Melbourne, and it has recently launched a community heritage awards to recognise and honour community members (individuals or groups) for their contribution to the protection and enhancement of Yarra's history and heritage.

Key Community Concerns and Directions

Various consultations in the past few years have indicated that heritage is one of the characteristics of Yarra that is most valued by the community. Local historical societies play an active role in documenting and promoting the history and heritage of Yarra, and there are also other community groups advocating for heritage protection and management.

The community engagement undertaken during the preparation of this Strategy identified a series of main themes that are important to the community for the future management of heritage in Yarra. These are that:

- More control is needed around buildings heights and intensity of new development;
- More focus needs to be placed on social/cultural/arts - stories and creative sharing;
- There is concern around the trend towards facadism – the retention of only the fronts of buildings, with the corresponding loss of other built heritage fabric;
- Graffiti/vandalism is a problem in the municipality that effects its cultural heritage. There are also too many advertising signs in the built environment and impact on the heritage qualities;
- There is a need for more heritage related information and interpretative signage;
- The quality and consitency of information on the heritage of the municipality needs to be improved, as does the community's access to it;
- Greater provision of heritage advisory services to the community is necessary;
- Aboriginal heritage should be better recognised in the municipality;
- Natural heritage should be better recognised in the municipality;
- There is a need for YCC to strengthen its existing provisions and management framework to improve the overall response to heritage; and
- Alterations to heritage properties to achieve universal access or improved sustainability – in particular through installation of solar panels, are recurring issues for YCC.

A workshop attended by representatives of key community organisations, developers and heritage practitioners identified a key desirable outcome to be increased capacity to manage heritage within YCC, with the concept of a dedicated heritage department/unit receiving significant support.

Challenges and Opportunities

Current challenges and opportunities have been identified based on the discussions with various stakeholders, including internal YCC departments involved in the management of heritage, and the Heritage Advisory Committee. The community concerns and feedback derived from community surveys, and stakeholder workshops have also been taken into consideration. Opportunities and challenges have been identified relative to the Strategy's Strategic Directions, and these are set out in the table below which provide the basis for the Strategic Priorities, later discussed in the report.

Attachment 1 - Exhibited Draft Heritage Strategy 2019

Challenges	Opportunities
Strategic Direction - Knowing our Heritage	
Challenges are: A large number of precinct heritage overlays, but a lack of awareness and understanding among the community. Need to ensure that Statements of Significance and mapping for many heritage places are accurate, consistent, up-to-date and in line with current standards. Need to review citations to identify places of historic and contemporary significance to Aboriginal people, intangible significance; social value etc. and to provide clear distinction between places of contributory and individual significant within precincts.	**Opportunities to:** ▪ Make information about the precincts and citations more accessible to the community. ▪ Improve the consistency and standard of documentation for heritage places to enable more efficient and effective management. The breadth of values recorded can also be increased to provide a more holistic record of Yarra's heritage.
The Thematic History of Yarra is very old. It needs to be reviewed and updated to make it more relevant and current. A lack of awareness about the thematic history of Yarra as it is not easily accessible.	▪ Expand the scope of the thematic history to explore additional themes, for example Aboriginal and natural aspects of heritage and the changes that recent development is producing. ▪ Use increased relevance to help raise awareness of the Thematic History, and access to it.
Previous heritage studies have not focussed on post-war heritage. This period needs to be further investigated, with places protected, so that this important part of the City's heritage is not lost.	▪ Undertake further gap studies, for example focussing on post-war heritage.
There is a need for the natural heritage of Yarra, including trees of heritage significance, to be recognised and protected.	▪ Develop a database of areas of natural heritage significance, including trees of heritage significance.
Strategic Direction - Protecting and Managing our Heritage	
Challenges are: To conserve and protect the CoY's cultural and natural heritage, including maintaining its historic character, while also meeting the demands for high-density development.	**Opportunities to:** ▪ Ensure that the planning vision of the municipality as well as heritage, urban design, activity centres built form and ESD policies have a stronger focus on heritage in YCC's current major review and rewrite of its planning scheme.
Yarra is experiencing a high level of development pressure, particularly in its key heritage streetscapes. Development must be managed and issues such as facadism and over development addressed to avoid compromising the integrity of heritage streetscapes.	▪ Review activity centre precinct citations and provide greater clarity and surety to inform heritage management decisions. ▪ Update the citations through Planning Scheme amendments and prepare and introduce appropriate development controls.
The local community is constantly indicating a need to improve the response of YCC's various service units towards heritage aspects such as in graffiti management, upkeep of gardens, trees, streetscape elements, bluestone laneways and signage.	▪ Review YCC's heritage management structure and framework so that heritage values are better recognised in its planning and place making framework.

	▪ Reference and link to other strategies and policies of the Council so that heritage aspects can be better managed. ▪ Lead by example by improving management of Council's own heritage assets.
Making heritage buildings meet contemporary requirements, including for environmental sustainability measures and disability access, is challenging.	▪ Prepare innovative strategies and guidelines to promote adaptation and reuse of heritage places, making them ESD compliant and accessible to all.
Strategic Direction - Supporting our Heritage	
Challenges are:	**Opportunities to:**
YCC's heritage advisors are currently operating at full capacity and are generally unable to be utilised by members of the community at the pre-application stage.	▪ Enable better heritage management decisions in the community through expansion of the heritage advisory service.
Large-scale redevelopment of old factories, warehouses and commercial areas is leading to the loss of historic fabric and change in the overall historic landscape.	▪ Work collaboratively with landowners, developers and local heritage groups to develop sound heritage interpretation strategies to document and interpret places where change has been allowed. In so doing, maintain a link to the past for current and future generations.
Local historical societies and some local community groups are involved in documenting and promoting history and heritage. But their activities are limited by lack of resources.	▪ Include a stream targeted towards heritage promotion in CoY's community grants program.
There is a general lack of awareness of heritage and planning principles amongst place owners, developers and the wider community, as well as YCC managers.	▪ Improve the information base with topic based reference sheets, 'dos and don'ts', residents kit etc. ▪ Document oral histories and catalogue them so that they can be easily accessed by the community. ▪ Initiate in house training programs to develop better understanding of the application of Burra Charter principles and other aspects of heritage management within YCC.
Strategic Direction - Promoting and Celebrating Heritage	
Challenges are: Current heritage discourse in the CoY is largely focussed on historical built form, and there is a need to complement this with by improving the recognition and understanding of other aspects of heritage such as Aboriginal, social and natural heritage.	**Opportunities to:** ▪ Provide resources to promote new ways of seeing the heritage of the CoY through projects, events and interpretative strategies focussing on heritage aspects other than the historical built form.

It is difficult to keep the changing resident population engaged with heritage. This is especially true of certain demographics, including the youth of Yarra, the student population and recent immigrants.	▪ Prepare a Heritage Communication Strategy around regular updates on events and initiatives related to heritage. ▪ Use new technologies in the presentation and communication of heritage information. ▪ Enable Yarra Libraries to take a more proactive role in promoting heritage and display programs. ▪ Engage students in heritage which could lead to long-term appreciation of heritage values.
Heritage is an aspect of the CoY enjoyed by the wider community. However there is a lack of shared responsibility in its promotion, maintenance and upkeep by the community.	▪ Support organisations such as historical societies who are making positive contributions to the promotion of heritage in Yarra. ▪ Develop partnerships with the developers where possible.

The Strategy

The Strategy recognises the strong presence and high importance of heritage in CoY and provides a long-term vision and practical and achievable direction to improve its management over the next ten years. It will be achieved through an Implementation Framework that supports an implementation plan of priority actions with achievable measures and timeframes.

Vision and Direction

The Council's vision for heritage in the CoY is as follows:

The City of Yarra is known as a place where our rich natural, Aboriginal, built and other cultural heritage is nurtured, protected and celebrated: It helps to define the city's identity, support its diverse living culture and is valued by current and future generations.

To achieve this vision the aim of the four Strategic Directions will be:

Knowing our Heritage

To improve our understanding of heritage of Yarra by identifying places that are important to us and ensuring that information about them is comprehensive and publicly accessible.

Protecting and Managing our Heritage

To develop and promote a robust policy and management framework that makes heritage a primary consideration in all elements of planning and place-making. YCC will also lead by example and demonstrate best-practice heritage management of its own properties and assets.

Supporting our Heritage

To support our heritage through a proactive involvement of YCC and the community in the management, care and conservation of our heritage.

Promoting and celebrating our Heritage

To celebrate heritage as a community, enhancing its value for all.

Strategic Priorities

Against the four Strategic Directions, eight 'Priority Areas' have been identified that together provide scope to address what are considered the most pressing heritage issues for the municipality.

These Priority Areas are summarised in the following table.

Strategic Direction	Priority Area
Knowing our heritage	▪ Improved Statements of Significance and Precinct Citations ▪ Natural Heritage
Protecting and managing our heritage	▪ Strengthening existing provisions and management framework ▪ Managing YCC's Own Heritage Assets
Supporting our heritage	▪ Heritage Advice ▪ World Heritage
Promoting and Celebrating our heritage	▪ Aboriginal Heritage ▪ Heritage Promotion and Community Access to Information

With reference to the full range of activities identified as desirable, but recognising that not everything can be achieved immediately, the above priorities were identified by YCC's Heritage Advisory Committee and supported through community workshops and meetings with YCC Executives.

The above priority areas identified for the strategic direction inform the action plan. As the Strategy has a 10 year horizon, the activities need to be set within the context of an implementation plan.

Under the Strategic Direction of 'knowing our heritage', the need to improve the existing baseline of knowledge to ensure fully informed decision making has drawn attention to the need for **improved Statements of Significance and Precinct Citations**, whilst the inclusion of **natural heritage** in the new Strategy prompts the need to understand this aspect of heritage in the municipality better.

Under 'protecting and managing our heritage', improving mechanisms for heritage management requires first that areas that are currently in operation be functioning at an optimal level. Hence the focus should be on **strengthening existing provisions**, and on improving the **management framework**, with a single unit of department having oversight. YCC also seeks to set a good example in Yarra by ensuring that the **management of its own heritage assets** is effective and in line with best practice.

The Strategic Direction of 'supporting our heritage' is directly served by a focus on improving and expanding access to YCC's **heritage advice** services, to enable the wider community to

undertake more informed and appropriate development in and around places of heritage significance. Parts of Yarra are adjacent to one of Victoria's two **World Heritage** places in the form of the Royal Exhibition Building, and this presents an excellent focal point through which to raise the profile of the broader cultural heritage in the municipality, which can only be to the benefit of its management.

As regards promoting and celebrating the heritage of the municipality, consultation has strongly identified the need to raise the profile of its **Aboriginal heritage**, whilst the general **promotion of heritage**, facilitated by **improved access to information**, is universally desirable.

Implementation Framework

The Strategy will be implemented through the following key steps.

Implement

While heritage management is part of the duty of care for all Council departments, the implementation of priority actions will be the responsibility of the assigned Lead Department.

The Implementation Plan section below includes a tentative timeframe for implementation of those actions. However, available funding may influence the detail, scale and timing of implemented actions.

YCC will also be engaging with the Heritage Advisory Committee to obtain their views and feedback on strategic heritage issues. New opportunities will be sought to create effective partnerships with community groups that are making positive contributions to promoting and supporting heritage in Yarra. This will include YCC actively seeking opportunities to engage and develop partnerships with historical societies, local groups, community and developers in protection, promotion and celebration of heritage.

Monitor

The progress and success of each individual action will be monitored by YCC's Senior Advisor City Heritage.

At the beginning of each year, departments with responsibility for actions under the Strategy will confirm with the Senior Advisor City Heritage which actions will be progressed in that year. They will also provide a six monthly update on the progress of the actions in hand and any likely delays. The Senior Advisor City Heritage will provide a six monthly update to the HAC about the progress of the Strategy actions.

The Senior Advisor City Heritage will prepare a formal report to Council on the key successes of the Strategy in progress, and any resulting challenges, annually.

Review

It is anticipated that the implementation table will be reviewed and revised every four years and reported to Council.

Future actions will be determined by examining the success of the short term priority actions. New actions may be progressed during the lifetime of this Strategy, or they will become a priority for future iterations.

The Heritage Strategy will be reviewed after 10 years. The next review and update to this strategy should take place in 2030.

Business as Usual

It is important to acknowledge that many departments manage aspects of the municipality's heritage as part of their 'business as usual' activities, in line with legislation, established YCC policies and strategies and specific place management plans.

This work will continue in conjunction with the activities that arise from the Strategy.

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Implementation Plan

The following Implementation Plan comprises the Priority Actions that have been identified for each of the Priority Areas through the development of the Strategy. Each of these has been assigned a timeframe of short term (0-5) years or long term (0-10) years, or it will be ongoing from now until the end of the Strategy's 10 year implementation time frame.

Priority Actions

Knowing our Heritage

We will improve our understanding of heritage in our community by identifying places that are important to us and ensuring that information around those values is comprehensive and publicly accessible

PRIORITY AREA	PRIORITY ACTION	LEAD DEPARTMENT	TIMEFRAME	QUANTIFIABLE TARGETS
Improved Statements of Significance and Precinct Citations Goal: Develop a better understanding of heritage places and precincts and ensure clear information is available to the community.	1. Review statements of significance to understand which need updating, including whether there are places of post war significance that need to be included in the precincts. Based on the review develop a program for updating those statements.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ A review of statements of significance is completed to understand which ones need updating and a program for updating them is established.
			Long term (0-10 years)	▪ Based on the program, statements of significance are progressively reviewed and updated.
		Strategic Planning Unit	Ongoing	▪ Updated Statements of Significance are incorporated in the Planning Scheme as a part of the periodic Planning Scheme 'fix-up' amendments.
	2. Review and upgrade the precinct citations for Yarra's activity centres and sites that are being	Strategic Planning Unit	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ As part of the preparation of built form frameworks and rezoning proposals, the review of precinct citations is

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	rezoned to allow for employment and housing growth.			completed for activity centres and land subject to amendment to allow for employment and housing growth.
			Ongoing	▪ Statements of significance are updated in line with the review and included in the planning scheme.
	3. Develop better community - including YCC officer - understanding of heritage precincts through heritage walks, precinct information sheets, and by providing easy access to heritage citations on the YCC website for community to access and view.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)	Short Term (0-5 Years)	▪ Access to precinct's heritage citations is provided through the YCC website. ▪ Eight additional heritage walks are completed and placed on the YCC website.
			Long Term (0-10 Years)	▪ Information sheets for key heritage precincts, conveying information on heritage significance and character are developed.
Natural Heritage Goal: Natural heritage is important and needs more than just protection. Achieve recognition of natural heritage values within other strategies dealing with the natural environment and aboriginal and cultural aspects.	4. Review Thematic History of Yarra to ensure that it captures all the relevant historic themes – including relating to natural, Aboriginal and cultural heritage.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)	Short Term (0-5 Years)	▪ The Thematic History of Yarra is reviewed and updated.
	5. Achieve recognition of heritage within other strategies dealing with the natural environment and Aboriginal and other cultural resources, including by more clearly explaining these aspects of heritage.	Biodiversity, Streetscapes, Natural Values Unit, Community Partnerships Unit, Open Space Unit and Arts and Cultural Services Unit.	Ongoing	▪ The Heritage Strategy is cross referenced to all other relevant YCC strategies, and the relationship is explained in all. ▪ Mutual goals of the various strategies are identified as a focus for YCC efforts, especially in relation to natural heritage.

	6. Develop a process/project to identify and protect objects and areas of natural heritage significance in Yarra including trees of heritage value.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)in collaboration with Biodiversity, Streetscapes and Natural Values and Open Space units	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ Following a process of community participation and interdepartmental collaboration, natural objects and trees of heritage significance are identified and appropriate protection is provided to them.
	7. Prepare Yarra River interpretation project in collaboration with the community and Melbourne Water – link to Actions 20 & 26	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) in collaboration with Community Partnerships, and Open Space units	Long Term (0-10 Years)	▪ The Yarra River interpretation project is completed.

Protecting and Managing our Heritage

Our heritage is important to us and will be protected through a robust management framework that encourages heritage as a primary consideration in all elements of planning. YCC will lead by example and demonstrate best-practice heritage management

PRIORITY AREA	PRIORITY ACTION	LEAD DEPARTMENT	TIMEFRAME	QUANTIFIABLE TARGETS
Strengthening Existing Provisions and Management Framework Management frameworks across YCC departments acknowledge that heritage is a shared consideration and responsibility.	8. Strengthen YCC's Heritage Policy and municipal planning statement in the Yarra Planning Scheme so that they demonstrate a stronger emphasis in protecting and enhancing the significant heritage character of Yarra's neighbourhoods, industrial areas and activity centres.	Strategic Planning Unit	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ The municipal planning statement, that demonstrates stronger emphasis on protecting and enhancing heritage significance of Yarra's neighbourhoods and activity centres, is included in the Yarra Planning Scheme. ▪ The planning policy framework on heritage is updated so that it includes a stronger emphasis on protecting and enhancing the significant heritage

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				character of Yarra's neighbourhoods, former industrial and commercial buildings and activity centres.
	9. Prepare guidelines on: • How to manage installation of solar panels on heritage buildings; and • Universal access to heritage buildings.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) with Environment Unit and Aged and Disability Services	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ Guidelines about how to manage installation of solar panels on heritage buildings and universal access to heritage buildings are prepared.
	10. Council's Graffiti Management Framework takes into consideration heritage requirements.	Works Department (in collaboration with Community Partnerships)	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ A program is prepared and graffiti removal of the council owned assets is managed in accordance with Heritage Victoria's guidelines. ▪ Council provides easy access to Heritage Victoria technical guides that relate to graffiti/paint removal, cleaning of walls etc. to the community.
	11. Undertake a review of the heritage outcomes of selected recent developments and projects with a view to understand if there are any gap to improve performance of the Planning Scheme or a need for process improvement.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) in consultation with the members of the HAC	Short term (0-5 years) Then ongoing	▪ Selected case studies of recent developments and projects are completed and findings are presented to the Executives.
	12. Initiate an in-house training program for staff working in the area of heritage.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) with Organisational Development	Ongoing: Starts 2020	▪ An in-house training program starts in 2020 and thereafter is implemented regularly.
	13. Establish and resource a heritage department within YCC with a clear remit enshrined in policy and the strategy.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) with HR and Executives	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ YCC approval is obtained and a heritage department is created with clear goals that respond to YCC's heritage policies and this Strategy.

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Managing Council's Own Heritage Assets Goal: Bolster YCC's approach to heritage management for its own assets – 'lead by example'	14. Prepare a program for developing Conservation Management Plans and other guidance as appropriate for YCC's own heritage assets and ensure that CMPs link with the Building Asset Management Plans.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) in collaboration with Buildings and Asset Management Department	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ The preparation of Conservation Management Plans for all YCC owned individually significant sites starts in 2020 and continues consecutively for the next 5 years. ▪ CMPs for YCC owned significant sites are linked to the respective Building Asset Management Plans. ▪ A restoration/conservation guide is prepared to assist Departments in planning and managing typical upgrades and alterations to buildings and streetscapes, fit-outs, landscaping etc.
	15. Prepare a framework, and obtain additional support, for managing YCC owned heritage assets including maintenance, restoration, alterations and upgrades such as disability access.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) in collaboration with Buildings and Asset Management Department, Traffic, Engineering, works Arts and Culture and Library Services and Construction Management	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ A framework for managing YCC owned heritage assets is prepared. ▪ Guidelines are prepared and service authorities, transport agencies and other relevant external stakeholders are informed about guidelines so that they respond to CoY heritage assets accordingly during their works in CoY. ▪ Additional resources to supplement local historical collections are sought. ▪ Existing oral history collections are fully catalogued.

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Supporting our Heritage

We support our heritage through a proactive involvement in its management, care and conservation

PRIORITY AREA	PRIORITY ACTION	LEAD DEPARTMENT	TIMEFRAME	QUANTIFIABLE TARGETS
Heritage Advice Goal: Improve access to heritage advice for the community.	16. Implement a regular (weekly) heritage planning advice service for the community.	Statutory Planning Unit	Ongoing	▪ A service to provide a weekly heritage planning advice to the community is initiated, and information about the service is widely publicised to inform the community.
	17. Increase resources for heritage advisory services with a focus on employing in-house heritage advisors.	Senior Advisor City Heritage / Statutory Planning with Human Resource unit	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ Additional resourcing is obtained for heritage advisory service – either in-house (see Action 12), or on the current model.
	18. Develop, publish and distribute heritage information sheets.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) - In collaboration with Statutory Planning and Communication Unit and other relevant departments	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ Information sheets are prepared and made available to the community through YCC's counters/ website or libraries. These cover subjects such as standard documentation requirements for planning proposals on heritage properties, historical archaeology, natural heritage, universal access to heritage properties, solar panels in heritage areas and 'Dos and Don'ts' on heritage properties etc.

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World Heritage Goal: Continue YCC's commitment to protecting and enhancing World Heritage, and use this to raise the profile of heritage conservation in the community	19. YCC actively participates in the World Heritage Environs Area Committee and in the review of the World Heritage Environs Area Strategy Plan, as well as in identifying opportunity for place making and promotional strategies/activities.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)	Ongoing	▪ YCC's participation in the World Heritage Environs Area Committee is continued including in: • Undertaking reviews of the World Heritage Environs Area Strategy Plan; • Developing place-making and/or promotional initiatives to promote the heritage of the World Heritage Environs Area within Yarra (e.g. along Gertrude Street); and • Seeking opportunities to integrate these with Council's existing promotional programs.

Promoting and Celebrating our Heritage

Celebrating heritage as a community, enhancing its value for all

PRIORITY AREA	PRIORITY ACTION	LEAD DEPARTMENT	TIMEFRAME	QUANTIFIABLE TARGETS
Aboriginal Heritage Goal: YCC will increase promotion and awareness of Aboriginal heritage	20. Partner with the Wurundjeri Community representatives to develop an Aboriginal heritage interpretation program to ensure greater appreciation of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the city, including the intersection of Indigenous and natural value. (Cross reference to Action 25)	Community Partnerships	Short Term (0-5 Years)	▪ A committee is established, consisting of relevant YCC departments and Wurundjeri representatives, to identify sites of heritage significance requiring an Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Strategy, and provide ongoing guidance on the interpretation of Aboriginal heritage in the CoY.
		Community Partnerships	Long Term (0-10 years)	▪ An Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation projects is developed and projects are implemented gradually.

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				▪ Printed promotional material (signage, leaflets etc.) is developed.
	21. Develop a database as an internal resource of Aboriginal heritage places, to complement VAHR records for the LGA by recognising places of historical or social value to the Aboriginal community, including from historical and recent times.	Community Partnerships and GIS units	Short Term (0-5 years)	▪ A database of Aboriginal heritage places in the municipality is prepared.
	22. Invest in improving in-house Aboriginal heritage staffing resources.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) with Human Resources Unit	Long term (0-10 years)	▪ A staff resource is identified/employed to service Aboriginal heritage aspects.
Heritage Promotion and Community Access to Information Goal: YCC diversifies its means of promoting heritage to ensure the widest reach within the community.	23. Prepare a Heritage Communications Plan to regularly update staff, residents and other community members about heritage programs, financial assistance and advice, *and to encourage community celebration of heritage*. The plan should include the capacity for regular review to ensure communication is tailored for the time and audience, and is actively and effectively delivered.	Communications Unit with Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)	Short Term (0-5 years)	▪ A Heritage Communications Plan is prepared and implemented. ▪ Yearly reviews of the Heritage Communications Plan are undertaken to address any growing need.
	24. Continue to support Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund, and promotion of heritage through historical societies, community grants program, Open House Melbourne, Australian Heritage Festival and awards program.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office), Community partnerships, Arts and culture	Ongoing	▪ YCC contributions to the Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund, community grants, open house Melbourne and awards programs are continued.
	25. Promote preparation of a heritage interpretation strategies or projects for key areas / precincts or sites also taking into consideration land-owners' and developers' involvement in the redevelopment of heritage places. (Cross reference to Action 20)	Senior Advisor City Heritage(CEO Office)	Ongoing	▪ Heritage Interpretation Strategies and projects are progressively prepared for significant sites and precincts of Yarra. ▪ Opportunities are sought for the use of new ways and technologies in promoting, interpretation and celebrating heritage.

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	26. Ensure active involvement of Yarra Libraries in improving heritage documentation and in promotion and education of heritage, including through additional resourcing.	Yarra Libraries	Ongoing	▪ A regular display is scheduled of any YCC heritage initiatives, including new interpretation strategies, updated heritage studies and any heritage education information useful to the community. ▪ Oral histories are catalogued and can be easily accessed by the community.

References

Legislations, Regulations and Policies

The relevant legislations, regulations and policies for the management of heritage in the municipality are listed below:

Commonwealth

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protection Act 1984
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

State

- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Heritage Act 2017
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 & Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018
- Yarra River Protection *(Wilip-gin Birrarung murron)* Act 2017
- State Planning Policy Framework

Local Policy and Strategies

- Yarra Planning Scheme including Heritage Overlay and local heritage and built form policies;

  The Yarra Planning Scheme sets out the objectives, policies and planning controls for the use, development and protection of land and heritage in the City of Yarra.

- City of Yarra - Council Plan 2017-2021

  The City of Yarra Council Plan for 2017-2021 outlines the importance of managing development and growth in such a way as to remain sensitive to the heritage of the city.

- Environment Strategy 2013–2017

  The Environment Strategy 2013-2017 addresses both cultural and natural heritage.

- Housing Strategy 2018

  The City of Yarra Housing Strategy 2018 report outlines community values and priorities, both of which relate to significant historical, heritage and natural spaces within the local areas. What is more, it outlines how increased housing and development needs to be managed in a way that is sensitive to said community values and heritage protections.

- Property Strategy 2018

  The City of Yarra Property Strategy report for 2018 builds on the Yarra Open Space Strategy 2006-2016, which addresses heritage values through three frameworks comprising of urban, natural and Aboriginal cultural heritage.

- Yarra Economic Development Strategy 2015–2020

  The City of Yarra ECS 2015-2020 outlines the role heritage and the arts have to play in the City of Yarra's local tourism economy.

- Yarra Libraries Strategic Plan 2017-20

  The Yarra Libraries Strategic Plan 2017-20 works to outline the curated library collections, which include heritage items and local history archives, whilst similarly addressing certain measures being taken to increase the digitisation of collections and the recording of oral histories.

- Multicultural Partnerships Plan 2015-2018

  The City of Yarra Multicultural Partnerships Plan 2015-2018 works to outline the interrelationship between multiculturalism and the local area's cultural heritage identity. It outlines measures to be taken in order to combat racism, through the use of community events to highlight cultural heritage.

- Graffiti Management Framework 2015-2019

  The City of Yarra Graffiti Management Framework 2015-2019 addresses measures undertaken to manage graffiti in the local area and draws on Heritage Overlays, and the distinction between vandalism and commissioned public art.

- Yarra Open Space Strategy 2006

  The Yarra Open Space Strategy 2006 addresses cultural heritage values through an urban framework as well as a natural heritage framework. It similarly works to address Aboriginal cultural heritage.

- Arts and Culture Strategy 2016-2020

  The City of Yarra Arts and Culture Strategy 2016-2020 addresses the interconnectedness between the City of Yarra's arts and culture scene, and the local area's much valued built heritage. It similarly seeks to prioritise Aboriginal arts and cultural heritage, and promote Aboriginal history through partnerships.

- Access and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2024

  The Access and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2024 works to consider the preparation of a new Heritage Strategy, with universal access and infrastructure proposed for heritage buildings.

- Volunteer Strategy 2019-2023

  The Yarra Volunteer Strategy 2019-2023 is a framework to guide Yarra City Council in promoting, supporting and celebrating the active involvement of volunteering across the City of Yarra.

Key Heritage Studies, Reviews and Amendments

The key heritage studies, reviews and amendments undertaken for the City of Yarra and its predecessor councils are listed below:

	Council	Local Study
1970s	City of Fitzroy	▪ North Fitzroy Conservation Study (1978) ▪ South Fitzroy Conservation Study (1979)
	City of Northcote[1]	▪ City of Northcote Urban Conservation Study (1979)
1980s	City of Collingwood	▪ Collingwood Conservation Study (1985)
	City of Fitzroy	▪ Fitzroy conservation study review (1989)
	City of Melbourne[2]	▪ North Carlton & Princes Hill Conservation Study (1982)
	City of Richmond	▪ Richmond Conservation Study (1984)
Up to 1994	City of Richmond	▪ Northern Suburbs Factory Study (1994)
After 1994 Amalgamations	**City of Yarra**	▪ Amendment C6 (gazetted February 2001)
	(former) City of Fitzroy	▪ Amendment C78
New format Planning Scheme (May 1999)	**City of Yarra**	▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps: An Overview (2004) ▪ City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas (2005) ▪ City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas (2004) ▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps: An Overview (2004) ▪ Amendment C85 (2008, gazetted September 2010) ▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps: Stage 1 (2008) ▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps: Stage 2 (2009)
	(former) City of Collingwood	▪ Amendment C6 (gazetted February 2001)
	(former) City of Melbourne	▪ Amendment C43 (gazetted December 2005)
2010 to present	**City of Yarra**	▪ City of Yarra Gaps Study (2012) ▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps Review One (based on City of Yarra Heritage Gaps: Stage 2) (2012) ▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps Review Two (2012) ▪ Amendment C149 (2012)

[1] That part of the former City of Northcote that now lies in the municipality of Yarra
[2] That former part of the City of Melbourne that now lies in the municipality of Yarra

	Council	Local Study
		▪ Amendment C157 (2012) ▪ Amendment C163 (2012) ▪ Heritage Gap Study: Review of 17 Heritage Precincts (2014) ▪ Amendment C173 (2014) ▪ Heritage Gap Study: Review (2015) ▪ Amendment C198 (2015) ▪ Heritage Gap Study: Review of Johnston Street East (2016) ▪ Review of Activity Centre Heritage Overlay Areas (2017-18) ▪ Yarra's Aboriginal Partnerships Plan (Draft), (2018) ▪ Heritage GAP Study, Review of 17 Heritage Precincts, Context, Revised 2016 ▪ Thematic Study of Theatres in the City of Yarra, Context, 2017 ▪ Heritage Overlay Study , Queens Parade Trees, John Patrick Landscape Architects Pty Ltd, 2018
	(former) City of Collingwood	▪ Incorporated Plan Methodology Report (2014) ▪ Heritage citation 20-60 Trenerry Crescent, Abbotsford, GJM Heritage 2016 ▪ Heritage Citation 112-124 Trenerry Crescent, Abbotsford, GJM Heritage 2016 ▪ Heritage Gap Study, Review of Johnston Street East, Context, 2016 ▪ Queens Parade Built Form Heritage Analysis and Recommendations, GJM, 2017 ▪ Collingwood Built Form Review, Heritage Advice, GJM, 2018 ▪ Heritage Assessment 18-22 Derby Street, Collingwood, Athemion Consultancies, 2018 ▪ Memorandum of Advice, 33-45 Derby Street, Collingwood, GJM, 2018
	(former) City of Melbourne	▪ Heritage Gap Study: Smith Street South (2014)
	(former) City of Richmond	▪ Heritage Gap Study: Review of Central Richmond ▪ Swan Street Built Form Heritage Review, GJM, 2017 ▪ Victoria Street and Bridge Road, Built Form Review, Heritage Assessments, GJM, 2018

Attachment 2 - Summary of Submissions and Officer Response

SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS AND OFFICER RESPONSE											
Number	Submitter	Submitter's response to question-Do you support these key areas of the strategy?								Summary of additional points raised by the submitter	Officer Response
		Knowing our Heritage		Protecting our Heritage		Supporting our Heritage		Promotingour Heritage			
		Priority area 1	Priority area 2	Priority area 1	Priority area 2	Priority area 1	Priority area 2	Priority area 1	Priority area 2		
1	Collingwood Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support				Policy statements to rigorously address issues of: - Higher buildings. - Token preservation, - Facadism, - Protect buildings from demolition.	Modifications suggested in the Strategy document to: - Para 4 of Strategic Priorities (refer page 16 of the amended Strategy). - Priority Action 8 (refer page 22 of the amended Strategy) to specifically include an additional dot point (new quantifiable target) to address issues raised through the submission. - Priority Action 11 (refer page 23 of the amended Strategy) to understand gaps in managing the issues raised though the submission.
2	Clifton Hill Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support				Incentives to developers (to promote preservation and not demolition)	Council currently already provides contributions to the Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund (Yarra Heritage Restoration Fund) which provides financial incentives to the heritage property owners/developers. Recommendation: **No change required to the strategy due to address this submission.**
3	Clifton Hill Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Restructuring the report (Part A and B) More focus needed for strengthening heritage guidelines (P17 action 8) in respect to : - Protecting heritage fabric - Preventing high rise development - preventing facadism - Special attention to Dights falls	Modifications suggested in the Strategy document to: - Para 4 of Strategic Priorities (refer page 16 of the amended Strategy). - Priority Action 8 (refer page 22 of the amended Strategy) to specifically include an additional dot point (new quantifiable target) to address issues raised through the submission. - Priority Action 11 (refer page 23 of the amended Strategy) to understand gaps in managing the issues raised though the submission. - The report also now has two parts Part A : Background and Part B - The Strategy
4	Richmond Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Strongly support		The submission supports the Strategy. **No specific change required to the Strategy as a result of this submission.**
5	Melbourne Resident	Support	Don't support	Support	Support	Strongly support	Support	I don't have an opinion	Support		The submission mostly supports the Strategy. No specific comments have been made. No specific changes required to the Strategy as a result of this submission.
6	Collingwood Resident	I don't have an opinion either way	Strongly support	I don't have an opinion either way	I don't have an opinion either way	I don't have an opinion either way	I don't have an opinion either way	Strongly support	I don't have an opinion either way	Ban foreign plants and favour native /ingenious species.	The issue of foreign plants is out side the scope of this strategy. It can be better addressed through other areas of the Council. The issue of pets are Local Laws matters. **Recommendation: No change needed to the Strategy due to this submission.**

Attachment 2 - Summary of Submissions and Officer Response

7	Collingwood Resident	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Strategy to demonstrate how issues raised in original survey would be addressed: - Overdevelopment - Height - Facadism	Modifications suggested in the Strategy document to: - Para 4 of Strategic Priorities (refer page 16 of the amended Strategy). - Priority Action 8 (refer page 22 of the amended Strategy) to specifically include an additional dot point (new quantifiable target) to address issues raised through the submission. - Priority Action 11 (refer page 23 of the amended Strategy) to understand gaps in managing the issues raised though the submission.
8	Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	- Additions to be sympathetic to original building (material and style) - Prevent facadism - Advice to building owners - Promote Yarra Heritage restoration Fund - WHEA footprint and protection measures - Promote and maintain a list of skilled professionals	Action 17 and 18 of the Strategy address the issue of advice to building owners. Action 20 covers the issue of WHEA. Action 25 supports Victorian heritage restoration fund. To address other issues raised in the submissions following is being recommeded: Action 24 (refer page 27 of the amended Strategy) has been modified to include a quantifiable target to provide access to HV list of heritage professionals and contractors. To address the issue of facadism modifications are suggested in the Strategy document to: - Para 4 of Strategic Priorities (refer page 16 of the amended Strategy). - An additional dot point (new quantifiable target) has been added to Priority Action 8 (refer page 22 of the amended Strategy).
9	Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission supports the Strategy. Recommendation: **No specific changes are required as a result of**
10	Richmond Resident	Support		Support	Strongly support	I don't have an opinion	Support	I don't have an			The submission supports the Strategy. Recommendation: No specific changes are required as a result of
11	Fitzroy Resident	Support	I don't have an opinion either way	Support	Strongly support	I don't have an opinion either way	Strongly support	Support	I don't have an opinion		The submission mostly supports the Strategy. Recommendation: **No specific changes are required as a result of this submission.**
12	Cremorne Resident	Strongly support	I don't have an opinion either way	I don't have an opinion either way	I don't have an opinion either way	Strongly support	I don't have an opinion either way	Strongly do not support	I don't have an opinion either way		The submission does not provide specific views about the strategy. Recommendation: **No specific changes are required as a result of this submission.**
13	North Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Any thing Council can do to protect heitage would be good.	The submission strongly supports the Strategy. Recommendation: **No changes are required as a result of this submission.**
14	Collingwood Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission strongly supports the Strategy. Recommendation: No changes are required as a result of this
15	Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support		The submission strongly supports the Strategy. Recommendation: **No changes are required as a result of this submission**
16	Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Detailed response sent by email	The submission strongly supports the Strategy. Recommendation: **No changes are required as a result of this submission**
17	North Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Mandatory heights and setback so that new development does not dominate or overshadows existing heritage feel.	Issues raised in the submission can be addressed through Action 8. Recommendation: **No changes recommended to the Strategy.**

Attachment 2 - Summary of Submissions and Officer Response

18	Clifton Hill Resident	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission strongly supports the Strategy. Recommendation: **No changes are required as a result of this submission.**
19	Richmond Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Strongly support	Generally supports expansion of hertiage vlaues in Richmond, heritage walks, protecting aboriginal significance, trees.	The submission supports the Strategy. **Recommendations: No changes required as a result of this submission.**
20	Carlton North Resident	Support	Strongly support	Support	Strongly support	Support	Support	I don't have an opinion either way	I don't have an opinion either way	Impact of new developments on the whole neighbourhoods, facadism and its impact in 20-100 years	Modifications suggested in the Strategy document to: - Para 4 of Strategic Priorities (refer page 16 of the amended Strategy). - Priority Action 8 (refer page 22 of the amended Strategy) to specifically include an additional dot point (new quantifiable target) to address issues raised through the submission. - Priority Action 11 (refer page 23 of the amended Strategy) to understand gaps in managing the issues raised though the submission.
21	North Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission strongly supports the Strategy. Recommendation: **No changes are required as a result of this submission**
22	Clifton Hill Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission strongly supports the Strategy. Recommendation: **No changes are required as a result of this submission.**
23	North Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	heritage strategy to cover areas that fall within the City of Yarra's public realm - laneways, parks, plazas Protect and repurpose heritage buildings Protect uniqueness of 19th and 20 Century heritage shops/houses	Precinct Heritage Overlays provide protections to areas of public realm. A quantifiable target of Priority Action 8 (refer page 22 of the amended Strategy) has been modified to inlcude stronger emphasis on protecting activity centres and laneways.
24	North Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission strongly supports the Strategy. Recommendation: **No changes are required as a result of this submission.**
25	North Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Research already completed by residents and presented to Heritage Victoria for State heritage recognition be included in implementation of the Strategy. Collection of Oral Histories	New Quantifiable targets on Community / local knowledge added to Action 1 and 2 (refer to pages 19 and 20 of the amended Strategy). Quantifiable targets for Action 26 have been updated to include recording of Oral histories.
26	Carlton North Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission supports the Strategy. Recommendation: **No changes are required as a result of this**
27	North Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Strongly support		The submission supports the strategy. **No changes needed due to this submission.**
28	Collingwood Resident	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Advice on a needs basis	Action 17 of the strategy would promote advice on as needs basis. Action 19 is on heritage information sheets that would help provide guidelines to manage heritage buildings. **Recommendations: No change recommended to the strategy as a result of this submission.**

Attachment 2 - Summary of Submissions and Officer Response

29	Fitzroy North Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Statements of significance to include references to the people who resided/worked in a heritage area	Where the information is available about association of a well known person or a family with a heritage place it can be considered for incorporation in the statement of significance- when those are improved (refer Priority Action 1). *Past Port Yarra* also provides an opportunity to the community to record any information about the history of a place or its association with specific person/s. Recommendation: **No changes needed to the Strategy to address this submission.**
30	Carlton North Buisisness Owner	Strongly do not support	Strongly do not support	Strongly do not support	Strongly do not support	Strongly do not support	Strongly do not support	Strongly do not support	Strongly do not support	Do not support further heritage protections in City of Yarra allow more medium construction especially in Fitzroy North and Carlton North	The submitter does not support any actions. Submitter would not like any further protection, especially in Fitzroy North and Carlton North and argues that the inner city area should allow more medium construction. The Strategy is consistent with the State Planning Policy Framework which has an objective to ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance. It is also consistent with the Plan Melbourne direction 4.4, Yarra Council's Council Plan 2017-2021 strategy 2.3 and 4.1 as well as local planning policies on heritage. Recommendation: **No changes needed to the Strategy to address this submission.**
31	Eaglemont Resident- Visitor to Yarra	Support	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission supports the strategy**. No changes needed due to this submission.**
32	Fitzroy North Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	- Employ a full time Heritage Officer - Developers have already made a mockery of Heritage - Mandatory requirements must be included - Heritage and sustainability must be seen as inseparable. Demolition and rebuilding have environmental impacts	The issue of priority to adaptation and reuse of buildings as a mandatory requirement and prioritising heritage conservation to avoid demolition and saving environmental costs would be addressed through the Planning Policies review and rewrite -Refer to Priority Action 8. Priority Action 8 has been modified to provide a focus on conservation over demolition.
33	Collingwood Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Concerns about Yorkshire Brewery area, its unique character amenity and environment. Need for maintaining the character of inner city industrial areas like in other major cities of the world.	A quantifiable action has been added to Priority Action 8 to include reference of industrial buildings. (Refer page 22 of the Amended Strategy)
34	Clifton Hill Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission supports the Strategy. **No change is needed to the Strategy to address this submission.**

Attachment 2 - Summary of Submissions and Officer Response

35	Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	- Over development, over-emphasis on increasing the allowable development intensity should be recognised as presenting a short term financial return. Economic value of Heritage should be understood. City's Heritage infrastructure and character present opportunities for increasing visitor numbers and attracting workers and residents. - Need for an Over-arching strategy to preserve the character of the area when put up against development pressure because these are overseen by different staff who work under different pressures. - Heritage strategy needs to include pathways towards creating actionable policies to preserve Yarra's cultural and industrial heritage, especially in the face of barely-controlled intense development.	The Heritage Strategy promotes emphasis on preparing stronger planning and heritage policies and controls through Priority Actions 2 and 8 . (Refer page 22 of the Amended Strategy)
36	Fitzroy North Resident	Strongly support	Support	I don't have an	Support	Support	Support	Strongly do not	Support		The submission supports the strategy. **No changes needed due to this submission.**
37	Fitzroy North Resident	Don't support	I don't have an opinion either way	I don't have an opinion either way	Support	Support	Support	Strongly support	Support	Protect buildings and areas that are of true historical significance. As an inner-city council, Yarra has a large role to play in allowing greater density of dwellings, to reduce sprawl and put downward pressure on prices. Heritage shouldn't automatically trump other considerations when it comes to the approval of new dwellings.	Heritage protection does not place a complete restriction on development but rather provides an opportunity to conserve elements of heritage significance with potential of growth and development such that it is complementary to the heritage characteristics of the place and enhances its heritage values . Recommendations: **No specific change recommended due to this submission.**
38	Clifton Hill Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission supports the strategy. **No changes needed due to this submission.**
39	Fitzroy North Resident			Strongly support		Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Clarity needed for - What are Council's assets - Definition of Natural heritage - How will Council provide consistent protection to heritage?	The section on *Achievements to Date* has been changed to *Heritage Management in Yarra and Achievements to Date* . This section also elaborates on the role of different departments of the Council in managing different aspects of heritage (Refer to page 11 of Amended Strategy). The Strategy- Page 16 , para3 elaborates on natural heritage .
40	Abbotsford Resident	Support	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission supports the strategy. **No changes needed due to this submission.**
41	Richmond Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support	- Clarity needed about Council's concept of communities - Need for an on-going dialogue about Council's approach to multi-cultureless and inter-culturalism within Yarra region	The Strategy now includes a section on Community Context. (Refer page 8 of the Amended Strategy)

Attachment 2 - Summary of Submissions and Officer Response

42	North Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	- Address issues relating to the overall heritage management system, relationships between state and local controls and the relationship with VCAT. - Add reference to shopping strips and that their heritage character and small scale buildings is part of their attraction and point of difference. - P7- strengthen heritage controls and ability for Council to protect heritage. - P8 natural heritage…including trees…' This should include that on private land as well as in the private domain. - P8- include meeting demands for high-density development……..meeting demands for high-density development 'where appropriate'. - P9 Under challenges includes 'Large scale redevelopment of old factories…' Opportunities includes '…work collaboratively with… - Lobby government and others to get more actual powers to control/influence development. - Council to ensure suitable end results.	The heading *Achievements to Date* has been changed to Heritage Management in Yarra and Achievements to date. (Refer page 11 of the Amended draft Strategy) . Text has been added to elaborate on which departments are involved in managing different aspects of heritage within Yarra. Priority action 8 includes text on activity centres.
43	North Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support	Strong supporter of Yarra and the Yarra community's efforts in promoting and protecting our irreplaceable heritage.	The submission strongly supports the strategy. **No changes needed due to this submission.**
44	Protect Fitzroy North	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission strongly supports the strategy. **No changes needed due to this submission.**
45	Fitzroy Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Support	Support	Inteded to provide a detailed response later.	The submission strongly supports the draft strategy. **No changes needed due to this submission.**
46	Fitzroy North Resident	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support	Strongly support		The submission strongly supports the strategy. **No changes needed due to this submission.**
Email Submissions											
48	Street Alive Yarra									- More weight should be placed on 'positive change'. - Instead of using heritage to limit built form or population, we should encourage appropriate development. - Parking - for Bluestone using half-cut approach which delivers smooth surface can provide more accessible outcomes.	The issue of positive change is broad and needs to be addressed through the planning policies and various strategies of the Council including this. Considering that almost 70% of the land in Yarra is cover by heritage overlays this Strategy suggests that a higher emphasis needs to be placed on managing heritage in Yarra in future. Action 9 has been modified to include guidelines on standard approaches to managing heritage objects in public ream including, heritage street furniture items, bluestone kerbs and channels and Laneways (refer to ameded Strategy page 23).

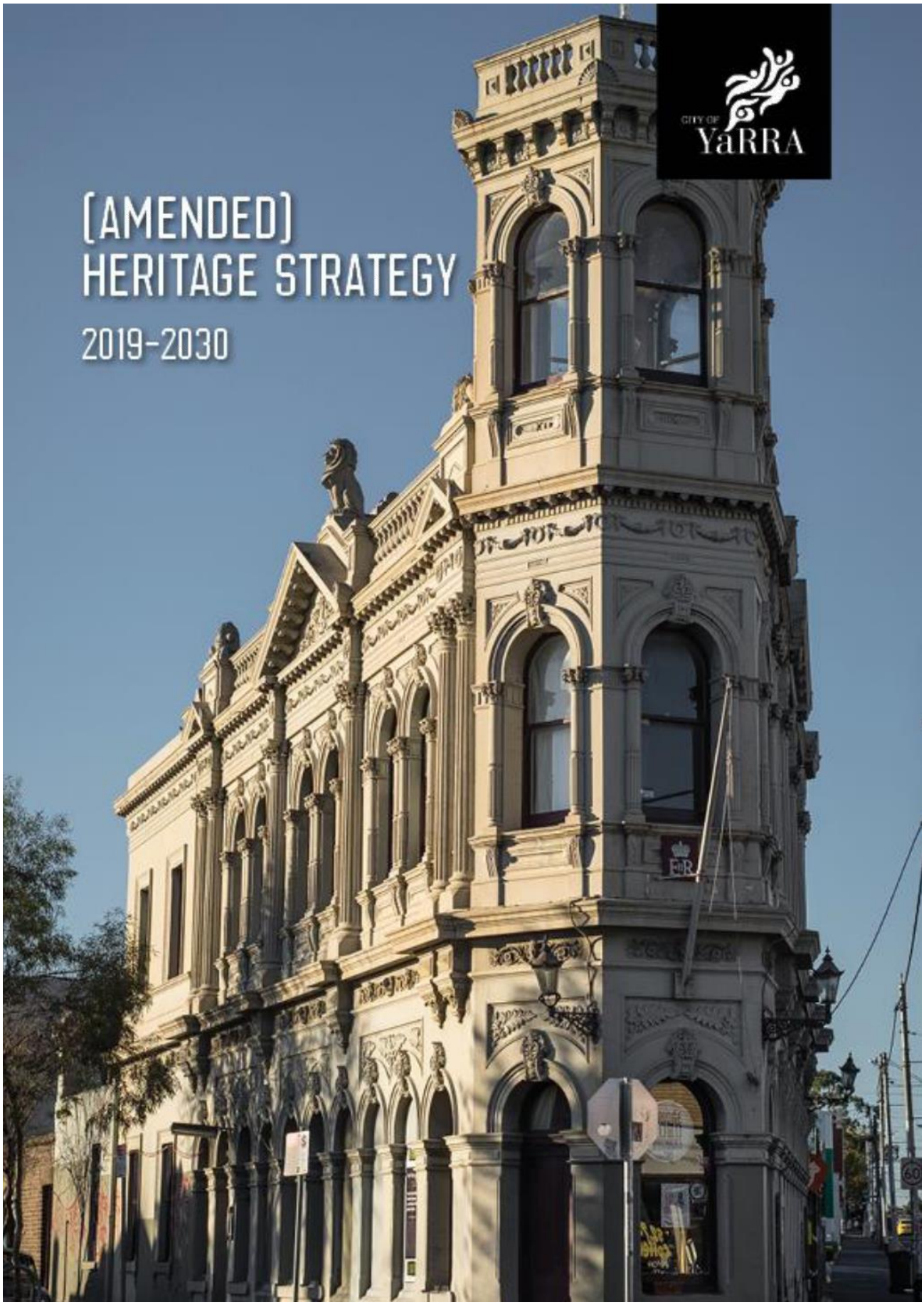
Attachment 2 - Summary of Submissions and Officer Response

47	Fitzroy Residents Association		Priority actions fundamental for Yarra to demonstrate its commitment to heritage: - The importance of the rewrite of the Yarra Planning Scheme - The need to enhance the culture and focus within Council so that heritage is given greater emphasis at a senior level with appropriate resources. - Strengthen YCC's Heritage Policy and municipal planning statement in the Yarra Planning scheme demonstrating stronger emphasis on protecting and enhancing heritage neighbourhoods industrial areas and activity centres. Strategic planning objectives and provisions to provide strong foundation for heritage protection so that Council decisions do not get overturned at VCAT. -Establish and resource heritage department. - Include community consultation to ensure the capture of local knowledge - The review Planning scheme review to be presented to HAC for their feedback. - Integrate WHMP into the YCC new planning scheme Yarra undertake a review of Yarra's strategic and statutory planning policies and decisions, to assess the effectiveness of WHEAP and to make recommendations for change. Promote significant sites such as National Heritage listed- Abbotsford Convent	The submission strongly supports all actions however lays emphasis on resourcing and implementing priority Actions 2, 8 , 11 , and 20. The submission also strongly supports Action 13 resourcing and implementing heritage department which would require Council's commitment and resourcing. The issue of WHMP are addressed through Priority Action 20. Priority action 26 has been modified to includes reference of sites such as Abbotsford Convent.
49	Fitzroy Resident		- Cooperation from property owners, - Competing pressures that threaten heritage conservation. - Findings of the review of previous strategy. - Legislative and Policy context: expand to emphasize the responsibilities placed on Council to review and implement the planning controls. - explain that owners and the broader community have legal responsibilities to conserve important heritage assets. - Avoid conflicting strategic planning objectives in the Planning Scheme, or if important heritage assets that have not been given due recognition or protection - Greater incentives for owners to maintain heritage assets - Council's powers to protect inappropriate demolition - Council must state that it is prepared to spend money to pursue offences under the Planning and Environment Act. - Painting Murals on heritage walls	Council is currently reviewing its Planning Scheme. The issue of conflicting strategic planning objectives and competing pressures will be addressed through that process. The Strategy's Priority Action 8 recommends strengthening heritage policy. Strategic Planning unit of the Council has been informed about the submissions that relate to Planning Scheme review, rewrite and heritage policies. Council also provides incentives to heritage property owners through VHRF to promote restoration. Inappropriate demolition can be dealt by the demolition policy under the heritage policy. Painting murals or otherwise on heritage walls is not promoted and requires a planning permit. Council has enforcement officers who manage planning enforcement issues. Council through planning policies and decisions on planning applications protects inappropriate demolition of heritage buildings. Section on legislative and policy context (page 9 of the Strategy) has been modified to include text relating to the responsibility of heritage property owners in protecting and managing heritage.

Attachment 2 - Summary of Submissions and Officer Response

50	Protect Fitzroy North Inc.		How this Strategy relates to State's Strategic documents (Plan Melbourne and State Planning Policy) objectives needs to be strengthened. The layering of history is a defining feature. Policy to acknowledge layering of styles through time - example Port Phillip Policy.	**Recommendations:** - Part B - The Strategy (page 15) includes a paragraph that indicates how this Strategy responds to Plan Melbourne objectives. - A new dot point has been added in the area of community concerns (refer page 12)on the need to develop to an understanding of and protecting different layers of history/heritage. This aspect can be addresed through 12 on trainning.
51	A HAC Member		The draft Strategy is deficient in its approach to management of archaeological heritage. A strategic approach required to identification and management of archaeological heritage. Council needs to urgently review its processes related to the commissioning of heritage advice, so that it can move beyond a focus on the historical and architectural.	A new action 14 is added (refer page 24 of the Amended Strategy) to identify sites of potential archaeological significance. Priority action 12 and 18 would address the issue of heritage advice on other aspects of heritage such as archaeological.

Attachment 3 - Amended Draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 for Council adoption



Attachment 3 - Amended Draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 for Council adoption

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

City of Councillors and Staff
City of Yarra Heritage Advisory Committee
City of Yarra Community
Extent Heritage Pty.Ltd.

Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri as the Traditional Owners of this country pays tribute to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Yarra and gives respect to Elders past, present and emerging."

Attachment 3 - Amended Draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 for Council adoption

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CoY City of Yarra

YCC Yarra City Council

HAC Heritage Advisory Committee

ESD Ecologically Sustainable Development

CMP Construction Management Plan

Attachment 3 - Amended Draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 for Council adoption

PART A – BACKGROUND

Introduction

The City of Yarra (CoY) has a vibrant and multi-faceted heritage, shaped by its rich history and diverse community. The Wurundjeri people are the Traditional Owners of the land on which the CoY is situated. Today evidence of the various layers of the City's natural, cultural and urban history can be experienced throughout the municipality.

Yarra City Council (YCC) fully appreciates the importance of its role in the management of the City's significant heritage, and it is committed to work with the wider community to conserve and enhance this heritage while embracing positive change in the municipality.

Purpose

The City of Yarra Heritage Strategy ('the Strategy') is a key document that defines YCC's strategic approach to the management of heritage. It defines key priorities that are important for developing and promoting a greater understanding of heritage within the community and recommends key actions and measures intended to achieve better protection and management of the City's heritage places and assets.

Scope

The Strategy builds on the previous Strategy (2015-2019) that set out the responsibilities of YCC in identifying, assessing, documenting and protecting its cultural heritage, both pre-settlement and post-settlement. The scope of the new Strategy has been broadened to include the natural heritage of the municipality, mirroring the holistic approach to heritage adopted nationally and internationally.

The Strategy is applicable to all elements of heritage, from tangible features such as historical buildings and precincts, landscapes, streetscapes, archaeological sites, objects, collections and records, to intangible elements such as cultural practices, stories, traditions, folklore and other knowledge that is inherited over generations. The Strategy focuses on those aspects of the City's cultural and natural heritage for which YCC has direct responsibility or the opportunity to positively influence.

The actions developed to fulfil this responsibility respond to four key Strategic Directions in accordance with Heritage Victoria's *Municipal Heritage Strategies Guide for Councils*. These are:

- Knowing our heritage;
- Protecting our heritage;
- Supporting our heritage, and;
- Promoting and Celebrating our Heritage

A number of departments at YCC are involved in the management of heritage in the CoY. The Strategy recognises that actions that are 'business as usual' will be continued by various departments. Therefore this Strategy focuses only on the strategic actions that are important for proactively improving the management of heritage in CoY in the coming years and sets out an action plan that is both achievable and accountable over the life of the new Strategy. The strategy also identifies that the implementation of some heritage outcomes requires support from key external organisations and service authorities

Process

Development of the Strategy followed a consultative process in which YCC's Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) has played an instrumental role. A subgroup from the HAC guided the structure and focus throughout the drafting process, and YCC also undertook several stages of wider community engagement. Internal departments responsible for different aspects of heritage management have provided input at different stages in the development of the Strategy to ensure that the implementation actions are achievable and so that they can be embedded in YCC's core business.

The development of the Yarra Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 has included the following steps:

- Review of the previous Heritage Strategy 2015-2018 and the implementation plan;
- Understanding the historical, legislative and policy, strategic and community context;
- Meetings with YCC's Heritage Advisory Committee;
- Liaison with YCC departments;
- Community survey, through YCC's web platform;
- Meetings and workshop with external stakeholders and interest groups;
- Discussion with YCC Executive; and
- Public Exhibition.

Timeframe

~~Timely implementation of the previous strategy has been challenging. Understanding~~ Responding to the processes, time-frames and resource implications of the proposed actions this strategy adopts a 10 year implementation time frame with a proposal for the periodic review of the implementation plan after every four years.

Context

The CoY was formed following the 1994 amalgamation of the former cities of Collingwood, Fitzroy, Richmond, and parts of Northcote and Melbourne. It now incorporates the suburbs of Abbotsford, Burnley, Clifton Hill, Collingwood, Cremorne, Fitzroy, North Carlton, North Fitzroy, Princes Hill and Richmond, together with parts of Alphington and Fairfield. Areas of the municipality have been important gathering places for Aboriginal people for thousands of years. The CoY is bound by the Yarra River (traditionally known as 'Birrarung') on three sides. The river corridor has significant natural and cultural heritage values, especially for the region's Wurundjeri Traditional Owners.

The Historical Context

The Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation are the Traditional Owners of the place that we know today as the City of Yarra. Their relationship with the City extends back tens of thousands of years to when their creator spirit 'Bunjil' formed their people, the land and all living things. The Birrarung is a rich natural and now managed landscape that was and remains integral to Aboriginal people's sense of place. This is also true of other watercourses in the municipality, including the Merri Creek in particular.

Archaeological evidence of Aboriginal occupation can be found throughout the municipality, especially along its watercourses, together with scar trees. The banks of the Yarra River, once intensively used for industry, are now also highly valued green spaces for leisure and recreation.

The suburbs that are now part of the CoY initially developed from 1839 as residential areas to house the Colony's growing population. The establishment of industries along the Yarra River provided employment for the new arrivals in a period of rapid population growth. Industrial and commercial life grew and centralised around the early locales of Fitzroy, Collingwood, Abbotsford and Richmond.

The CoY includes some of Melbourne's earliest established suburbs, whose history remains evident in the significant nineteenth and early twentieth century architecture, subdivision pattern, street furniture, parklands, trees and other elements. Rows of cohesive streetscapes with single storey workers cottages and double storey terraces exist with middle class villas and landmark civic and religious buildings. The layout of the suburbs of Fitzroy, Richmond and Princes Hill is largely mid Victorian in design. However, the evidence of slum clearance in the form of 1960s–70s tower developments has dramatically changed the physical form of some of these areas. Abbotsford, Collingwood and parts of Richmond and Fitzroy developed largely as manufacturing areas with industry and residential development existing side by side. Following the Second World War, rapid growth and population change have brought diversity and physical transformation to the suburbs of Yarra.

The CoY also has a number of late Victorian and Edwardian shopping strips that exhibit consistent streetscapes of heritage facades and shop fronts. These centres contribute to the economic prosperity of the CoY. The population boom of the last two decades has added enormous pressure for redevelopment of underutilised ex-industrial and large sites, especially

in and around the shopping strips, and this has started to impact the character and feel of these places.

The municipal history of the CoY is reflected in its notable public and civic buildings, such as the Fitzroy Town Hall (1874), Collingwood Town Hall (1887) and Richmond Town Hall (1890). The Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens (located immediately adjacent to the CoY) witnessed the opening of the first Australian Parliament in 1901, as well as the great exhibitions of 1880 and 1888. It is important that the heritage of these places is celebrated and conserved.

The Community Context

The CoY is an inner-city municipality in close proximity to the Melbourne Central Business District (CBD), thereby enjoying access to public transport, active strip shopping centres, parks and recreation areas with a particular focus around the corridor of the Yarra River. In the second half of the 20th century the CoY welcomed successive waves of immigrants, initially from Britain and Europe and then Asia, who continue to contribute to the cultural diversity of the place. In recent years Yarra has experienced consistent economic and population growth (an estimated increase of 98,521 for 2018 alone1), but the diverse population of the municipality, including its large resident and visiting Aboriginal community, retain strong and enduring connections with the area and its heritage. The CoY is now a culturally and linguistically diverse municipality with 23% of residents speaking a language other than English. Nearly one third of the population is in the age group of 25-34 and approximately half of the households are renters. This indicates that YCC needs to develop strategies to engage a young and changing population with the heritage.

Various consultations in the past few years have indicated that heritage is one of the characteristics of Yarra most valued by the community. Local historical societies play an active role in documenting and promoting the history and heritage of the CoY, and there are also other community and advocacy groups concerned with protecting heritage.

The Legislative and Policy Context

Heritage places in Australia are protected by Federal, State and Local Government legislation or regulations. A list of the relevant legislation is attached in the reference section at the end of this report. The management requirements for such places depend on the level of their recognised heritage significance.

Local Government plays an important role in heritage conservation; from its identification and appropriate statutory protection, to the management of change in the urban environment and celebration of its diverse heritage. The Yarra Planning Scheme includes the vision and strategic directions for future planning and development of the municipality which are brought into effect through a number of planning provisions and the requirements of local planning policies (such as for built environment and heritage), zones and overlays such as Heritage Overlay, Design and Development overlay etc.

The Victorian Government has the main responsibility for managing and legislating for the

[1] Estimated Resident Population, Australian Bureau of Statistics

protection and listing of State and Locally significant heritage. It also provides oversight and education through its relevant heritage agencies; Heritage Victoria and Aboriginal Victoria, and other agencies such as Parks Victoria are concerned with both the natural and cultural heritage of the State.

As independent statutory bodies, the Victorian Heritage Council and Aboriginal Heritage Council are respectively responsible for the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) – that recognises places of state level heritage significance – and the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR). The Commonwealth Government also has a responsibility for cultural and natural heritage through the National Heritage List and the World Heritage List.

Inclusion of a property on a heritage overlay also requires owner of a heritage place to play a key role in the protection and management of the heritage aspects. This includes taking account of cultural significance and conservation requirements in day-to-day as well as in considering further development opportunities. Owners of properties with heritage value must undertake regular maintenance to protect condition and integrity, and seek professional advice for sympathetic change when physically impacting the place or altering its use. Any major change to the place must comply with the relevant planning provisions. Further, if the opportunity arises, the owner can assist in educating the wider community on the importannce of the place. Importantly, approximately 70% of properties in the CoY are included in the Heritage Overlay. These places include residential, commercial, industrial and civic buildings and are mostly located in one of the 54 heritage precincts in the CoY. The Heritage Overlay also applies to a number of parks and landscapes within the municipality. A substantial number of places are included in the Victorian Heritage Register by virtue of their State-level heritage significance. Abbotsford Convent is a significant asset in Yarra that has been recently included in the National Heritage List, while the UNESCO World Heritage listed Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens are located just outside the municipal boundary, with parts of Fitzroy in the south western corner of the municipality included in the World Heritage Environs Area buffer zone.

The State Government introduced the Yarra River Protection *(Wilip-gin Birrarung murron)* Act in 2017. There is a Yarra River 50 Year Community Vision prepared as a part of its implementation which has a focus on understanding and respecting the history of the river, celebrating the vital and continued role of the Traditional Owners its custodians and recognising its role in their culture. The State Government is currently preparing a Yarra Strategic Plan with priority actions for the coming years. Once this plan is finalised, actions relating to protecting and commemorating cultural heritage of the river will need to be developed to supplement the action plans in this Strategy, to provide an integrated and collaborative approach to heritage conservation, enhancement and interpretation.

Strategic Context

Plan Melbourne (2017-2050)

Plan Melbourne (2017-2050) is the State Government's long term planning strategy to manage growth and development in metropolitan Melbourne. While Plan Melbourne advocates for accommodating new housing in activity centres near places that offer good access to jobs, services and public transport, it relies on preserving Melbourne's uniqueness as one of the key

principles for planning for the future, and specifies its heritage as one of the city's distinctive qualities.

Direction 4.4 of Plan Melbourne undertakes to:

"Respect Melbourne's Heritage as we build for the future".

It also includes the following policy goals to help implement this direction:

- *Recognise the value of heritage when managing growth and change*
- *Respect and protect Melbourne's Aboriginal cultural heritage*
- *Stimulate economic growth through heritage conservation*
- *Protect Melbourne's heritage through telling its stories.*

Council Plan 2017-2021

YCC's Council Plan 2017-2021 sets out priorities and direction for the Council until 2021, and one of its key objectives is that development and growth are managed to maintain and enhance the character and heritage of the city. This is supported by several strategies, including relating to acknowledging and celebrating Aboriginal history (Strategy 2.3) and supporting and empowering a more sustainable Council and Community (Strategy 3.2). Strategy 4.1 is "Protect Yarra's heritage and neighbourhood character", under which a main initiative (4.1.1) is to strengthen the protection of Yarra's heritage through the planning scheme, education, and resource provision.

Other Strategies of the Council

A number of service areas of YCC include the management of heritage amongst their responsibilities. A list of the various YCC strategies of that relate to heritage is provided in the Reference section.

The Burra Charter

The *Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance* (2013)- the 'Burra Charter', and its practice notes provide conservation best-practice guidance and principles to inform decision making. More detailed information on the Burra Charter can be accessed at: https://australia.icomos.org/

As one of the three municipalities in Melbourne's Inner Metro Region (together with the Cities of Melbourne and Port Phillip) the CoY has been experiencing significant development pressure in activity centres, underutilised industrial sites and mixed use and employment precincts. In this scenario of growth and change it is important that Burra Charter principles of conservation are correctly applied to ensure a clear voice for heritage in planning and management decision making.

Heritage Management in Yarra and Achievements to Date

YCC and the Yarra community have been in the forefront of heritage identification and protection for many years, the CoY having been one of the first municipalities in Victoria to systematically study its heritage and protect places of value.

A number of heritage studies have been undertaken in the past covering the entire municipality. The studies have also identified potential future heritage survey work to fill in the gaps. There are excellent local history collections in the CoY libraries, while Yarra's Arts and Cultural Services unit also maintains arts and objects of heritage significance. YCC has launched a web application (PastPort) to document Yarra's history and heritage through community participation.

To support the protection and management of CoY's heritage, the findings of its many heritage studies have been implemented into the planning scheme through the Heritage Overlay, covering buildings, precincts, parks and gardens. YCC also has the responsibility to manage and maintain its own heritage buildings. YCC provides ongoing funding to the Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund (Yarra Heritage Restoration Fund) to provide financial assistance for restoration works, and also provides ongoing support to local historical societies.

Many departments of YCC are involved in the management of heritage in its different aspects. Departments with collective responsibility for the management of built heritage include City Strategy (Strategic Planning, Urban Design and Open Space units), Statutory Planning, Building and Asset Management, City Works, Recreation and Leisure Services, Arts, Culture and Venues. Various aspects of Aboriginal cultural heritage of the CoY are managed by the Community Partnerships unit and the Statutory Planning unit, whilst that of natural heritage is the responsibility of the Open Space unit, Recreation and Leisure Services; City Works (Biodiversity, Streetscapes and Natural Values units) and the Environment unit.

A Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) has been re-established to advise on strategic heritage matters, whilst YCC employs three part-time heritage advisors to provide advice on planning applications. The CoY also has an in house Senior Advisor City Heritage to advise on significant and strategic heritage matters.

YCC has initiated an Aboriginal History of Yarra website and the Aboriginal Heritage Walking Trail to further the understanding of the Aboriginal history of the area. Interpretative signage exists for some streets and buildings within the municipality, and the CoY website and Yarra Libraries provide access to YCC's heritage studies and other relevant heritage information. YCC participates in heritage festivals and Open House Melbourne, and it has recently launched a community heritage awards to recognise and honour community members (individuals or groups) for their contribution to the protection and enhancement of Yarra's history and heritage.

Key Community Concerns and Directions

Various consultations in the past few years have indicated that heritage is one of the characteristics of Yarra that is most valued by the community. Local historical societies play an active role in documenting and promoting the history and heritage of Yarra, and there are also other community groups advocating for heritage protection and management.

The community engagement undertaken during the preparation of this Strategy identified a series of main themes that are important to the community for the future management of heritage in Yarra. These are that:

- More control is needed around buildings heights and intensity of new development;
- More focus needs to be placed on social/cultural/arts - stories and creative sharing;
- There is concern around the trend towards facadism,– the retention of only the fronts of buildings, with the corresponding loss of other built heritage fabric;
- Graffiti/vandalism is a problem in the municipality that effects its cultural heritage. There are also too many advertising signs in the built environment and impact on the heritage qualities;
- There is a need for more heritage related information and interpretative signage;
- There is a need to develop a better understanding of, and protect, different layers of history;
- The quality and consistency of information on the heritage of the municipality needs to be improved, as does the community's access to it;
- Greater provision of heritage advisory services to the community is necessary;
- Aboriginal heritage should be better recognised in the municipality;
- Natural heritage should be better recognised in the municipality;
- There is a need for YCC to strengthen its existing provisions and management framework to improve the overall response to heritage; and
- Alterations to heritage properties to achieve universal access or improved sustainability – in particular through installation of solar panels, are recurring issues for YCC.

A workshop attended by representatives of key community organisations, developers and heritage practitioners identified a key desirable outcome to be increased capacity to manage heritage within YCC, with the concept of a dedicated heritage department/unit receiving significant support.

Challenges and Opportunities

Current challenges and opportunities have been identified based on the discussions with various stakeholders, including internal YCC departments involved in the management of heritage, and the Heritage Advisory Committee. The community concerns and feedback derived from community surveys, stakeholder workshops and public exhibition of the draft Strategy have also been taken into consideration. Opportunities and challenges have been identified relative to the Strategy's Strategic Directions, and these are set out in the table below which provide the basis for the Strategic Priorities, later discussed in the report.

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Strategic Direction - Knowing our Heritage

Challenges are:	**Opportunities to:**
A large number of precinct heritage overlays, but a lack of awareness and understanding among the community. Need to ensure that Statements of Significance and mapping for many heritage places are accurate, consistent, up-to-date and in line with current standards. Need to review citations to identify places of historic and contemporary significance to Aboriginal people, intangible significance; social value etc. and to provide clear distinction between places of contributory and individual significant within precincts.	Make information about the precincts and citations more accessible to the community. Improve the consistency and standard of documentation for heritage places to enable more efficient and effective management. The breadth of values recorded can also be increased to provide a more holistic record of Yarra's heritage.
The Thematic History of Yarra is very old. It needs to be reviewed and updated to make it more relevant and current. A lack of awareness about the thematic history of Yarra as it is not easily accessible.	Expand the scope of the Thematic History to explore additional themes, for example Aboriginal and natural aspects of heritage and the changes that recent development is producing. Use increased relevance to help raise awareness of the Thematic History, and access to it.
Previous heritage studies have not focussed on post-war heritage. This period needs to be further investigated, with places protected, so that this important part of the City's heritage is not lost.	Undertake further gap studies, for example focussing on post-war heritage.
There is a need for the natural heritage of Yarra, including trees of heritage significance, to be recognised and protected.	Develop a database of areas of natural heritage significance, including trees of heritage significance.

Strategic Direction - Protecting and Managing our Heritage

Challenges are:	**Opportunities to:**
To conserve and protect the CoY's cultural and natural heritage, including maintaining its historic character, while also meeting the demands for high-density development where appropriate.	Ensure that the planning vision of the municipality as well as heritage, urban design, activity centres built form and ESD policies have a stronger focus on heritage in YCC's current major review and rewrite of its planning scheme.
Yarra is experiencing a high level of development pressure, particularly in its key heritage streetscapes. Development must be managed and issues such as facadism and over development addressed to avoid compromising the integrity of heritage streetscapes.	Review activity centre precinct citations and provide greater clarity and surety to inform heritage management decisions. Update the citations through Planning Scheme amendments and prepare and introduce appropriate development controls.
The local community is constantly indicating a need to improve the response of YCC's various service units towards heritage aspects such as in graffiti management, upkeep of gardens, trees, streetscape elements, bluestone laneways and signage.	Review YCC's heritage management structure and framework so that heritage values are better recognised in its planning and place making framework. Reference and link to other strategies and policies of the Council so that heritage aspects can be better managed. Lead by example by improving management of Council's own heritage assets.
Making heritage buildings meet contemporary requirements, including for environmental sustainability measures and disability access, is challenging.	Prepare innovative strategies and guidelines to promote adaptation and reuse of heritage places, making them ESD compliant and accessible to all.

Strategic Direction - Supporting our Heritage

Challenges are:	**Opportunities to:**
YCC's heritage advisors are currently operating at full capacity and are generally unable to be utilised by members of the community at the pre-application stage.	Enable better heritage management decisions in the community through expansion of the heritage advisory service.
Large-scale redevelopment of old factories, warehouses and commercial areas is leading to the loss of historic fabric and change in the overall historic landscape.	Work collaboratively with landowners, developers and local heritage groups to develop sound heritage interpretation strategies to document and interpret places where change has been allowed. In so doing, maintain a link to the past for current and future generations.
Local historical societies and some local community groups are involved in documenting and promoting history and heritage. But their activities are limited by lack of resources.	Include a stream targeted towards heritage promotion in CoY's community grants program.
There is a general lack of awareness of heritage and planning principles amongst place owners, developers and the wider community, as well as YCC managers.	Improve the information base with topic based reference sheets, 'dos and don'ts', resident's kit etc. Document oral histories and catalogue them so that they can be easily accessed by the community. Initiate in house training programs to develop better understanding of the application of Burra Charter principles and other aspects of heritage management within YCC.

Strategic Direction - Promoting and Celebrating Heritage

Challenges are:	**Opportunities to:**
Current heritage discourse in the CoY is largely focussed on historical built form, and there is a need to complement this with by improving the recognition and understanding of other aspects of heritage such as Aboriginal, social and natural heritage.	Provide resources to promote new ways of seeing the heritage of the CoY through projects, events and interpretative strategies focussing on heritage aspects other than the historical built form.
Heritage is an aspect of the CoY enjoyed by the wider community. However there is a lack of shared responsibility in its promotion, maintenance and upkeep by the community.	Support organisations such as historical societies who are making positive contributions to the promotion of heritage in Yarra. Develop partnerships with the developers where possible.
It is difficult to keep the changing resident population engaged with heritage. This is especially true of certain demographics, including the youth of Yarra, the student population and recent immigrants.	Prepare a Heritage Communication Strategy around regular updates on events and initiatives related to heritage. Use new technologies in the presentation and communication of heritage information. Enable Yarra Libraries to take a more proactive role in promoting heritage and display programs. Engage students in heritage which could lead to long-term appreciation of heritage values.
Heritage is an aspect of the CoY enjoyed by the wider community. However there is a lack of shared responsibility in its promotion, maintenance and upkeep by the community.	Support organisations such as historical societies who are making positive contributions to the promotion of heritage in Yarra. Develop partnerships with the developers where possible.

PART B – THE STRATEGY

The Strategy recognises the strong presence and high importance of heritage in CoY and provides a long-term vision and practical and achievable direction to improve the management of heritage over the next ten years. It will be achieved through an Implementation Framework that supports an implementation plan of priority actions with achievable measures and timeframes.

Vision and Direction

The Council's vision for heritage in the CoY is as follows:

The City of Yarra is known as a place where our rich natural, Aboriginal, built and other cultural heritage is nurtured, protected and celebrated: It helps to define the city's identity, support its diverse living culture and is valued by current and future generations.

To achieve this vision the aim of the four Strategic Directions will be:

Knowing our Heritage

To improve our understanding of heritage of Yarra by identifying places that are important to us and ensuring that information about them is comprehensive and publicly accessible.

Protecting and Managing our Heritage

To develop and promote a robust policy and management framework that makes heritage a primary consideration in all elements of planning and place-making. YCC will also lead by example and demonstrate best-practice heritage management of its own properties and assets.

Supporting our Heritage

To support our heritage through a proactive involvement of YCC and the community in the management, care and conservation of our heritage.

Promoting and celebrating our Heritage

To celebrate heritage as a community, enhancing its value for all.

The Strategy responds to the goals of Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 (the State Government's long term planning strategy for metropolitan Melbourne) about value of heritage in managing growth and change. It places priority for strengthening YCC's local planning vision, directions and heritage policies to reflect value of heritage in Yarra consistent with the Strategy vision. It also facilitates improved recognition of Aboriginal and natural heritage values in Yarra and suggests priority actions for improving YCC's management framework and ability to manage heritage in Yarra holistically.

Strategic Priorities

Against the four Strategic Directions, eight 'Priority Areas' have been identified that together provide scope to address what are considered the most pressing heritage issues for the municipality.

These Priority Areas are summarised in the following table.

Strategic Direction	Priority Area
Knowing our heritage	▪ Improved Statements of Significance and Precinct Citations ▪ Natural Heritage
Protecting and managing our heritage	▪ Strengthening existing provisions and management framework ▪ Managing YCC's Own Heritage Assets
Supporting our heritage	▪ Heritage Advice ▪ World Heritage
Promoting and Celebrating our heritage	▪ Aboriginal Heritage ▪ Heritage Promotion and Community Access to Information

With reference to the full range of activities identified as desirable, but recognising that not everything can be achieved immediately, the above priorities were identified by YCC's Heritage Advisory Committee and supported through community workshops and meetings with YCC Executives.

The above priority areas identified for the strategic direction inform the action plan. As the Strategy has a 10 year horizon, the activities need to be set within the context of an implementation plan.

Under the Strategic Direction of 'knowing our heritage', the need to improve the existing baseline of knowledge to ensure fully informed decision making has drawn attention to the need for **improved Statements of Significance and Precinct Citations**, whilst the inclusion of **natural heritage** in the new Strategy prompts the need to understand the heritage values of natural features of the CoY, such as its flora and fauna, geology and waterways, better.

Under 'protecting and managing our heritage', improving heritage management requires that Council areas that are currently in operation be functioning ~~and~~ at an optimal level. There is also a need to strengthen mechanisms such as planning policies and controls to better manage issues of overdevelopment and loss of heritage fabric etc. Hence the focus should be on **strengthening existing provisions and on improving management framework**, with a single unit or department having oversight on heritage issues. YCC also seeks to set a good example in Yarra by ensuring that the **management of its own heritage assets,** including YCC owned and/or managed buildings, landscapes and community places, is effective and in line with best practice.

The Strategic Direction of 'supporting our heritage' is directly served by a focus on improving and expanding access to YCC's **heritage advice** services, to enable the wider community to undertake more informed and appropriate development in and around places of heritage significance. Parts of Yarra are adjacent to one of Victoria's two **World Heritage** places in the form of the Royal Exhibition Building. This world heritage environs precinct presents an excellent opportunity and a focal point to raise the profile of the broader cultural heritage in the municipality.

As regards promoting and celebrating the heritage of the municipality, consultation has strongly identified the need to raise the profile of its **Aboriginal heritage**, whilst the general **promotion of heritage**, facilitated by **improved access to information**, is universally desirable.

Implementation Framework

The Strategy will be implemented through the following key steps.

Implement

While heritage management is part of the duty of care for all Council departments, the implementation of priority actions will be the responsibility of the assigned Lead Department.

The Implementation Plan section below includes a tentative timeframe for implementation of those actions. However, available funding may influence the detail, scale and timing of implemented actions.

YCC will also be engaging with the Heritage Advisory Committee to obtain their views and feedback on strategic heritage issues. New opportunities will be sought to create effective partnerships with community groups that are making positive contributions to promoting and supporting heritage in Yarra. This will include YCC actively seeking opportunities to engage and develop partnerships with historical societies, local groups, community and developers in protection, promotion and celebration of heritage.

Monitor

The progress and success of each individual action will be monitored by YCC's Senior Advisor City Heritage.

At the beginning of each year, departments with responsibility for actions under the Strategy will confirm with the Senior Advisor City Heritage which actions will be progressed in that year. They will also provide a six monthly update on the progress of the actions in hand and any likely delays. The Senior Advisor City Heritage will provide a six monthly update to the HAC about the progress of the Strategy actions.

The Senior Advisor City Heritage will prepare a formal report to Council on the key successes of the Strategy in progress, and any resulting challenges, annually.

Review

It is anticipated that the implementation table will be reviewed and revised every four years and reported to Council.

Future actions will be determined by examining the success of the short term priority actions. New actions may be progressed during the lifetime of this Strategy, or they will become a priority for future iterations.

The Heritage Strategy will be reviewed after 10 years. The next review and update to this strategy should take place in 2030.

Business as Usual

It is important to acknowledge that many departments manage aspects of the municipality's heritage as part of their 'business as usual' activities, in line with legislation, established YCC policies and strategies and specific place management plans.

This work will continue in conjunction with the activities that arise from the Strategy.

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Implementation Plan

The following Implementation Plan comprises the Priority Actions that have been identified for each of the Priority Areas through the development of the Strategy. Each of these has been assigned a timeframe of short term (0-5) years or long term (0-10) years, or it will be ongoing from now until the end of the Strategy's 10 year implementation time frame.

Priority Actions

Knowing our Heritage

We will improve our understanding of heritage in our community by identifying places that are important to us and ensuring that information around those values is comprehensive and publicly accessible

PRIORITY AREA	PRIORITY ACTION	LEAD DEPARTMENT	TIMEFRAME	QUANTIFIABLE TARGETS
Improved Statements of Significance and Precinct Citations Goal: Develop a better understanding of heritage places and precincts and ensure clear information is available to the community.	1. Review statements of significance to understand which need updating, including whether there are places of post war significance that need to be included in the precincts. Based on the review develop a program for updating those statements.	Sr. Advisor City Heritage	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ A review of statements of significance is completed and a program for updating them is established.
			Long term (0-10 years)	▪ Based on the program, statements of significance are progressively reviewed and updated also considering local knowledge from historical societies and available research from the community.
		Strategic Planning Unit	Ongoing	▪ Updated Statements of Significance are incorporated in the Planning Scheme as a part of the periodic Planning Scheme 'fix-up' amendments.

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	2. Review and upgrade the precinct citations for Yarra's activity centres and sites that are being rezoned to allow for employment and housing growth.	Strategic Planning Unit	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ As part of the preparation of built form frameworks and rezoning proposals, the review of precinct citations is completed for activity centres and land subject to amendment to allow for employment and housing growth. ▪ Local knowledge from historical societies and research if available e.g. research completed by residents and presented to Heritage Victoria to inform State heritage recognition, should be considered as a part of revising the statements of significance in framing the built form frameworks.
			Ongoing	▪ Statements of significance are updated in line with the review and included in the planning scheme.
	3. Develop better community - including YCC officer - understanding of heritage precincts through heritage walks, precinct information sheets, and by providing easy access to heritage citations on the YCC website for community to access and view.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)	Short Term (0-5 Years)	▪ Access to precinct's heritage citations is provided through the YCC website. ▪ Eight additional heritage walks are completed and placed on the YCC website.
			Long Term (0-10 Years)	▪ Information sheets for key heritage precincts, conveying information on heritage significance and character are developed.
Natural Heritage	4. Review Thematic History of Yarra to ensure that it captures all the relevant historic themes – including relating to natural, Aboriginal and cultural heritage.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)	Short Term (0-5 Years)	▪ The Thematic History of Yarra is reviewed and updated.

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Goal: Natural heritage is important and needs more than just protection. Achieve recognition of natural heritage values within other strategies dealing with the natural environment and aboriginal and cultural aspects.	5. Achieve recognition of heritage within other strategies dealing with the natural environment and Aboriginal and other cultural resources, including by more clearly explaining these aspects of heritage.	Biodiversity, Streetscapes, Natural Values Unit, Community Partnerships Unit, Open Space Unit and Arts and Cultural Services Unit.	Ongoing	▪ The Heritage Strategy is cross referenced to all other relevant YCC strategies, and the relationship is explained in all. ▪ Mutual goals of the various strategies are identified as a focus for YCC efforts, especially in relation to natural heritage.
	6. Develop a process/project to identify and protect objects and areas of natural heritage significance in Yarra including trees of heritage value.	Biodiversity, Streetscapes and Natural Values Unit	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ Following a process of community participation and interdepartmental collaboration, natural objects and trees of heritage significance are identified and appropriate protection is provided to them.
	7. Prepare Yarra River interpretation project in collaboration with the community and Melbourne Water – link to Actions 20 & 26	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) in collaboration with Community Partnerships, and Open Space units	Long Term (0-10 Years)	▪ The Yarra River interpretation project is completed.

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Protecting and Managing our Heritage

Our heritage is important to us and will be protected through a robust management framework that encourages heritage as a primary consideration in all elements of planning and placemaking. YCC will lead by example and demonstrate best-practice heritage management

PRIORITY AREA	PRIORITY ACTION	LEAD DEPARTMENT	TIMEFRAME	QUANTIFIABLE TARGETS
Strengthening Existing Provisions and Management Framework *Management frameworks across YCC departments acknowledge that heritage is a shared consideration and responsibility.*	8. Strengthen YCC's Heritage Policy and municipal planning statement in the Yarra Planning Scheme so that they: • Demonstrate a stronger emphasis on protecting and enhancing the significant heritage character of Yarra's neighbourhoods, industrial areas and activity centres; • Support conservation and adaptation over demolition of heritage buildings	Strategic Planning Unit (in consultation with Senior Advisor City Heritage)	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ The municipal planning statement, and strategic directions that demonstrate stronger emphasis on protecting and enhancing the heritage significance of Yarra's neighbourhoods and activity centres, are included in the Yarra Planning Scheme. ▪ The planning policy framework is updated so that heritage policies include stronger emphasis on protecting and enhancing the significant heritage buildings including industrial and commercial buildings, activity centres and laneways. ▪ Heritage policies are developed to address the community concerns of issues of facadism, tokenistic preservation, inappropriate demolition of heritage buildings and its parts, protection of laneways and over development in heritage precincts. ▪ YCC's Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) is actively consulted in the development of the above policies and planning framework.

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	9. Prepare guidelines on: • How to manage installation of solar panels on heritage buildings; • Universal access to heritage buildings; and • Standard approaches to managing heritage elements in the public realm, including street furniture, bluestone kerbs and channels, and laneways.	Sr Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) with Environment Unit and Aged and Disability Services	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ Guidelines about how to manage installation of solar panels on heritage buildings, universal access to heritage buildings and standard approaches to managing heritage elements in the public realm are prepared.
	10. Strengthen Council's Graffiti Management Framework to improve Council's response to graffiti on sites of significant heritage value.	Works Department in collaboration with Community partnerships	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ Processes and resources are identified to provide an improved graffiti management response for significant heritage sites.
	11. Undertake a review of the heritage outcomes of selected recent developments and projects with a view to understand: • If there are any gaps to improve performance of the Planning Scheme; and • If there is a need for process improvement to better manage development outcomes in heritage areas.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) in consultation with the members of the HAC	Short term (0-5 years) Then ongoing	▪ Selected case studies of recent developments and projects are completed and findings are presented to the Executives.
	12. Initiate an in-house training program for staff working in the area of heritage.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) with Organisational Development	Ongoing: Starts 2020	▪ An in-house training program starts in 2020 and thereafter is implemented regularly.
	13. Establish and resource a heritage department within YCC with a clear remit enshrined in policy and the strategy.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) with HR and	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ YCC approval is obtained and a heritage department is created with

		Executives		clear goals that respond to YCC's heritage policies and this Strategy.
	14. Develop a strategic approach for identifying sites of potential archaeological significance, including through the preparation of archaeological sensitivity mapping.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ A strategic approach for identifying sites of potential archaeological significance is adopted.
Managing Council's Own Heritage Assets Goal: Bolster YCC's approach to heritage management for its own assets – 'lead by example'	15. Prepare a program for developing Conservation Management Plans and other guidance as appropriate for YCC's own heritage assets and ensure that CMPs link with the Building Asset Management Plans.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) in collaboration with Buildings and Asset Management Department	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ The preparation of Conservation Management Plans for all YCC owned individually significant sites starts in 2020 and continues consecutively for the next 5 years. ▪ CMPs for YCC owned significant sites are linked to the respective Building Asset Management Plans. ▪ A restoration/conservation guide is prepared to assist Departments in planning and managing typical upgrades and alterations to buildings and streetscapes, fit-outs, landscaping etc.
	16. Prepare a framework, and obtain additional support, for managing YCC owned heritage assets including maintenance, restoration, alterations and upgrades such as disability access.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) in collaboration with Buildings and Asset Management Department, Traffic, Engineering, works Arts and Culture and Library Services and Construction Management	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ A framework for managing YCC owned heritage assets is prepared. ▪ Guidelines are prepared and service authorities, transport agencies and other relevant external stakeholders are informed about guidelines so that they respond to CoY heritage assets accordingly during their works in CoY. ▪ Additional resources to supplement local historical collections are sought. ▪ Existing oral history collections are fully catalogued.

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Supporting our Heritage

We support our heritage through a proactive involvement in its management, care and conservation

PRIORITY AREA	PRIORITY ACTION	LEAD DEPARTMENT	TIMEFRAME	QUANTIFIABLE TARGETS
Heritage Advice Goal: Improve access to heritage advice for the community.	17. Implement a regular (weekly) heritage planning advice service for the community.	Statutory Planning Unit	Ongoing	▪ A service to provide a weekly heritage planning advice to the community is initiated, and information about the service is widely publicised to inform the community.
	18. Increase resources for heritage advisory services with a focus on employing in-house heritage advisors.	Senior Advisor City Heritage / Statutory Planning with Human Resource unit	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ Additional resourcing is obtained for heritage advisory service – either in-house (see Action 12), or on the current model.
	19. Develop, publish and distribute heritage information sheets.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) - In collaboration with Statutory Planning and Communication Unit	Short term (0-5 years)	▪ Information sheets are prepared and made available to the community through YCC's counters/ website or libraries. These cover subjects such as standard documentation requirements for planning proposals on heritage properties, historical archaeology, natural heritage, universal access to heritage properties, solar panels in heritage areas and 'Dos and Don'ts' on heritage properties etc.
World Heritage	20. YCC actively participates in the World Heritage Environs Area Committee and in the review of the World Heritage Environs Area	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)	Ongoing	▪ YCC's participation in the World Heritage Environs Area Committee is continued including in:

Goal: Continue YCC's commitment to protecting and enhancing World Heritage, and use this to raise the profile of heritage conservation in the community	Strategy Plan, as well as in identifying opportunity for place-making and promotional strategies/activities.			• Undertaking reviews of the World Heritage Environs Area Strategy Plan; • Developing place-making and/or promotional initiatives to promote the heritage of the World Heritage Environs Area within Yarra (e.g. along Gertrude Street); and • Seeking opportunities to integrate these with Council's existing promotional programs.

Promoting and Celebrating our Heritage

Celebrating heritage as a community enhancing its value for all.

PRIORITY AREA	PRIORITY ACTION	LEAD DEPARTMENT	TIMEFRAME	QUANTIFIABLE TARGETS
Aboriginal Heritage Goal: YCC will increase promotion and awareness of Aboriginal heritage	21. Partner with the Wurundjeri Community representatives to develop an Aboriginal heritage interpretation strategy to ensure greater appreciation of Aboriginal cultural and shared heritage values in the city, including the intersection of Indigenous and natural values. The Strategy should be formed by a committee consisting of relevant YCC departments and Wurundjeri representatives. (Cross reference to Action 23)	Community Partnerships	Short Term (0-5 Years)	▪ A committee is established, consisting of relevant YCC departments and Wurundjeri representatives, to identify sites of heritage significance requiring an Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Strategy, and provide ongoing guidance on the interpretation of Aboriginal heritage in the CoY.
		Community Partnerships and Senior Advisor City Heritage	Long Term (0-10 years)	▪ Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation and shared value projects are developed and implemented. ▪ Printed promotional material (signage, leaflets etc.) is developed.

Attachment 3 - Amended Draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 for Council adoption

	22. Develop a database as an internal resource of Aboriginal heritage places, to complement VAHR records for the LGA by recognising places of historical or social value to the Aboriginal community, including from historical and recent times.	Community Partnerships and GIS units	Short Term (0-5 years)	▪ A database of Aboriginal heritage places in the municipality is prepared.
	23. Invest in improving in-house Aboriginal heritage staffing resources.	Sr Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office) with Human Resources Unit	Long term (0-10 years)	▪ A staff resource is identified/employed to service Aboriginal heritage aspects.
Heritage Promotion and Community Access to Information Goal: YCC diversifies its means of promoting heritage to ensure the widest reach within the community.	24. Prepare a Heritage Communications Plan to regularly update staff, residents and other community members about heritage programs, financial assistance and advice, *and to encourage community celebration of heritage*. The plan should include the capacity for regular review to ensure communication is tailored for the time and audience, and is actively and effectively delivered.	Communications Unit with Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office)	Short Term (0-5 years)	▪ A Heritage Communications Plan is prepared and implemented. ▪ Yearly reviews of the Heritage Communications Plan are undertaken to address any growing need. ▪ Access to the Heritage Victoria list of heritage professionals and contractors is provided as part of the Heritage Communications Plan.
	25. Continue to support Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund, and promotion of heritage through historical societies, community grants program, Open House Melbourne, Australian Heritage Festival and awards program.	Senior Advisor City Heritage (CEO Office), Community partnerships, Arts and culture	Ongoing	▪ YCC contributions to the Victorian Heritage Restoration Fund, community grants, open house Melbourne and awards programs are continued.
	26. Promote preparation of a heritage interpretation strategies or projects for key areas / precincts or sites and also taking into consideration land-owners' and developers' involvement in promotion of heritage through the redevelopment of large heritage places. (Cross reference to Action 21)	Senior Advisor City Heritage(CEO Office) in collaboration with other relevant departments	Ongoing	▪ Heritage Interpretation Strategies and projects are progressively prepared and place making opportunities are identified for significant sites (such as Abbotsford Convent and Dights Falls) and precincts of Yarra. ▪ Opportunities are sought for the use of new ways and technologies in promoting, interpreting and celebrating

Attachment 3 - Amended Draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030 for Council adoption

				various aspects of cultural and natural heritage.
	27. Ensure active involvement of Yarra Libraries in improving heritage documentation and in promotion and education of heritage, including through additional resourcing.	Yarra Libraries	Ongoing	▪ A regular display is scheduled of any YCC heritage initiatives, including new interpretation strategies, updated heritage studies and any heritage education information useful to the community. ▪ Existing oral histories are catalogued and can be easily accessed by the community. ▪ New oral histories are recorded and catalogued.

REFERENCES

Legislations, Regulations and Policies

The relevant legislations, regulations and policies for the management of heritage in the municipality are listed below:

Commonwealth

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protection Act 1984
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

State

- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Heritage Act 2017
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 & Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018
- Yarra River Protection *(Wilip-gin Birrarung murron)* Act 2017
- State Planning Policy Framework

Local Policy and Strategies

- Yarra Planning Scheme including Heritage Overlay and local heritage and built form policies;

  The Yarra Planning Scheme sets out the objectives, policies and planning controls for the use, development and protection of land and heritage in the City of Yarra.

- City of Yarra - Council Plan 2017-2021

  The City of Yarra Council Plan for 2017-2021 outlines the importance of managing development and growth in such a way as to remain sensitive to the heritage of the city.

- Environment Strategy 2013–2017

  The Environment Strategy 2013-2017 addresses both cultural and natural heritage.

- Housing Strategy 2018

  The City of Yarra Housing Strategy 2018 report outlines community values and priorities, both of which relate to significant historical, heritage and natural spaces within the local areas. What is more, it outlines how increased housing and development needs to be managed in a way that is sensitive to said community values and heritage protections.

- Property Strategy 2018

  The City of Yarra Property Strategy report for 2018 builds on the Yarra Open Space Strategy 2006-2016, which addresses heritage values through three frameworks comprising of urban, natural and Aboriginal cultural heritage.

- Yarra Economic Development Strategy 2015–2020

  The City of Yarra ECS 2015-2020 outlines the role heritage and the arts have to play in the City of Yarra's local tourism economy.

- Yarra Libraries Strategic Plan 2017-20

  The Yarra Libraries Strategic Plan 2017-20 works to outline the curated library collections, which include heritage items and local history archives, whilst similarly addressing certain measures being taken to increase the digitisation of collections and the recording of oral histories.

- Multicultural Partnerships Plan 2015-2018

  The City of Yarra Multicultural Partnerships Plan 2015-2018 works to outline the interrelationship between multiculturalism and the local area's cultural heritage identity. It outlines measures to be taken in order to combat racism, through the use of community events to highlight cultural heritage.

- Graffiti Management Framework 2015-2019

  The City of Yarra Graffiti Management Framework 2015-2019 addresses measures undertaken to manage graffiti in the local area and draws on Heritage Overlays, and the distinction between vandalism and commissioned public art.

- Yarra Open Space Strategy 2006

  The Yarra Open Space Strategy 2006 addresses cultural heritage values through an urban framework as well as a natural heritage framework. It similarly works to address Aboriginal cultural heritage.

- Arts and Culture Strategy 2016-2020

  The City of Yarra Arts and Culture Strategy 2016-2020 addresses the interconnectedness between the City of Yarra's arts and culture scene, and the local area's much valued built heritage. It similarly seeks to prioritise Aboriginal arts and cultural heritage, and promote Aboriginal history through partnerships.

- Access and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2024

  The Access and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2024 works to consider the preparation of a new Heritage Strategy, with universal access and infrastructure proposed for heritage buildings.

- Volunteer Strategy 2019-2023

  The Yarra Volunteer Strategy 2019-2023 is a framework to guide Yarra City Council in promoting, supporting and celebrating the active involvement of volunteering across the City of Yarra.

Key Heritage Studies, Reviews and Amendments

The key heritage studies, reviews and amendments undertaken for the City of Yarra and its predecessor councils are listed below:

	Council	Local Study
1970s	City of Fitzroy	▪ North Fitzroy Conservation Study (1978) ▪ South Fitzroy Conservation Study (1979)
	City of Northcote[1]	▪ City of Northcote Urban Conservation Study (1979)
1980s	City of Collingwood	▪ Collingwood Conservation Study (1985)
	City of Fitzroy	▪ Fitzroy conservation study review (1989)
	City of Melbourne[2]	▪ North Carlton & Princes Hill Conservation Study (1982)
	City of Richmond	▪ Richmond Conservation Study (1984)
Up to 1994	City of Richmond	▪ Northern Suburbs Factory Study (1994)
After 1994 Amalgamations	**City of Yarra**	▪ Amendment C6 (gazetted February 2001)
	(former) City of Fitzroy	▪ Amendment C78
New format Planning Scheme (May 1999)	**City of Yarra**	▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps: An Overview (2004) ▪ City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas (2005) ▪ City of Yarra Review of Heritage Overlay Areas (2004) ▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps: An Overview (2004) ▪ Amendment C85 (2008, gazetted September 2010) ▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps: Stage 1 (2008) ▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps: Stage 2 (2009)
	(former) City of Collingwood	▪ Amendment C6 (gazetted February 2001)
	(former) City of Melbourne	▪ Amendment C43 (gazetted December 2005)
2010 to present	**City of Yarra**	▪ City of Yarra Gaps Study (2012) ▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps Review One (based on City of Yarra Heritage Gaps: Stage 2) (2012) ▪ City of Yarra Heritage Gaps Review Two (2012) ▪ Amendment C149 (2012)

[1] That part of the former City of Northcote that now lies in the municipality of Yarra
[2] That former part of the City of Melbourne that now lies in the municipality of Yarra

Council	Local Study
	▪ Amendment C157 (2012) ▪ Amendment C163 (2012) ▪ Heritage Gap Study: Review of 17 Heritage Precincts (2014) ▪ Amendment C173 (2014) ▪ Heritage Gap Study: Review (2015) ▪ Amendment C198 (2015) ▪ Heritage Gap Study: Review of Johnston Street East (2016) ▪ Review of Activity Centre Heritage Overlay Areas (2017-18) ▪ Yarra's Aboriginal Partnerships Plan (Draft), (2018) ▪ Heritage GAP Study, Review of 17 Heritage Precincts, Context, Revised 2016 ▪ Thematic Study of Theatres in the City of Yarra, Context, 2017 ▪ Heritage Overlay Study , Queens Parade Trees, John Patrick Landscape Architects Pty Ltd, 2018
(former) City of Collingwood	▪ Incorporated Plan Methodology Report (2014) ▪ Heritage citation 20-60 Trenerry Crescent, Abbotsford, GJM Heritage 2016 ▪ Heritage Citation 112-124 Trenerry Crescent, Abbotsford, GJM Heritage 2016 ▪ Heritage Gap Study, Review of Johnston Street East, Context, 2016 ▪ Queens Parade Built Form Heritage Analysis and Recommendations, GJM, 2017 ▪ Collingwood Built Form Review, Heritage Advice, GJM, 2018 ▪ Heritage Assessment 18-22 Derby Street, Collingwood, Athemion Consultancies, 2018 ▪ Memorandum of Advice, 33-45 Derby Street, Collingwood, GJM, 2018
(former) City of Melbourne	▪ Heritage Gap Study: Smith Street South (2014)
(former) City of Richmond	▪ Heritage Gap Study: Review of Central Richmond ▪ Swan Street Built Form Heritage Review, GJM, 2017 ▪ Victoria Street and Bridge Road, Built Form Review, Heritage Assessments, GJM, 2018

Attachment 4 - Submission from Streets Alive Yarra

Draft Heritage Strategy

Prepared by: Streets Alive Yarra

www.streets-alive-yarra.org

facebook.com/streetsaliveyarra/

Attachment 4 - Submission from Streets Alive Yarra

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 8 to 80 years old, irrespective of whether they choose to walk, cycle, use public transport or drive. Residents and shoppers are able to move safely, comfortably, and conveniently around Yarra; and can easily find a park near shops.

Image credit: OCULUS Landscape Architecture and Urban Design

Streets Alive Yarra was founded in 2017 and now has over 2,000 likes on Facebook, increasing by 10-20 per week. A network of local champions develops concepts and proposals for how to improve their local street or precinct. Streets Alive Yarra is also Yarra's Walkability Action Group (WAG) representative for Victoria Walks.

Further information is available at www.streets-alive-yarra.org.

Attachment 4 - Submission from Streets Alive Yarra

Overview

Streets Alive Yarra welcomes the opportunity to offer feedback on the draft Heritage Strategy. We support the introductory statement that the role of council is to:

> *'work with the wider community to conserve and enhance this heritage while embracing positive change in the municipality.'*

We feel there should be more weight placed on 'positive change' to support a higher population density while also making Yarra a beautiful city to live in.

Definitions

We appear to lack clear definitions for Strategy 4.1 of our Council Plan, which states:

> *'protect Yarra's heritage and neighbourhood character.'*

We would support a definition of heritage as including:

> *'a great place to live',*

We would support a definition of neighbourhood character as including:

> *'where kids can safely & independently walk or cycle to school, friends or the library.'*

In other words, it's not just about heritage buildings.

Apparent contradictions

The draft strategy doesn't appear to address the apparent contradiction between:

> *'various consultations in the past few years have indicated that heritage is one of the characteristics of Yarra that is most valued by the community'* (draft page 7)

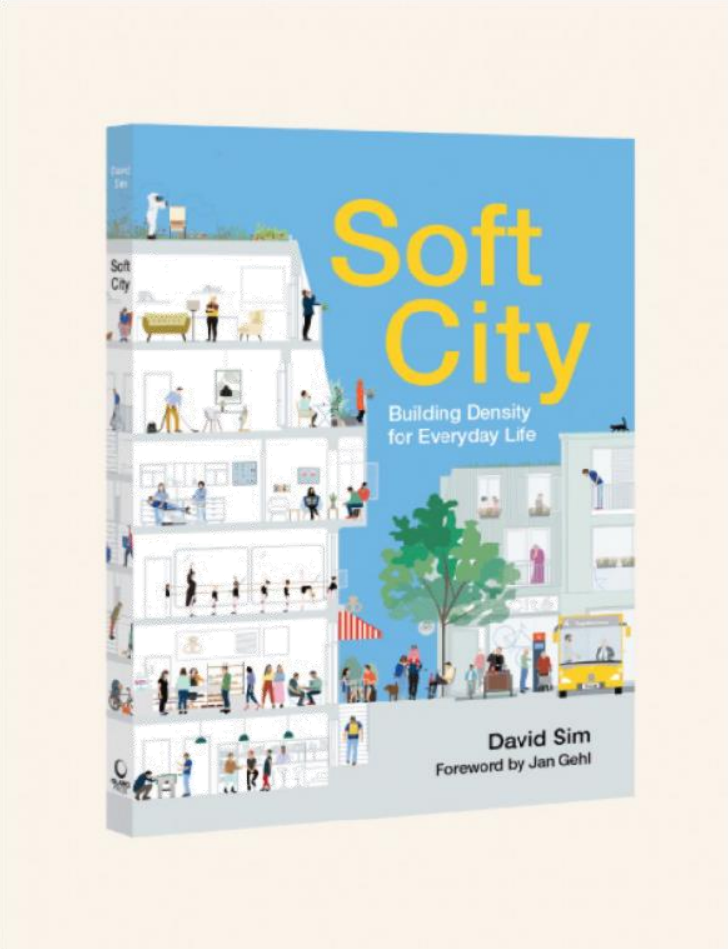
and:

> *'it is difficult to keep the changing resident population engaged with heritage'* (draft page 10).

Perhaps it's more accurate to say that there is strong support for heritage restrictions from certain cohorts of the community who are rightly concerned about development with inappropriate height or built form, or the inability of our public open spaces or public services to support a higher population. Instead of using heritage to limit built form or population, we should encourage appropriate development by using design & development overlays; and support a higher population by investing in 20-minute neighbourhoods, 30 km/h superblocks and public open space.

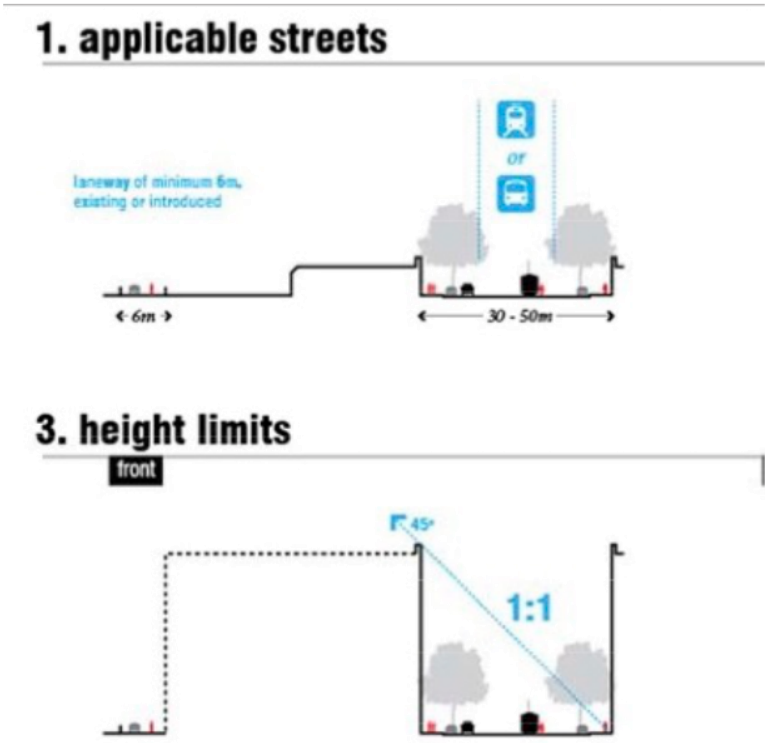
Development pressure

The draft strategy is correct to state that the City of Yarra has experienced development pressure (draft page 6). Yarra should continue to support 'positive change', specifically development and densification along transport corridors, as described in 'Soft City' by David Sim of Gehl Architects, which is subtitled 'Building Density for Everyday Life'.



Soft City by David Sim of Gehl Architects

In particular, council should support 'Linear Barcelona' height limits along our grid of transport corridors (VicRoads arterials), as described in 'Transforming Australian Cities'.



Source: Department of Planning and Community Development, published In Transforming Australian Cities and reproduced in Soft Cities

As our population increases, liveability will be improved if we allow the buildings lining our grid of arterials to grow and interlink to provide a grid of shops that offer services to people. Buildings along our typical 20m wide arterials should be permitted to offer ground floor retail, two floors of offices and two floors of residences. Yarra needs more proactive planning guidelines to support densification and less emphasis of holding back densification because of heritage.

Indeed, many beautiful dense cities in Europe could never have been built if heritage controls had been imposed at two stories. Let's not make that mistake. Instead of holding back development, we should guide development so that street frontages look beautiful and complement our heritage.

On-street parking

The draft strategy mentions 'solar panels' five times but fails to mention 'on-street parking' even once. This is an egregious mismatch. In our opinion, on-street parking imposes a greater impact upon heritage streetscapes than solar panels do. Solar panels offer a good fit with our heritage of being 'a great place to live'. If solar panels are to be controlled or restricted, then on-street parking should be controlled or restricted to an even greater extent.

Bluestone

It would be good if the strategy pointed out that it's acceptable to modify or move bluestone paving or kerbs that have been classed as heritage. As our population density and building density increases, we'll need to adjust our streetscapes to improve liveability. Heritage should not be used as a justification to prevent place making (such as footpath extensions or bump outs) or the construction of protected bicycle lanes. The heritage we'd most like to protect are the lives of our children, who would benefit from more investment in place making and safe travel infrastructure.

One good way of using bluestone is the 'half-cut' approach, which retains bluestone while delivering a smooth surface:

Half-cut bluestone in Yarra. Image credit: Streets Alive Yarra.

Attachment 4 - Submission from Streets Alive Yarra

Natural heritage

The Heritage Strategy should support the Urban Forest Strategy by clearly stating support for our natural heritage of trees and forests, specifically by replacing space for on-street parking with space for native trees.

Image credit: Adelaide Design Manual

Attachment 4 - Submission from Streets Alive Yarra

Concluding remarks

Streets Alive Yarra applauds the City of Yarra's focus on updating our Heritage Strategy. We would be delighted to provide further detail or explanation of the themes raised in this document.

streetsaliveyarra@gmail.com
www.streets-alive-yarra.org
facebook.com/streetsaliveyarra/

Attachment 5 - Submission from FRA

www.fitzroyresidents.org.au
info@fitzroyresidents.org.au

fitzroy residents' association

Established in 1969 to promote, protect and enhance residential amenity

Yarra's draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030

FRA welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030.

Our members, along with many residents in Yarra, stress the importance of heritage management and protection.

We have selected a number of priority actions in the draft strategy which we believe are fundamental for Yarra to demonstrate its commitment to heritage:

- The importance of the rewrite of the Yarra Planning Scheme
- The need to enhance the culture and focus within Council so that heritage is seen to, and will, be given greater emphasis at a senior level with appropriate resources

and have made suggestions in relation to priority areas.

Heritage policy in Yarra Planning Scheme

Priority action 8

Strengthen YCC's Heritage Policy and municipal planning statement in the Yarra Planning Scheme so that they demonstrate a stronger emphasis in protecting and enhancing the significant heritage character of Yarra's neighbourhoods, industrial areas and activity centres

We recognise that the YPS rewrite is a significant undertaking and that there have been some delays to release it for public exhibition. This delay is of concern because it is clear that the heritage provisions need to be strengthened urgently.

The rewrite should endeavour to include strategic planning objectives and provisions that will provide a strong foundation for heritage protection and avoid Council decisions being overturned by VCAT.

Establish and resource a Heritage Department

Priority action 13

Establish and resource a heritage department within YCC with a clear remit enshrined in policy and the strategy

FRA strongly supports this action. The decision to appoint Senior Advisor, City Heritage was a welcome one. However, the level of concern in the community about heritage protection and the significant area in Yarra covered by Heritage Overlays, necessitates a dedicated unit established on a par with the other units in the Planning and Place Making Directorate.

The strategy will not deliver successful outcomes without improved resourcing. It would appear that a significant number of the priority actions fall, either wholly or in part, to the responsibility of the Senior Advisor City Heritage in the CEO's office. The draft notes (p2), "*Timely implementation of the previous strategy has been challenging*."

Attachment 5 - Submission from FRA

As well as resourcing, this highlights a number of concerns:

- The number of priority actions
- The timeframe in which they will be initiated and completed.

Despite disclaimers such as "…*available funding may influence the detail, scale and timing of implemented actions",* it is not good governance to include priority actions that have little or no chance of success without adequate resourcing.

A dedicated unit would demonstrate Yarra's commitment to heritage and FRA urges Council to initiate its establishment with an appropriate allocation in the next budget.

Undertake a review of heritage outcomes in developments and projects
Priority action 11
Undertake a review of the heritage outcomes of selected recent developments and projects with a view to understand if there are any gaps to improve performance of the Planning Scheme or a need for process improvement

FRA supports this priority action.

We submit that an addition to qualifiable targets for this priority action is required:

- An outline of the review process be prepared with urgency to demonstrate that reviews can be undertaken with impartiality and effectiveness.
- That the outline be presented to the Heritage Advisory Committee for their feedback.

If implemented with a sound process, this initiative would demonstrate good governance.

Precinct citation reviews
Priority action 2
Review and upgrade the precinct citations for Yarra's activity centres and sites that are being rezoned to allow for employment and housing growth

This priority action is supported but FRA submits it could be improved by including provisions to include community consultation in reviews to ensure the capture of local knowledge.

World Heritage
Priority action 19
YCC actively participates in the World Heritage ~~Environs Area~~ Management Steering Committee. The steering committee is responsible for implementing and reviewing the World Heritage Management Plan (WHMP)

We submit that two additional quantifiable targets be added to this priority action:

- Integrating WHMP into the YCC new planning scheme and including the heritage guidelines
- In anticipation of the WHMP review in 2020 by Heritage Victoria, Yarra undertake a review of Yarra's strategic and statutory planning policies and decisions, to assess the effectiveness of WHEA SP in protecting the World Heritage values including Royal Exhibition Building views, and to make recommendations for changes.

This action cross references with priority actions 8 and 11

It is suggested that a new goal be included to take into account **National Heritage** and include a priority action to ensure the protection of national heritage places in Yarra such as the Abbotsford Convent.

Attachment 5 - Submission from FRA

Natural Heritage
Priority action 7
Prepare Yarra River interpretation project in collaboration with the community and Melbourne Water

The State government has a new Yarra River Protection -Wilip-gin Birrarung murron - Act (2017) which sets up a new statutory authority, the Birrarung Council, with a range of responsibilities.

Given the breadth of the Act, it is suggested reference should be made to the Act in both the natural and heritage priority areas, and note City of Yarra responsibilities under the Act.

Conclusion
FRA is pleased to note an improvement in this draft strategy with inclusion of quantifiable targets.

As stated above, we have identified actions relating to the YPS rewrite and establishment of a Heritage Department having fundamental importance. We commend the proposal to conduct a review of developments and projects to identify heritage outcomes/impacts. However, overall we are concerned about resourcing for these and other priority actions. We urge that these priorities be examined quickly to scope resourcing required and more detailed timelines established so that initial allocations can be included in the next budget round.

[redacted]
FRA Secretary
m [redacted]
6 October 2019

[ii] We attach by way of example a community member's summary of issues relating to the St Vincent's Private Hospital development. In attaching this summary, FRA wants to demonstrate the importance of this priority action given the range of issues that can arise in a development from a community member's experience.

Attachment 6 - Email response from a resident

RESPONSE TO DRAFT HERITAGE STRATEGY 2019-2030

I support the principles and content of the proposed heritage strategy, including the widening of the scope to include indigenous and natural heritage in the municipality. In preparation of the draft, a number of issues have been identified and positive actions are proposed to address many of these issues over the ten year span to 2030. I am concerned, however, that the protection of valued heritage assets relies on the cooperation of property owners, and that the document does not more openly discuss the competing pressures that threaten heritage conservation. Once a building is demolished or significant heritage fabric is removed, it cannot be replaced.

The first step in preparation of the new heritage strategy was a review of the 2015-2018 Heritage Strategy and Implementation Plan. What were the findings of this review and how has that influenced the current draft? Was there a rigorous evaluation of the Implementation Plan? What was achieved, and what was identified as needing to be carried forward and incorporated into the new strategy? There is passing reference to challenging time-frames, but what does this mean in practical terms?

Under the heading Legislative and Policy Context the second paragraph on page 4 attempts to summarize the role of the Yarra Planning Scheme in a single sentence. Given the key role of the planning policies and controls, perhaps this should be expanded to emphasize the responsibilities placed on Council to review and implement the planning controls. It should also explain that owners and the broader community have legal responsibilities to conserve important heritage assets.

At the State level, Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 Direction 4.4 merely requires a 'respect' for heritage. What is needed is advocacy and strong legal protection for Yarra's valued heritage assets. As noted, 70 percent of the municipality is covered by Heritage Overlays, however some of these areas have higher concentrations of contributory buildings than others. The Strategy will be of most value to Council if it can ensure that that Council decisions are not overturned at VCAT because there are conflicting strategic planning objectives, or if important heritage assets that have not been given due recognition or protection in the Planning Scheme.

The key community concerns and directions identified on page 7 are broad. They appear to be encompassed by the 26 Priorities for Implementation. Greater incentives for owners to maintain heritage assets are required.

In the light of what has happened in respect of the Corkman Irish Pub in Pelham Street Carlton, it would be good to see some mention in the Strategy of strengthening Council's powers over inappropriate demolition. This would include 'demolition by neglect'. With some of the highest land values in the municipality coinciding with areas of intrinsic heritage value, Council must state that it is prepared to spend money to pursue offences under the Planning and Environment Act.

Release of the draft is timely because of the status of concurrent reviews of built form and heritage controls in several key activity centres. The review of the precinct citations and improved coordination of heritage and other overlay controls must be addressed now. I therefore support the eight Priority Areas listed on page 12. Increased budget allocations in the early years of the new strategy could save

Attachment 6 - Email response from a resident

the Council the time and expense of actions at VCAT and improve the certainty of outcomes for landowners and the broader community.

Community education and advocacy are also important. The belated recognition by Council officers supporting street art that the painting of previously unpainted surfaces requires a planning permit may have avoided the spread of 'murals' on brick walls to deter graffiti. The removal of paint controls from the Heritage Schedule did not override this specific provision. It is also now obvious that curated public art cannot in itself deter tagging and vandalism.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment and provide feedback on the Draft Heritage Strategy. I look forward to its adoption and implementation at the earliest opportunity.

[redacted]

Fitzroy

Attachment 7 - Submission from Protect Fitzroy North

Protect Fitzroy North Inc.

A0097896O
PO Box 1076 Fitzroy North 3068
protectfitzroynorth@gmail.com
www.protectfitzroynorth.org

PROTECT FITZROY NORTH.ORG

October 4, 2017

Response to Draft Heritage Strategy 2019

First of all, congratulations on the work done on the Heritage Strategy to date. The clearer focus on the role and backdrop of Indigenous heritage, together with the sense that heritage is more than just "old buildings" are both welcome.

Certainly the former has strong strategic backing in Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 Policy 4.4.2 - "Respect and protect Melbourne's Aboriginal cultural heritage".

I note that the overarching Direction 4.4. in Plan Melbourne - "Respect Melbourne's heritage as we build for the future" - also goes on:

"Heritage will continue to be one of Melbourne's competitive strengths, contributing to its distinctiveness and liveability and attracting visitors, new residents and investors. Heritage is an important component of Victoria's tourism industry and benefits the economy."

...

"In time, new development will add to Melbourne's rich legacy of heritage places. The process of building a new legacy is important, just as it is vital that current assets are protected.

Innovative approaches to the creative re-use of heritage places need to be adopted, ensuring good urban design both preserves and renews historic buildings and places."

Plan Melbourne then goes on to expand on these respective themes of "Stimulate economic growth through heritage conservation" and "Protect Melbourne's heritage through telling its stories" in Policies 4.4.3 and 4.4.4 respectively.

Certainly the Draft Heritage Strategy document does a good job of picking up those themes of heritage conservation and the "telling stories" in the sense of social and cultural heritage.

However, I have a couple of suggestions - one is that the linkage back to the overarching state strategic documents could perhaps be made a little clearer in the document. Currently it looks like Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 is mentioned in passing but exactly how this Draft Heritage Strategy relates to it and its policies and objectives is unclear.

When arguing a matter before VCAT it's certainly helpful to have clearer links to state policy of this kind, as it gives more weight to council's own policies.

The second suggestion offered is that there is another important aspect of how heritage tells its stories - and that *is* through place and built form[1] - specifically in how heritage is layered.

Plan Melbourne makes a point that heritage isn't just a fixed point in time - it's the ongoing "rich legacy" of heritage places - the most recent to be recognised being Federation Square(!).

This concept of layering is far more clear in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme's Clause 22.04:

> **22.04-3 Objectives**
>
> To encourage the conservation of all significant and contributory heritage places in the Heritage Overlay.
>
> To discourage the demolition of significant and contributory heritage places in the Heritage Overlay.
>
> To encourage all new development and redevelopment of significant and contributory places to be respectfully and harmoniously integrated with the surrounding character.
>
> To encourage the retention, reuse and recycling of significant and contributory heritage places in the Heritage Overlay in a manner which conserves and does not detract from the surrounding character.
>
> To promote design excellence which clearly and positively supports the ongoing heritage significance of the Heritage Overlay.

[1] Yes, I know I said heritage isn't just about "old buildings" - but the way buildings of different ages relate to each other is an important part of how the built environment *can* "tell a story" and speak to future generations.

Attachment 7 - Submission from Protect Fitzroy North

To ensure new buildings and additions complement existing heritage characteristics.

To ensure that new development and any publicly visible additions and/or alterations in or to a heritage place maintain the significance of the heritage place and employ a contextual design approach.

The Port Phillip Clause 22.04 talks about layering in connection with a "contextual design approach":

22.04-4 Policy

General

It is policy to:

- Encourage the restoration and reconstruction of heritage places in all parts of the Heritage Overlay where appropriate and in particular in intact or substantially consistent streetscapes ….
- Encourage new development to be respectful of the scale, form, siting and setbacks of nearby significant and contributory buildings.
- Disregard the impact of buildings that are obviously atypical to the character of the streetscape when determining the appropriate mass and scale for new buildings or extensions or upper storey additions in a Heritage Overlay.
- Encourage a contextual design approach for additions and/or alterations to a heritage place or for new development. A contextual approach is where the alteration, addition or new development incorporates an interpretive design approach (derived through comprehensive research and analysis). New development should sit comfortably and harmoniously integrate with the site and within the streetscape and not diminish, detract from or compete with the significance of the heritage place, or streetscape character of adjoining or nearby buildings.
- This approach can include:
    - Contemporary architecture and innovative design which is an important part of the contextual approach because it adds to the existing diversity and layering of styles through time. This layering is a defining feature in a number of areas and is therefore an important component of Port Phillip's heritage.
    - Accurate reproduction architecture may be employed in limited instances where detailed evidence, such as photographic evidence, exists for that alteration, addition or new development. ….

I'll spare everyone further quoting of the Port Phillip scheme - suffice to say strong guidance from a cohesive Heritage Strategy can be powerful once embodied in the Planning Scheme.

The idea seen in Plan Melbourne and the PP scheme above, that heritage is about change rather than the lack of it is important. Important so as to justify the adaptation of heritage places to new uses, and also important in terms of justifying the preservation of heritage buildings from different periods which may co-exist in the same precinct - because, and when, they tell a story.

All too often heritage consultants working for developers will justify the demolition of a couple of heritage buildings because they're from a slightly different era to the bulk of the stock in that streetscape - e.g. a couple of Edwardian buildings in a largely Victorian shopping strip, or a single Art Deco or Moderne commercial building nestled in largely Federation surrounds.

It's the very presence of "out of place" buildings that often *tells* the story - those buildings were put there for a reason, to address changing needs, just as we may seek to renew buildings today. That someone knocked down a dairy to build a motor garage is telling us something important about the evolution of Melbourne. That they didn't feel the need to do the same with the Victorian houses around it is telling us something else.

As the example of Federation Square shows, it's not age alone that makes a building valued as heritage, but other qualities - social, cultural - basically that it has a place in telling our stories.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

President - Protect Fitzroy North

M [redacted]

E [redacted]

Attachment 8 - Email response by a HAC member

Response to City of Yarra Draft Heritage Strategy 2019-2030

This response follows my first sight of the draft plan, immediately following the meeting of the Heritage Advisory Committee on 10th October 2019. I have kept this very short as I understand that speed is of the essence.

I note that the Draft Heritage Strategy is comprehensive in many respects. However it is seriously deficient in its approach to the management of the archaeological heritage of the City. At no point does the document acknowledge that the near total focus on the built form (and some acknowledgement of the need to develop a more comprehensive Aboriginal history of the City) poses a significant challenge to the management of the archaeological heritage of the City. In 2019 it should not be necessary that a focus on historical heritage requires more than a focus on built forms or inscribed landscapes.

The absence of an explicit and clearly-thought-through strategy to manage the archaeological cultural heritage of the City means that our capacity to effectively respond to ANY of the four Strategic Directions noted on P. 12, is severely hampered . The consequence of this is that threats to archaeological heritage cannot yet be identified, let alone mitigated. I note that Aboriginal Heritage is seen as a priority area ONLY for *Promoting and Celebrating our heritage*.

Collectively the absence of a strategic approach to the identification and management of the archaeological heritage of the City of Yarra represents a fundamental shortcoming in the Strategy that requires an urgent response from Council.

At the very least the Council needs to urgently review its processes related to the commissioning of heritage advice, so that it can move beyond a focus on the historical and architectural. I note that there are several major heritage consultancies that can provide such advice, especially when linked to the in-house expertise to be found in Heritage Victoria.

[redacted]
Charles La Trobe Professor of Archaeology
La Trobe University
Member City of Yarra Heritage Advisory Committee

11.12 Change to Ordinary Council Meeting Schedule

Reference: D19/192702
Authoriser: Group Manager Chief Executive's Office

Purpose

1. To schedule an additional Ordinary Meeting of Council for Tuesday 26 November 2019.

Background

2. In order to ensure a manageable meeting schedule, Council's Governance office maintains a Forward Report Schedule to plan out the business to be presented at Council meetings throughout the year.
3. A recent review of this schedule has identified an unexpectedly high number of items to be presented to Council before the end of 2019. This, coupled with the fact that only one Ordinary Meeting is currently scheduled for November (due to the Ceremonial Meeting scheduled on Thursday 28 November 2019), leads to now recommending an additional meeting be scheduled.
4. Council's usual meeting frequency is to schedule meetings on the first and third Tuesday of each month. On this basis, it is recommended that an additional meeting be scheduled on Tuesday 26 November 2019 (the third Tuesday). To fit with the expected pattern, it is recommended that the meeting be held at 6.30pm (confidential) and 7.00pm (public) at the Fitzroy Town Hall.

External Consultation

5. No external consultation has been undertaken in the development of this report.

Internal Consultation (One Yarra)

6. Confirmation has been received regarding venue availability.

Financial Implications

7. There are no material financial implications of the recommendations of this report.

Economic Implications

8. There are no material economic implications of the recommendations of this report.

Sustainability Implications

9. There are no material sustainability implications of the recommendations of this report.

Social Implications

10. There are no material social implications of the recommendations of this report.

Human Rights Implications

11. No human rights implications have been identified in the preparation of this report.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

12. No public communication has been undertaken in the development of this report.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

13. The ongoing monitoring of Council's meeting schedule and maintenance of the Forward Report Schedule assists Council to achieve its commitment to 'A leading Yarra' as set out in the Council Plan 2017-2012.

14. More specifically, ensuring that the number of items presented to Council meetings does not cause them to become unwieldy supports articulated strategy 7.3, which commits Council to "*maintain a culture of transparency, governance, ethical practice and management of risks that instils a high level of community respect and confidence in Council decision-making*" and 7.6 which commits to "e*nable greater transparency and access to the conduct of Council Meetings*."

Legal Implications

15. Section 89 (4) of the Local Government Act 1989, generally provides that a Council must give at least 7 days' notice when holding an Ordinary or Special Council Meeting or a Special Committee comprising solely of Councillors (such as the Internal Development Approvals Committee). Where urgent or extraordinary circumstances prevent Council from complying with section 89(4), Council is required to give such public notice as is practicable and specify the urgent or extraordinary circumstances which prevented normal notice in the Minutes.

16. Further, Clause 36 of Council's Meeting Procedures Local Law 2011, provides that – "the date, time and place for all Ordinary Meetings and Special Committee Meetings shall be fixed by the Council from time to time".

17. The scheduling of an additional Ordinary Council Meeting requires a Council resolution. An Ordinary Meeting (as distinct from a *Special* Meeting) does not require the specific agenda items to be known in advance, and enables the inclusion of Public Question Time and the Councillors' Forum.

Other Issues

18. No other issues have been raised in developing this report.

Options

19. Should Council determine not to schedule an additional meeting, this would necessitate a large number of items of business to be presented at the two Council scheduled Ordinary Council Meetings in December.

Conclusion

20. Officers recommend that an additional meeting be scheduled on Tuesday 26 November 2019 at 6.30pm (confidential) and 7.00pm (public) at the Fitzroy Town Hall and that the Chief Executive Officer be directed to give the necessary public notice of the additional meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council:

   (a) schedule an additional Ordinary Council Meeting on 26 November 2019 at Fitzroy Town Hall, with the confidential session commencing at 6.30pm and the public session commencing at 7.00pm; and

   (b) direct the Chief Executive Officer to give public notice of the additional meeting.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Rhys Thomas**
TITLE: **Senior Governance Advisor**
TEL: **9205 5302**

Attachments
There are no attachments for this report.

11.13 Appointment of Authorised Officers - Planning and Environment Act 1987

Trim Record Number: D19/195314
Responsible Officer: Group Manager Chief Executive's Office

Purpose

1. To provide for the formal appointment of Council Officers as Authorised Officers pursuant to Section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act* 1987 and Section 232 of the *Local Government Act* 1989.

Background

2. In order to undertake the duties of office, the below named staff member should be appointed as an Authorised Officer pursuant to the above referred legislation.
3. This authorisation cannot be made by the Chief Executive Officer under delegation, and must be made by resolution of Council.

Consultation

4. Not applicable.

Financial Implications

5. There are no direct financial implications arising from the appointment of an authorised officer.

Economic Implications

6. This report has no economic implications.

Sustainability Implications

7. This report has no sustainability implications.

Social Implications

8. This report has no direct social implications.

Human Rights Implications

9. This report has no Human Rights implications.

Communications with CALD Communities Implications

10. Not applicable.

Council Plan, Strategy and Policy Implications

11. This report is an example of this Council's positive action, in demonstrating its commitment to its legislative obligations.

Legal Implications

12. Appointment of Authorised Officers under the *Planning and Environment Act* 1987 requires a formal resolution of Council. Where such authorisation is proposed to be granted, provision is also made to allow the respective officer to also initiate proceedings on behalf of Council (as provided in Section 232 of the *Local Government Act* 1989).

Other Issues

13. Not applicable.

Options

14. Not applicable.

Conclusion

15. That Council formally appoint the officers listed below as Authorised Officers pursuant to Section 147 (4) of the *Planning and Environment Act* 1987 and Section 232 of the *Local Government Act* 1989. The Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation document will be signed accordingly by the Chief Executive Officer.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council formally appoints:

   (a) Darren BORG; and

   (b) Elizabeth DELANTY

   as Authorised Officers pursuant to Section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act* 1987 and Section 232 of the *Local Government Act* 1989.

2. That Council directs that the Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation be signed accordingly by the Chief Executive Officer.

CONTACT OFFICER: **Rhys Thomas**
TITLE: **Senior Governance Advisor**
TEL: **9205 5302**

Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.