



# City of Yarra Quarterly Community Report

Quarter Three 2023/24

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

# Executive Summary

We are pleased to present the Quarterly Community Report for Quarter 3. This report provides a timely, open and transparent overview of the organisation and its activities from January to March 2024 inclusive.

Council is extremely proud of the depth and breadth of the work we are doing across a diverse range of areas. This quarter we have continued to address everything from improving our Financial Sustainability to our response to the Climate Emergency.

From embarking on a deliberative engagement where we asked the Yarra community to draft a set of principles which will guide service planning at Yarra in the future, to hosting a national bushland regeneration forum, to opening a new Kindergarten at Collingwood College, it has been a busy and rewarding quarter.

In addition to highlights and achievements, we continued the day-to-day services that our community relies on, working with you to implement and deliver on the actions outlined in our strategic plans.

## Strategy and Plan highlights

- Financial Sustainability
- Active and Healthy Ageing Action Plan
- Nature Strategy

## Service highlights include:

- Neighbourhood House Partnership Framework
- Yarra Libraries
- Yarra Arts
- Collingwood College Kindergarten Update

## Progress made in delivering the Council Plan 2021-25

There are 57 actions planned for delivery this financial year. As of 30 March 2024, all actions had commenced with 47 actions completed or on track. This represents a result of 82% of our actions are completed or on-track which is above our performance target of 75%.

## Financial Sustainability

Yarra's Financial Sustainability Strategy (FSS) was endorsed by Council on 12 December 2023. The strategy is a representation of Council's commitment to the responsible management of ratepayer's funds. By making this move we're ensuring that we can meet the service and infrastructure needs of our community, now and into the future.

Council has already achieved significant improvements in its financial position over the last two years through a number of projects and activities. Details of our recent deliberative engagement to support financial sustainability are detailed in this report.

## Financial update

Council's cash and cash equivalents have increased from \$81.1 million (June 2023) to \$96.5 million and borrowings have decreased from \$34.9 million (June 2023) to \$31.6 million demonstrating strengthened financial sustainability.

A surplus for March 2024 of \$15.1 million is reported despite increasingly challenging economic circumstances. Generating sufficient levels of surpluses is critical to fund our capital works and other programs in the future.

## Capital Works

The Capital Works Program is a comprehensive asset renewal, upgrade and new works program and the total projected investment for 2023/24 is \$29.8 million. Council continues to plan and deliver projects that improve community safety and usability of our assets, to ensure longevity and reliability of our assets, to increase usability and efficiency, and address our community's current and future needs.

The expenditure to date for the 2023/24 Capital Works Program is \$17.2 million. In this quarter, Council has progressed well in the delivery of a mix of infrastructure works (roads and drainage) and structural works (ovals and pavilions, and community facilities), as a result of improved management of the capital works projects.

# Community Engagement Action Plan



*Community members working together at Yarra's deliberative engagement*

This quarter a key highlight in the community engagement space has been the successful delivery of a deliberative engagement process focused on developing a set of service review principles. A representative sample of the Yarra community was recruited through an EOI process that saw 42 community members brought together to deliberate. Through a series of four workshops, led by independent facilitators, the group of community members developed a draft set of guiding principles that will help inform and guide Council's future planning and review of community services.

Deliberative engagement is one of the deepest forms of community engagement and helps us understand our community's diverse perspectives and lived experience. The community input from this engagement process will have an enduring impact and will help shape the future of Yarra.

Feedback from the community working group indicated that participants were comfortable with the quality of the information, satisfied with the opportunity to express their views, and found their participation in this process worthwhile.

In addition, Council delivered the first Talking Yarra community event. This engagement program provides an opportunity for our community to speak directly with our Councillors about the issues that matter to them. During this quarter Council also held 9 community engagements in relation to current projects.

## Community Engagement Activities

Council has been holding a series of in-person events across Yarra this year. A new program of events was developed with a strong focus on creating more opportunities for our community to engage in, in-person discussions with councillors about the issues and topics that matter most to them. There was a strong focus on ensuring these sessions were promoted to our diverse community and that under-represented voices were encouraged to participate. The new engagement program responds directly to feedback provided by our community and includes Meet the Mayor sessions, Talking Yarra community events and Talking Yarra stakeholder events.

In the last quarter we have held the following in person engagement activities for councillors:

- Six 'Meet the Mayor' sessions held in Fitzroy, Collingwood, Carlton North, Richmond and Clifton Hill
- Talking Yarra community event held in Richmond with members of Yarra's LGBTIQ+ community to mark Pride.

During the December to March quarter of the 2023/24 financial year, Council has also undertaken 9 engagements in relation to current projects. The engagements held include:

- Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy
- Access and Inclusion Strategy
- Service Planning and Review Principles
- Gertrude and Brunswick Streets corner
- Street Garden Guidelines
- Safer Streets – Alphington
- Charles Evans Reserve
- Cambridge Street Reserve Play Space.

As part of our commitment to best practice engagement, facilitating community participation in decision making, and ensuring our engagement program is both accessible and inclusive and results in broad representation from our diverse community, we are continually considering and testing new approaches to the way we engage. The following are some examples:

- Using icons and other visual aids to present the information for the Gertrude and Brunswick Streets corner engagement on the Your Say Yarra project in a simple and easy to understand way to encourage feedback from CALD and residents from the estate housing in the Atherton Gardens area. This methodology along with the targeted stakeholder approach, resulted in a successful reach of 8% of participants who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- Ensuring a diverse representation from CALD backgrounds, young people and LGBTIQ+ community members have been included in the Service Planning and Review Principles deliberative engagement process by conducting a thorough and independent selection process.

We have also implemented new strategies to provide space for people of all abilities to offer feedback. These efforts were recognised recently when our Your Say Yarra project page for the Access and Inclusion Strategy engagement stage 1 was highlighted in the local government sector as a best practice model for accessibility. Our approach included options for both traditional and Easy English, balanced visual and text content and used image options in the survey.

## Financial Update

The quarter three financial position builds on the outcomes of prudent financial management achieved through the careful delivery of the 2023/24 annual budget and alignment of the objectives of the Financial Sustainability Strategy.

Following on from the comprehensive mid-year budget review (December 2023), Council has strengthened its financial position, achieved through holding costs, prudent human resource management and real time assessment of the capital works program.

Despite the ongoing financial challenges, Council is reporting no change from the forecast at the end of December 2023, which is a forecast surplus result of \$12.6m compared to a surplus of \$15.2m in the adopted budget. However, continuing decreases in user fees and charges (in particular further reduction in children services utilisation levels) and volatility with cost pressures and other external influences will be closely monitored during the last quarter of 2023/24. Surpluses at 30 June 2024, will be transferred to our reserves to align with the key objectives of the financial sustainability strategy.

The reduced forecast surplus is largely as a result of deferral of capital grant income to 2024/25 (\$5m).

Without these adjustments, Council's forecast would have provided a \$2.4m favourable position to budget. This overall forecast result is a significant outcome for Yarra City Council and demonstrates Council's commitment to strengthening our financial position without impacting services to the community.

The outcome also moves towards achieving financial goals of no further borrowing to fund operating activities, holding costs, and now Council can plan to build cash reserves and enabling the organisation to make decisions in alignment with the adopted Financial Sustainability Strategy.

## Comprehensive Income Statement

Income Statement	YTD Budget	YTD Actuals	YTD Variance	Annual Budget	Annual Forecast	Annual Variance
	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M	\$M
<b>Revenue from ordinary Activities</b>						
Rates and charges	131.8	132.0	0.2	132.1	131.7	(0.4)
Statutory fees and fines	26.4	28.7	2.3	35.6	37.5	1.9
User Fees	27.1	25.3	(1.8)	35.2	33.5	(1.7)
Grants - Operating	12.6	14.4	1.8	18.7	18.7	-
Grants - Capital	0.7	2.1	1.4	7.3	2.3	(5.0)
Contributions - Other monetary	4.7	4.6	(0.1)	6.4	7.7	1.3
Reimbursements	1.1	1.4	0.3	0.8	1.5	0.7
Other Income	1.6	4.2	2.6	2.2	3.7	1.5
Net gain/(loss) on disposal	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.3
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>206.3</b>	<b>213.3</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>238.4</b>	<b>237.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Expenses from ordinary activities</b>						
Employee Costs	75.8	75.0	0.7	101.5	102.7	(1.2)
Materials and services	61.7	55.7	6.0	89.0	88.7	0.1
Depreciation & Amortisation	19.3	19.2	0.1	25.7	25.7	-
Amortisation - right of use assets	0.2	0.9	(0.7)	0.2	0.2	-
Bad and doubtful debts	3.7	1.5	2.2	5.1	5.1	-
Borrowing costs	0.7	0.7	-	0.9	0.9	-
Interest Exp - Leases	-	0.2	(0.1)	0.0	0.1	(0.1)
Other expenses	0.5	0.5	-	0.8	0.8	-
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>161.9</b>	<b>153.7</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>223.2</b>	<b>224.3</b>	<b>(1.1)</b>
<b>Net Result</b>	<b>44.4</b>	<b>59.6</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>(2.5)</b>

The full year forecast surplus is a reduction of \$2.586m to budget, primarily due to the Brunswick Street Oval project and grant funding deferred to 2024/25.

Decreases in the forecast User Fees revenue are driven by a reduction in the utilisation of Childcare and Leisure Centres of \$0.8m and \$1.0m respectively and are consistent with the results in Quarter one and quarter two as previously reported.

The above decreases in income are partially offset with increases to statutory fees and fines (\$2.3m) and other income (\$2.6m) as a result of strengthened management of cash for investment and higher interest rates. At this stage of the financial year, there is no change to the overall financial sustainability risk rating as budgeted. Council has previously reported its challenges in generating enough cash to fund future capital works without borrowing.



Some sector wide staff shortages and planned human resource allocations have resulted in savings in salaries, however the forecast will result in an overspend in agency labour costs, together with increases to the WorkCover premium.

YTD actual results compared to YTD budget is favourable by \$15.2m. This result is driven by the following:

#### Revenue

- a) Rates and Charges are generally in line with budget YTD. Forecast has been reduced due to Supplementary rates being lower than budget (-\$0.500m) as well as waste charges (-\$0.200m), offset by higher than expected interest on rates in arrears (\$0.250m).
- b) Statutory Fees are favourable YTD, as a result of improved resource allocation to increase parking infringement notices issued and increased parking meter fees and permits income (\$2.280m).
- c) User Fees are unfavourable YTD for Family & Children Services (-\$0.931m), Town Planning fees (-\$0.302m), Infrastructure permits (-\$0.300m), and Construction Enforcement (\$-0.240m), offset by favourable position in Libraries, Arts & Events (\$0.201m).
- d) Grants - Operating grants are favourable YTD due to grant income carried forward from 2022/23 (\$1.147m) as well as unbudgeted School Crossing Supervisor grant received in Parking and Compliance (\$0.434m), and unbudgeted Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) grants received in City Works (\$0.578m).
- e) Grants - Capital grants are favourable YTD due to unbudgeted grant income for Otter and Smith Street Park (\$0.298m), Cambridge Street Reserve (\$0.325m), Richmond Early Learning Facility (\$0.250m), and grant income (\$0.455m) carried forward from 2022/23. Revenue is recognised progressively throughout the year as the projects are delivered. Associated expenses are captured in the capital works program. Impacting the variance compared to forecast is the timing difference for Brunswick Street Oval between the receipt of grant funding and delivery of the project (-\$4.600m) and Collingwood College (-\$0.435m).
- f) Other Income is favourable YTD, driven by higher interest rates and deposit balances than was originally budgeted (\$2.002m)
- g) Net gain on disposal of assets is favourable YTD due to vehicle sales being higher than budgeted, as a result of the 2023 Fleet review in alignment with the objectives of the Financial Sustainability Strategy to identify savings and grow cash reserves. Forecasts have been updated to reflect additional income expected from asset sale (\$0.246m).

#### Expenses

- h) Employee Costs: YTD savings in salaried staff costs due to vacancies (\$3.564m) is offset by agency & casual staff to backfill vacancies (-\$3.184m). Full year forecast remains unfavourable due to increase in work cover premium (-\$0.341m) and utilisation of more agency and casual staff to fill vacant positions (-\$1.6m).
- i) Materials & Services: YTD favourable variance driven by savings in contract payments in waste management, (\$2.555m) under-utilisation of legal fees (\$1.428m) reduced reliance on consultants (\$0.440m). Given volatility in cost pressures, we will be closely monitoring all costs to ensure budget is not exceeded. Any surpluses identified at 30 June 2024, expected to be transferred to reserves as per the objectives of the financial sustainability strategy.
- j) Bad and doubtful debts are currently favourable to budget due to an updated assessment of the closing

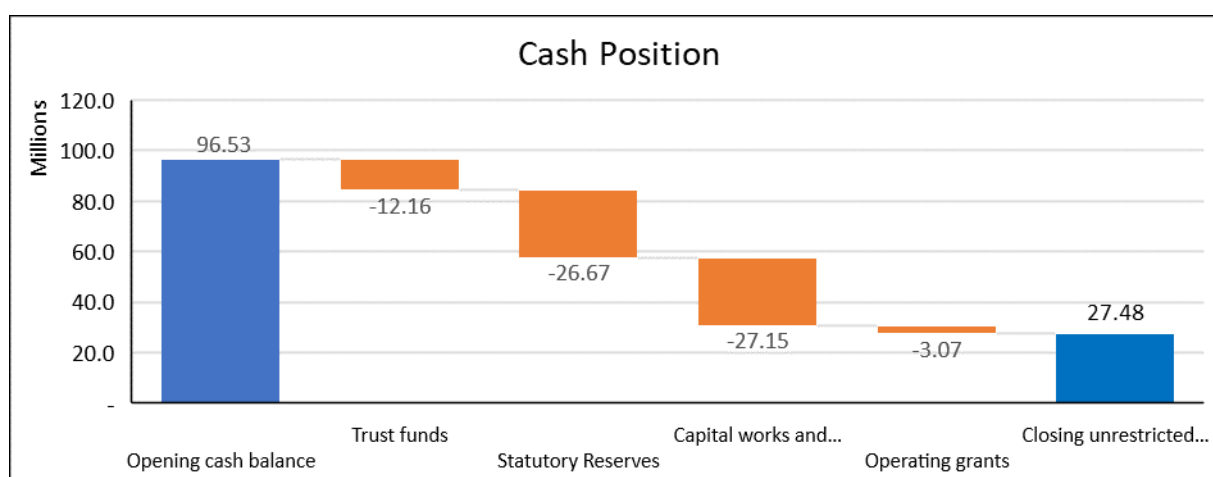
k) Debtor balance at the end of the December quarter. We will monitor movements closely and make an adjustment in quarter four should favourable variance materialise.

## Capital Works

At 31 March 2024, YTD actuals \$17.191m are lower than YTD budget of \$23.650m and includes spend of \$4.097m from carryovers of \$7.248m.

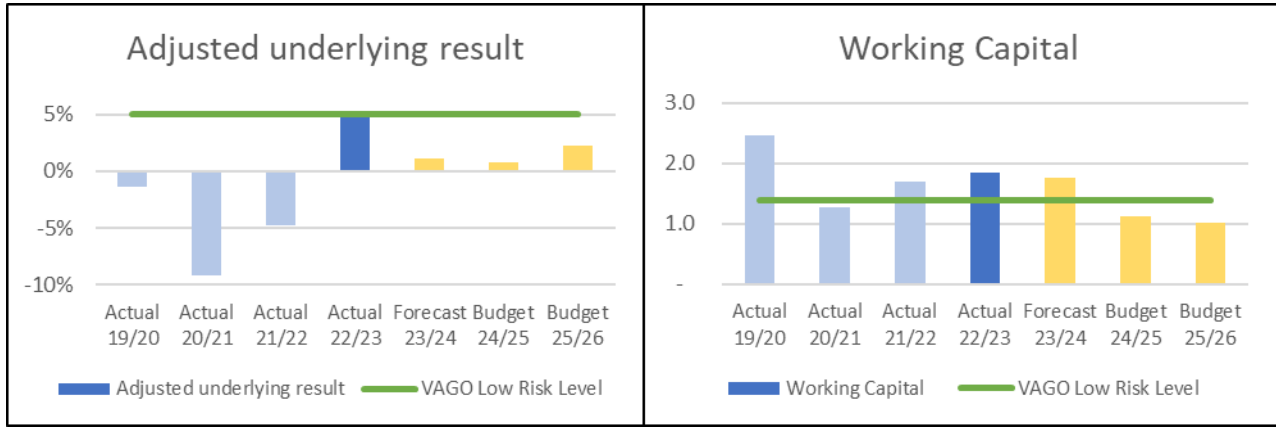
Financial Results Summary	YTD Budget	YTD Actuals	YTD Variance	Annual Budget	Current Final Projection	Annual Variance
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
New asset expenditure	7,861	4,088	3,773	12,424	9,111	3,313
Asset renewal expenditure	14,686	12,577	2,110	20,043	19,425	618
Asset upgrade expenditure	1,103	526	577	1,541	1,349	192
<b>Total capital works expenditure</b>	<b>23,650</b>	<b>17,191</b>	<b>6,460</b>	<b>34,008</b>	<b>29,885</b>	<b>4,123</b>

## Cash Position



At 31 March 2024, Council has total cash of \$96.53m, of which \$31.61m is funded by borrowings. Unrestricted and unallocated cash position is \$27.48m, moving from \$5.39m at 30 June 2023.

# Financial Sustainability Ratios

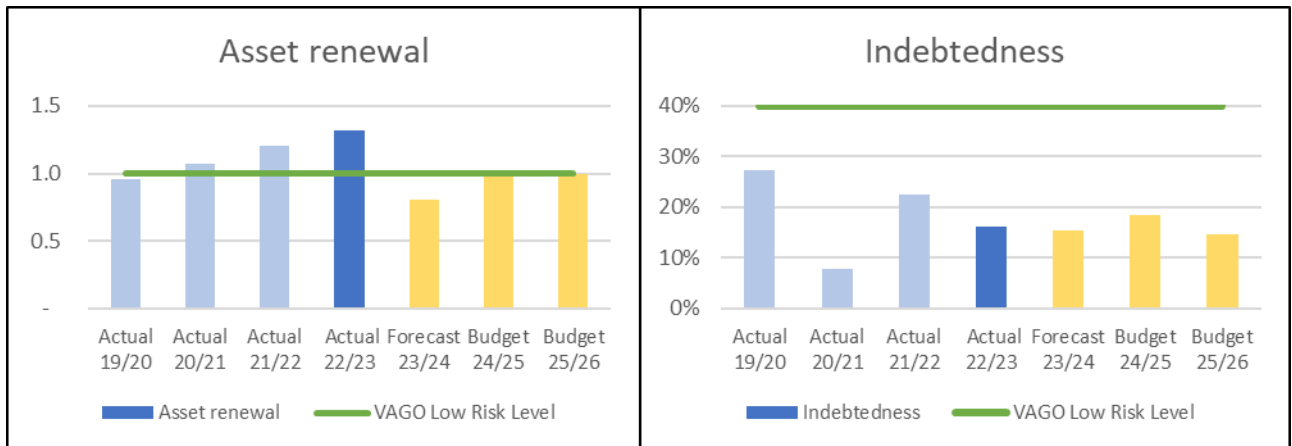


Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / adjusted underlying revenue

This ratio measures an entity's ability to generate its own cash. A positive result indicates a surplus, and the larger the percentage, the stronger the result. The result highlights Council's challenges in generating enough cash to fund future capital works without borrowing.

Current assets / current liabilities

Compares current assets to current liabilities, which provides a measure of the ability to pay existing liabilities in the next 12 months. This year's result expected to be in the low-risk range.



Renewal & upgrade spend/ depreciation

Ratios higher than 1.0 indicate that spending on existing assets is faster than the depreciation rate. This year's result is expected to stay in the low-risk range.

Non-current liabilities / own-source revenue

Measures Council's ability to pay the principal and interest on its borrowings when they are due from the funds it generates. This year's result is expected to stay in the low-risk range.

## Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV) Loan financial covenants

TCV loan requirements		Target	Current Month	
Interest Cover	EBITDA/Interest Expense	> 2.0	108	100%
Interest Bearing Loans	Interest Bearing Liabilities/Own Source Revenue	< 60%	16.45%	100%

TCV financing is conditional upon Council maintaining a sustainable financial position when measured by the interest cover and interest bearing loans ratios. YTD results indicate that Council is meeting the minimum requirements. TCV loan requirements are well within target given limited borrowing compared to own source revenue and liability obligations.

## Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Financial Position	YTD Actuals \$'000	30/06/23 Actuals \$'000	Movement Inc/(Dec) \$'000
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	41,532	31,124	10,409
Trade and other receivables	67,450	25,721	41,729
Other financial assets	55,000	50,000	5,000
Inventories	147	147	-
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	-	-	-
Other assets	1,202	2,148	(946)
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>165,331</b>	<b>109,139</b>	<b>56,192</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Investments in joint arrangements	5	5	-
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,924,185	1,926,440	(2,255)
Right-of-use assets	2,555	279	2,276
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>1,926,745</b>	<b>1,926,724</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>2,092,076</b>	<b>2,035,863</b>	<b>56,213</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	6,058	7,188	(1,130)
Trust funds and deposits	18,659	15,797	2,863
Unearned income/revenue	10,350	13,413	(3,063)
Provisions	16,766	17,759	(993)
Interest-bearing liabilities	1,113	4,399	(3,286)
Lease liabilities	284	249	35
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>53,230</b>	<b>58,804</b>	<b>(5,574)</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Other Liabilities	399	386	13
Provisions	1,241	1,227	13
Interest-bearing liabilities	30,501	30,501	-
Lease liabilities	2,341	50	2,290
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>34,481</b>	<b>32,165</b>	<b>2,316</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>87,711</b>	<b>90,969</b>	<b>(3,258)</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>2,004,365</b>	<b>1,944,894</b>	<b>59,471</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
Accumulated surplus	673,330	651,149	22,181
Asset revaluation reserves	1,244,752	1,244,894	(141)
Other reserves	26,670	25,575	1,095
Surplus for the year	59,612	23,276	36,336
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>2,004,365</b>	<b>1,944,894</b>	<b>59,471</b>

## Statement of Cashflows

Statement of Cash Flows	YTD	Annual Budget	Annual	Annual
	Actuals		Forecast	Variance
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows	Inflows
	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)	(Outflows)
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>				
Rates and charges	94,944	132,797	130,579	(2,218)
Statutory fees and fines	26,653	32,033	36,424	4,391
User fees	21,720	35,136	33,226	(1,909)
Grants - operating	11,295	18,739	17,914	(826)
Grants - capital	2,132	7,263	2,349	(4,914)
Contributions - monetary	4,630	6,351	5,200	(1,151)
Interest received	3,352	1,800	2,408	608
Trust funds and deposits taken/(repaid)	2,775	-	3,648	3,648
Other receipts	2,151	1,196	-	(1,196)
Net GST refund/(payment)	1,179	-	-	-
Payments to Employees	(75,971)	(101,505)	(102,244)	(739)
Payments to Suppliers	(57,956)	(90,117)	(90,067)	50
<b>Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities</b>	<b>36,903</b>	<b>43,692</b>	<b>39,436</b>	<b>(4,256)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>				
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(20,287)	(34,008)	(28,555)	5,454
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	609	350	400	50
Payments for investments	(5,000)	-	-	-
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(24,679)</b>	<b>(33,658)</b>	<b>(28,155)</b>	<b>5,503</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>				
Finance costs	(704)	(894)	(894)	(0)
Proceeds from Borrowings	-	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings	(3,286)	(4,399)	(4,399)	-
Interest paid - lease liability	(151)	(8)	(136)	(129)
Repayment of lease liabilities	2,325	(249)	(766)	(517)
<b>Net cash used in financing activities</b>	<b>(1,816)</b>	<b>(5,549)</b>	<b>(6,195)</b>	<b>(645)</b>
<b>Net increase in cash held</b>	<b>10,409</b>	<b>4,485</b>	<b>5,087</b>	<b>602</b>
Cash at beginning of period	31,124	82,566	81,123	(1,443)
<b>Cash at end of period</b>	<b>41,532</b>	<b>87,051</b>	<b>86,209</b>	<b>(841)</b>

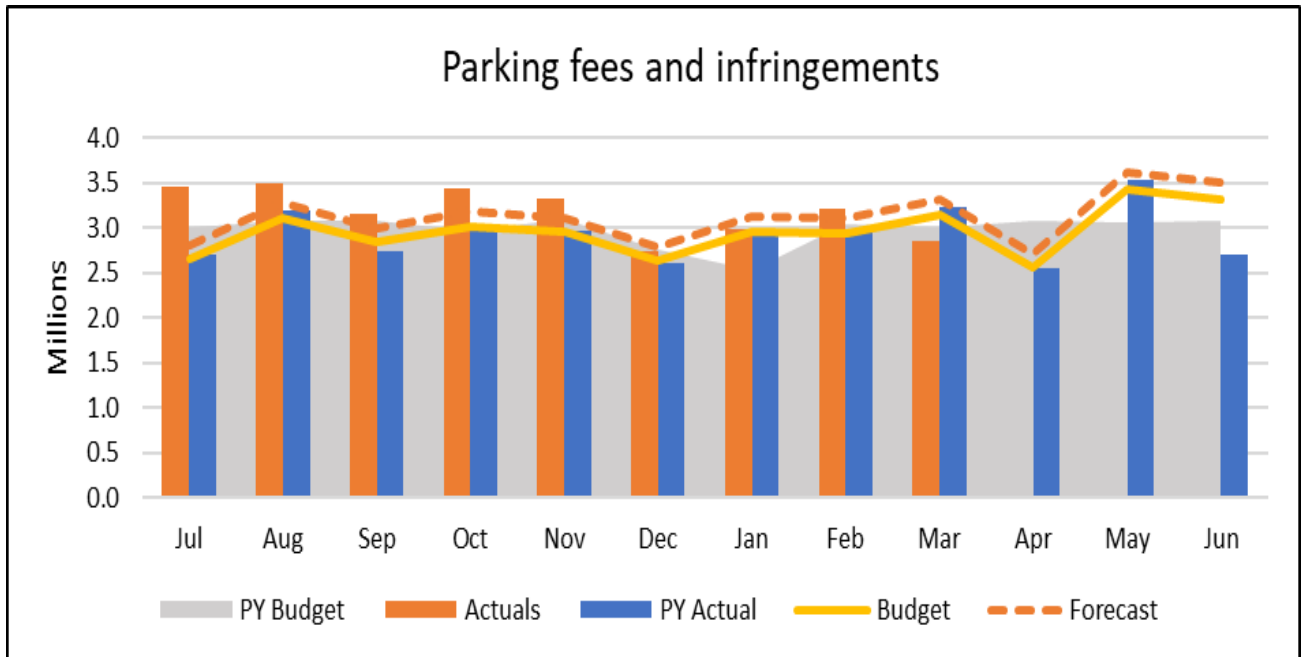
## Statement of Capital Works

Statement of Capital Works	YTD Budget	YTD Actuals	YTD Variance	Adopted Budget	Current Final Projection	Annual Variance
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Property</b>						
Buildings	4,143	2,409	1,734	8,347	4,633	3,714
<b>Total property</b>	<b>4,143</b>	<b>2,409</b>	<b>1,734</b>	<b>8,347</b>	<b>4,633</b>	<b>3,714</b>
<b>Plant and equipment</b>						
Plant, machinery and equipment	616	30	586	912	412	500
Fixtures, Fittings and Furniture	134	58	76	211	191	20
Computers and telecommunication	600	79	521	723	323	400
Library books	561	539	22	630	600	30
<b>Total plant and equipment</b>	<b>1,911</b>	<b>706</b>	<b>1,204</b>	<b>2,476</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>950</b>
<b>Infrastructure</b>						
Roads	4,570	5,057	(488)	7,102	6,820	282
Bridges	-	-	-	-	-	-
Footpaths and cycleways	1,385	1,267	118	1,538	1,499	39
Drainage	1,588	1,624	(36)	2,510	2,495	15
Waste management	1,615	-	1,615	1,880	1,702	178
Parks, open space and streetscap	6,593	4,759	1,833	7,646	8,045	(399)
Other infrastructure	1,845	1,367	478	2,509	3,165	(656)
<b>Total infrastructure</b>	<b>17,596</b>	<b>14,075</b>	<b>3,521</b>	<b>23,185</b>	<b>23,726</b>	<b>(541)</b>
<b>Total capital works expenditure</b>	<b>23,650</b>	<b>17,191</b>	<b>6,460</b>	<b>34,008</b>	<b>29,885</b>	<b>4,123</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>						
New asset expenditure	7,861	4,088	3,773	12,424	9,111	3,313
Asset renewal expenditure	14,686	12,577	2,110	20,043	19,425	618
Asset expansion expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asset upgrade expenditure	1,103	526	577	1,541	1,349	192
<b>Total capital works expenditure</b>	<b>23,650</b>	<b>17,191</b>	<b>6,460</b>	<b>34,008</b>	<b>29,885</b>	<b>4,123</b>

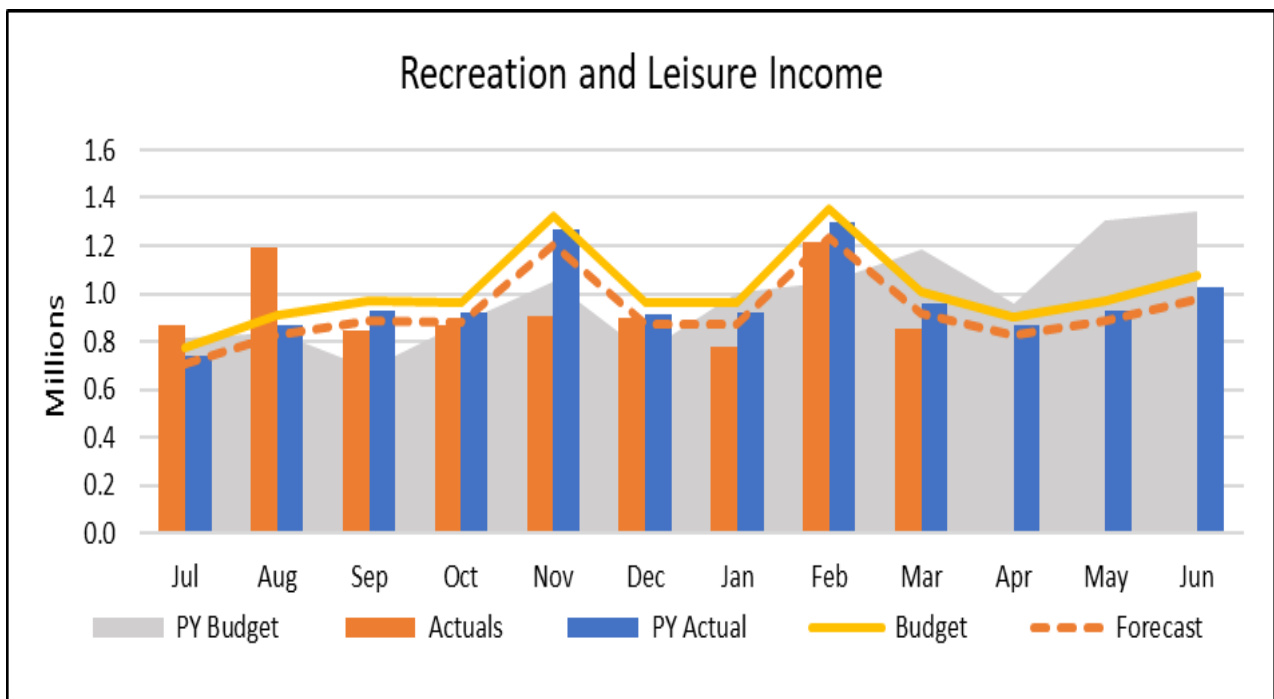
# Operating Performance

## Statutory Fees

Statutory fees have significantly increased compared to the previous years. YTD trend indicates that performance is above YTD budget and the annual forecast has been revised.



## Recreation and Leisure Fees

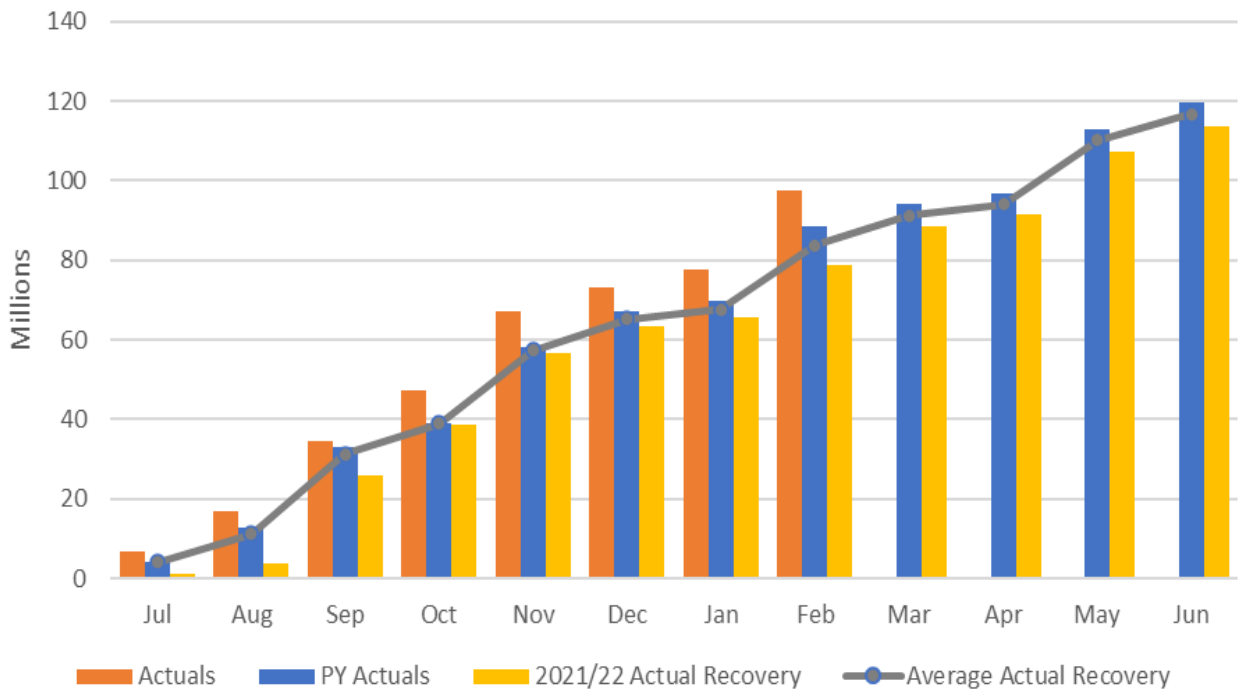


## Rates Collection

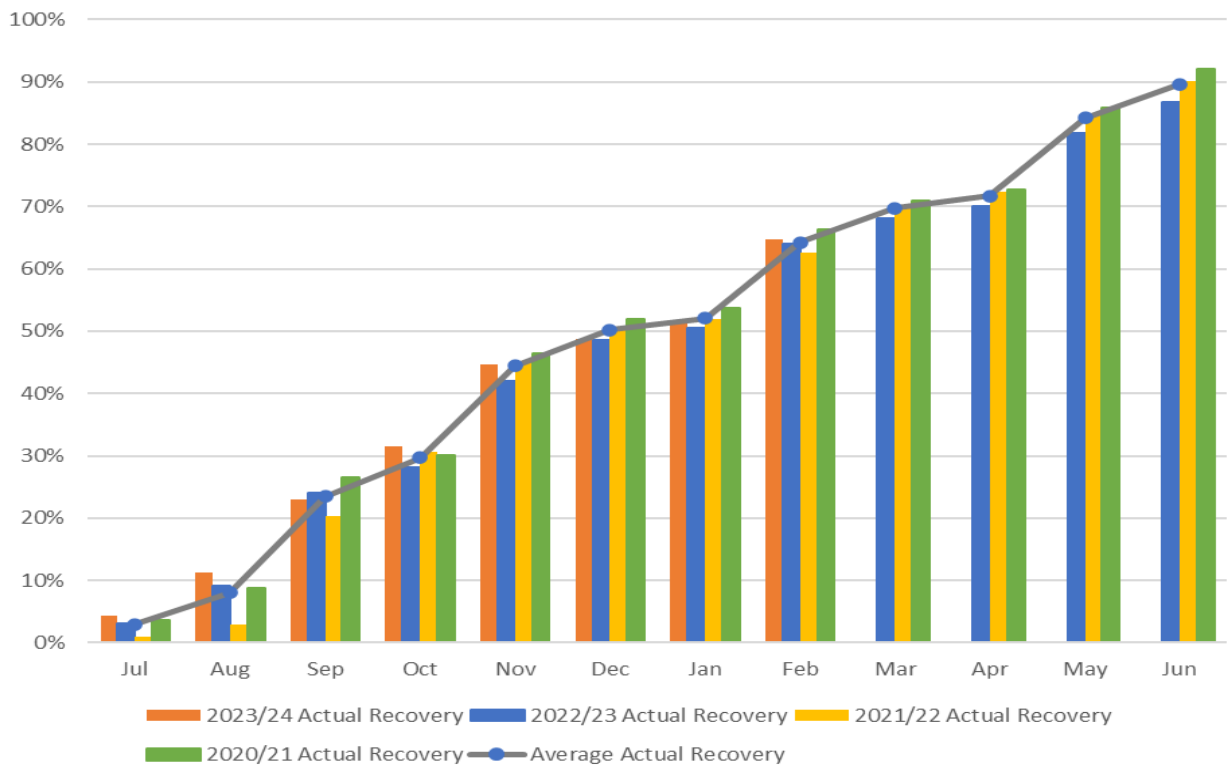
The cash collections from rates are currently aligning with the average collections achieved in the last three years. We will closely monitor this in the upcoming months to assess its impact on the forecasted cash balances.



Rates collection in Millions (excluding arrears)



Rates collection by percentage of total rates raised (excluding arrears)



# Parking Revenue

This report presents parking revenue data for the third quarter of financial year 2023/24. It is intended to provide stakeholders with an overview of parking revenue and identify any trends or patterns.

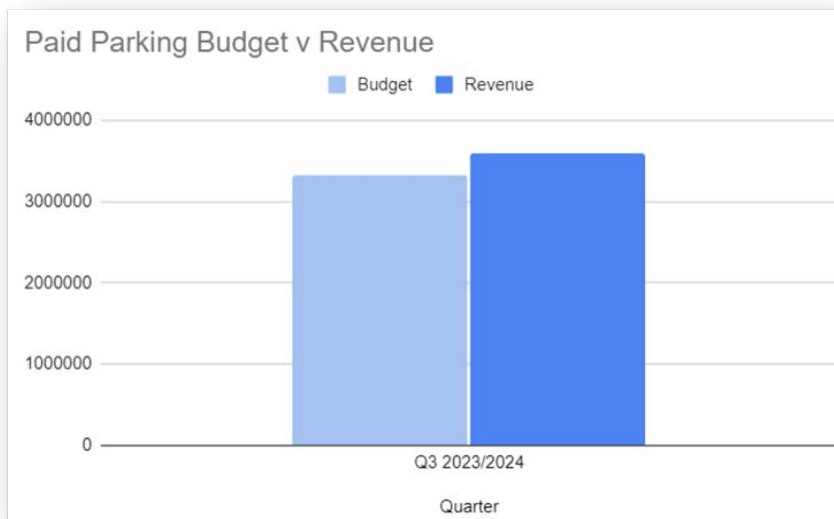
Parking revenue is broken down into two categories: paid parking and parking infringements.

Paid parking revenue includes income generated from both pay-by-phone (PayStay) and meter payments made by drivers.

## Q3 Overall Paid Parking Revenue

Paid parking revenue includes both pay-by-phone (PayStay) and meter payments and are inclusive of GST. Total revenue received for Q3 23/24 increased by 1.60% compared to Q3 22/23. The graph below shows that the forecast revenue for Q3 was exceeded by 7.90%. Comparison Q3 figures for 22/23 and 23/24 are shown below detailing total paid parking revenue for this Q3 increased by \$56,556.15 compared to Q3 2022/23:

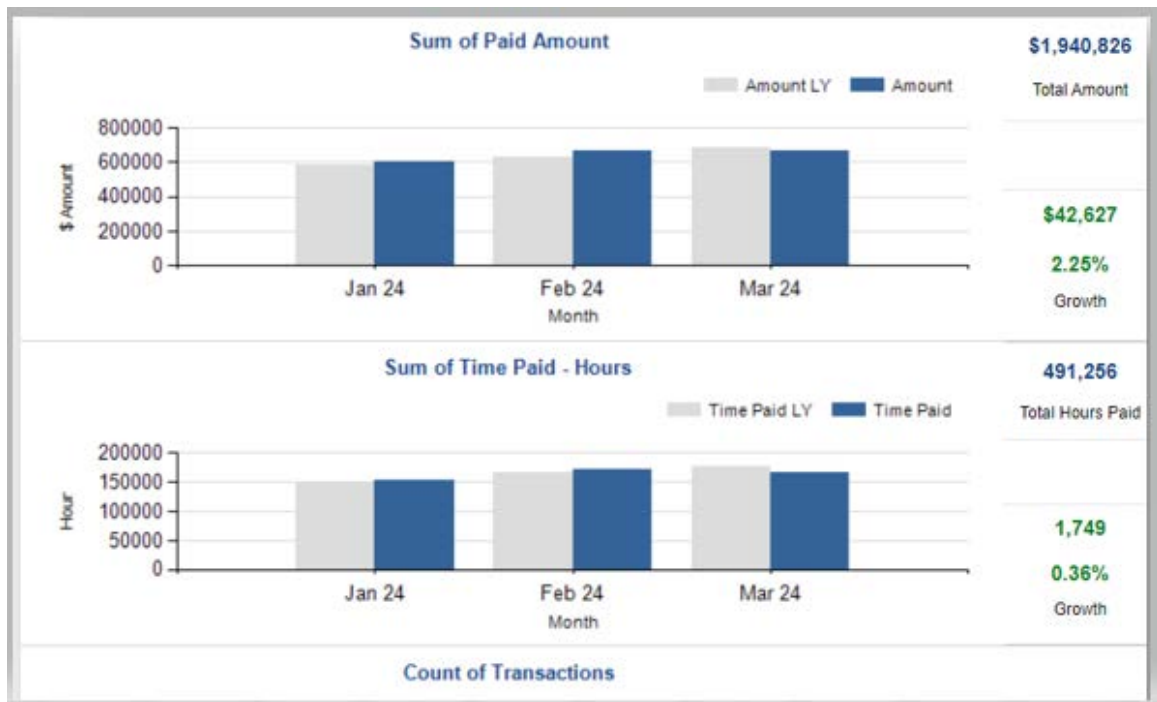
- Q3 2022/2023: \$3,539,175.54
- Q3 2023/2024: \$3,595,731.69



## Q3 Paid Parking Meters

The table below shows the parking meter data including revenue and time paid. A total of 320,073 transactions occurred during Q3:

- Q3 2022/23 Meter Revenue: \$1,898,199.00
- Q3 2023/24 Meter Revenue: \$1,940,826.00



## Q3 Paid Parking Pay by Phone

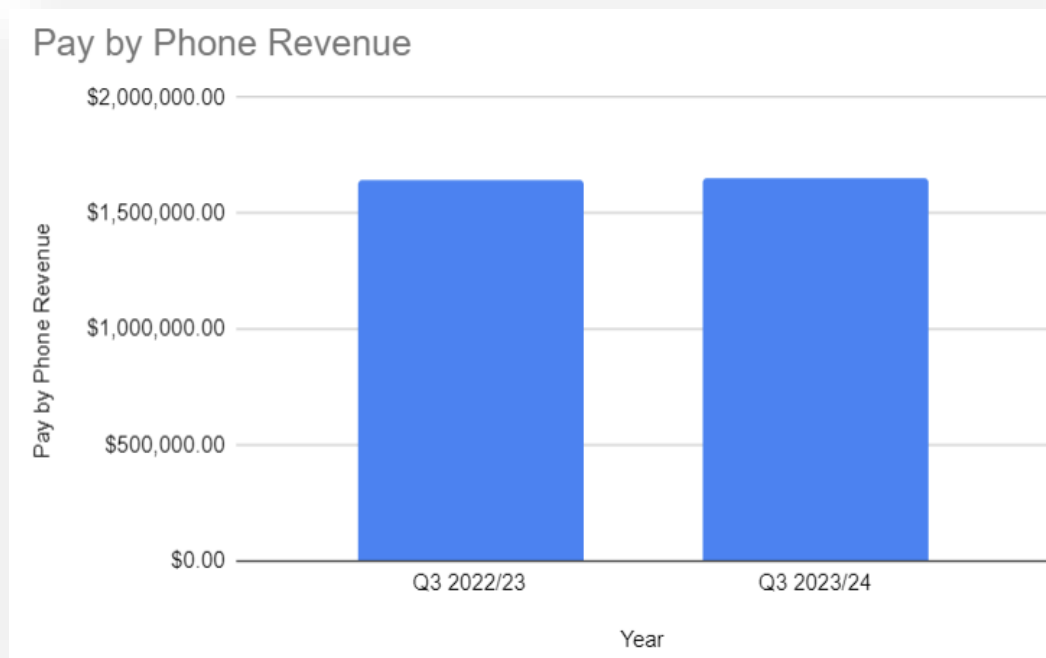
Pay by phone remains an active option for customers and the date continues to show a modest increase in the number of transactions when comparing Q3 22/23 to 23/24:

- Q3 2022/23 Pay by Phone Transactions: 310,756
- Q3 2023/24 Pay by Phone Transactions: 311,939



Revenue generated by pay by phone also shows a modest increase when comparing Q3 22/23 to 23/24:

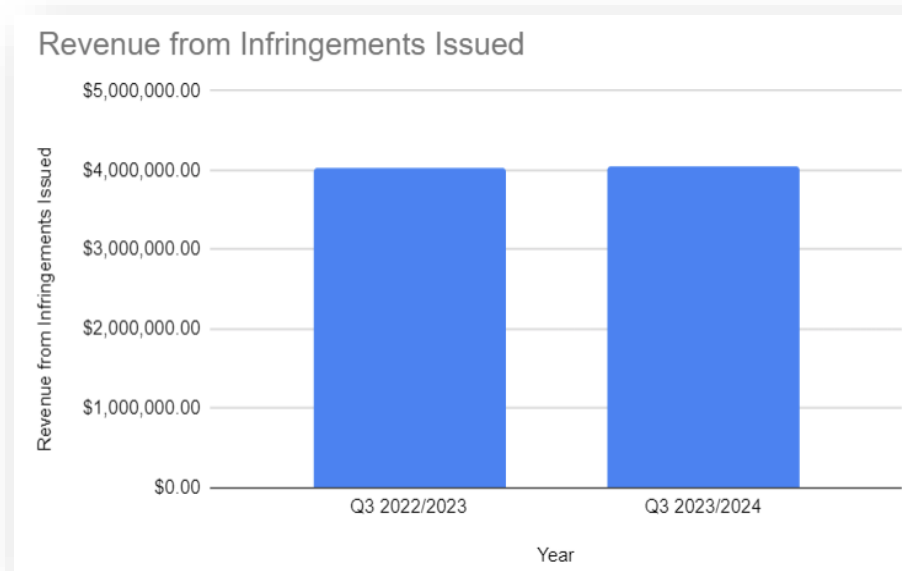
- Q3 2022/23 Pay by Phone Revenue: \$1,640,976.54
- Q3 2023/24 Pay by Phone Revenue: \$1,654,905.69



### Q3 Parking Infringement Revenue

Revenue from infringements issued during Q3 shows a modest increase when comparing Q3 22/23 to 23/24:

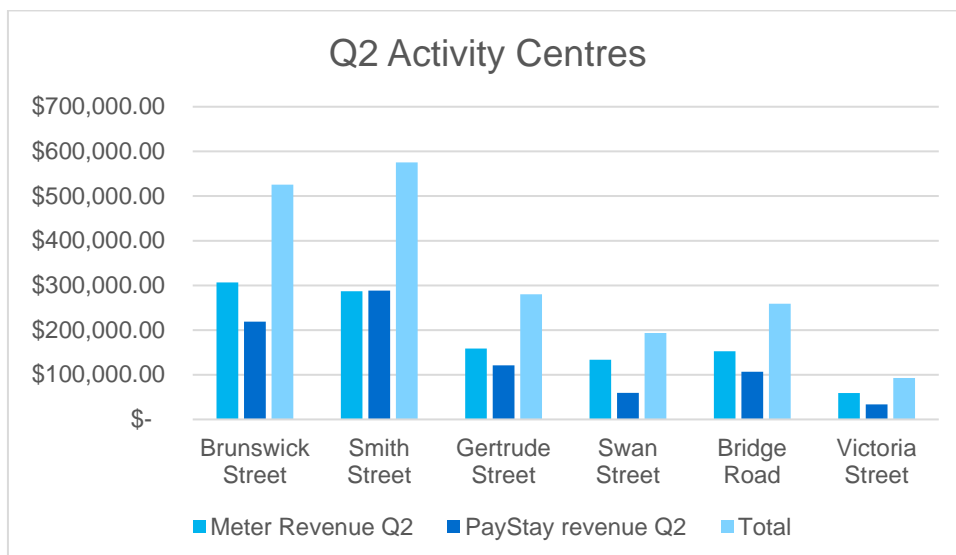
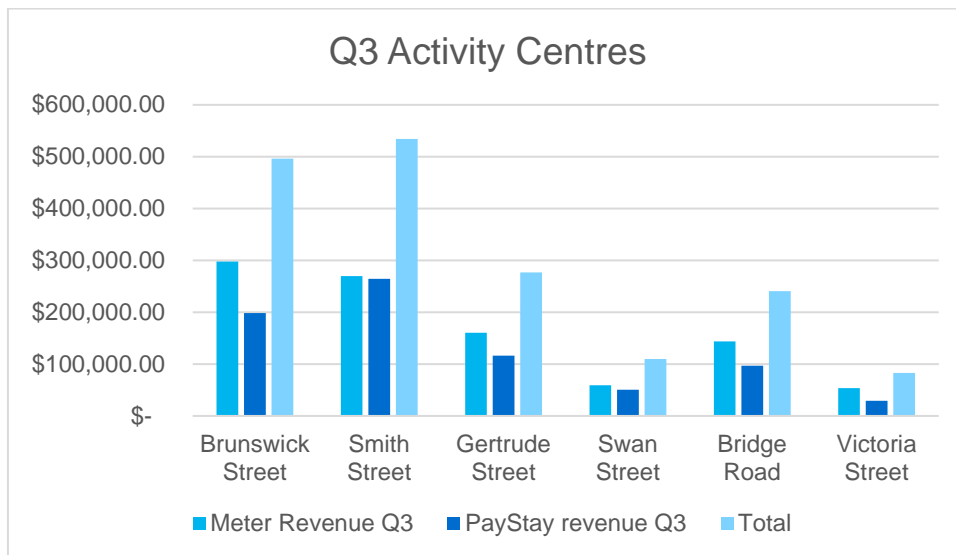
- Q3 Infringement Revenue 2022/2023: \$4,023,124.00
- Q3 Infringement Revenue 2023/2024: \$4,053,129.00



## Activity Centre Paid Parking

Each shopping strip in Yarra is unique, influenced by a variety of factors such as the types of attractions and businesses located on the street. As a result, it is not possible to directly compare paid parking revenue across the centres.

Several important variables to consider when looking at the various centres include different tariffs (hourly fee) applied across the centres, amount paid for on-street parking, and breadth of hours that paid parking is in effect.

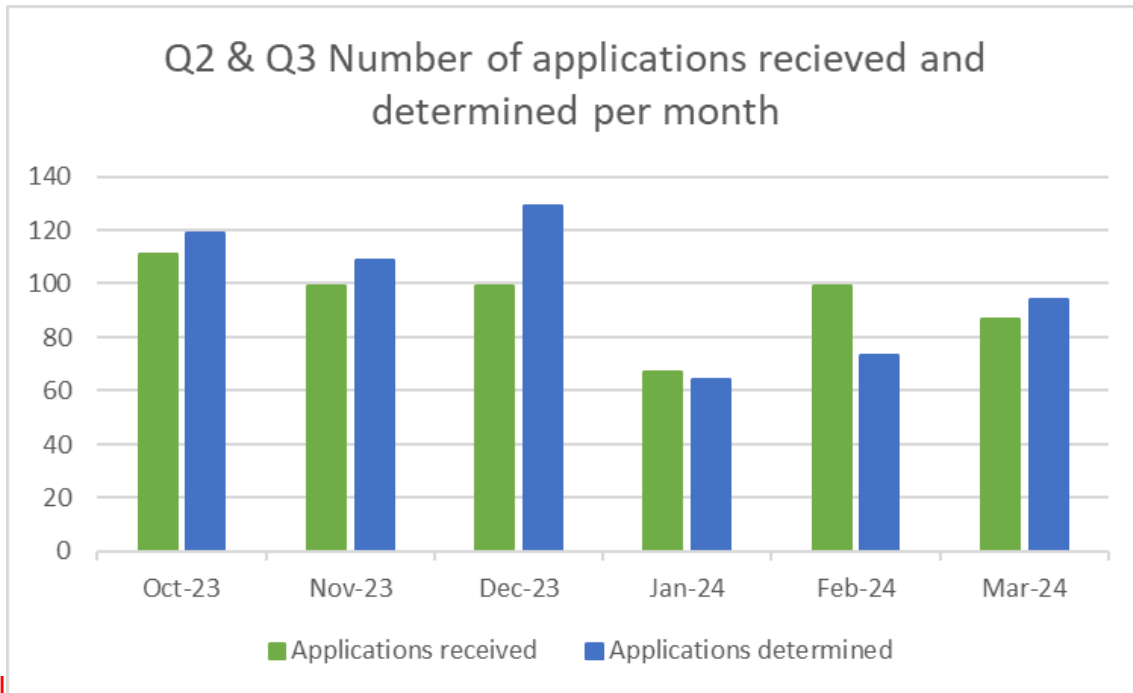


# Statutory Planning Activity

This report presents information regarding Statutory Planning Application for Q3.

## Applications Received and Determined

During Q3 Council received 253 planning applications and determined 231.

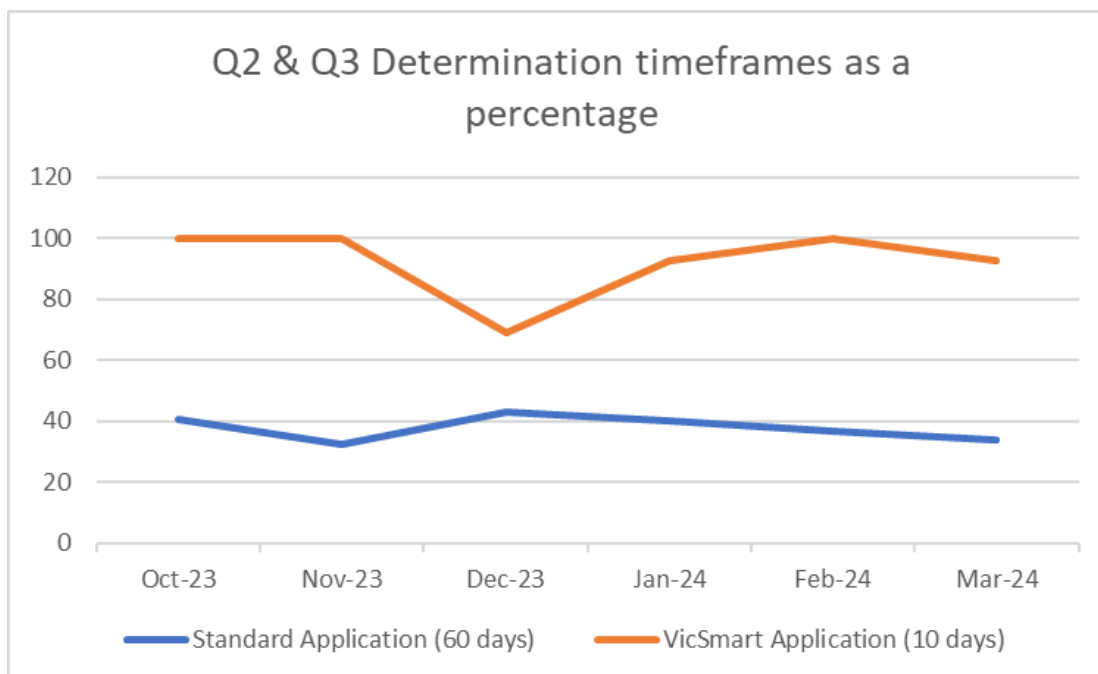


### Timeframes

Council has two types of applications:

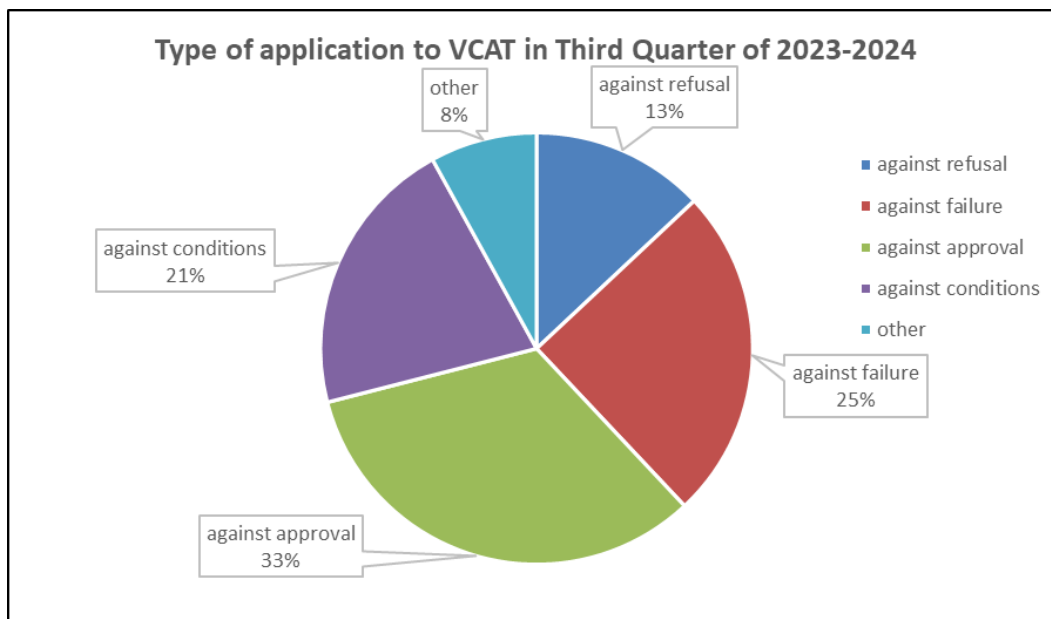
- Standard applications – 60-day statutory timeframe
- VicSmart applications – 10 business day timeframe

During Q3, Council determined 36.81% of its Standard applications within the 60-day timeframe and 95.24% of its VicSmart applications within the 10-business day timeframe.

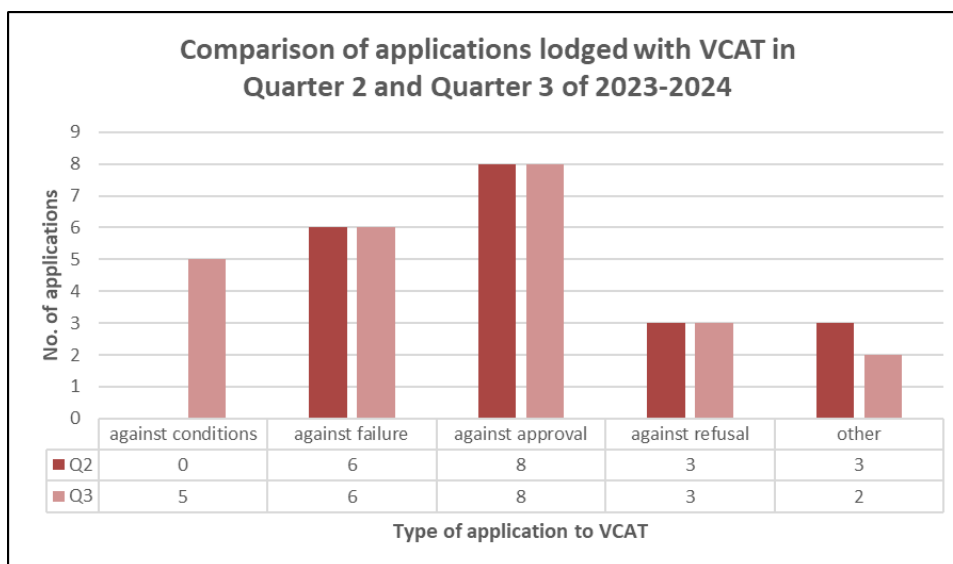


# VCAT Activity Report

There were 24 applications that were reviewed to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) in the third quarter of 2023-2024, 4 more applications than the second quarter of 2023-2024.



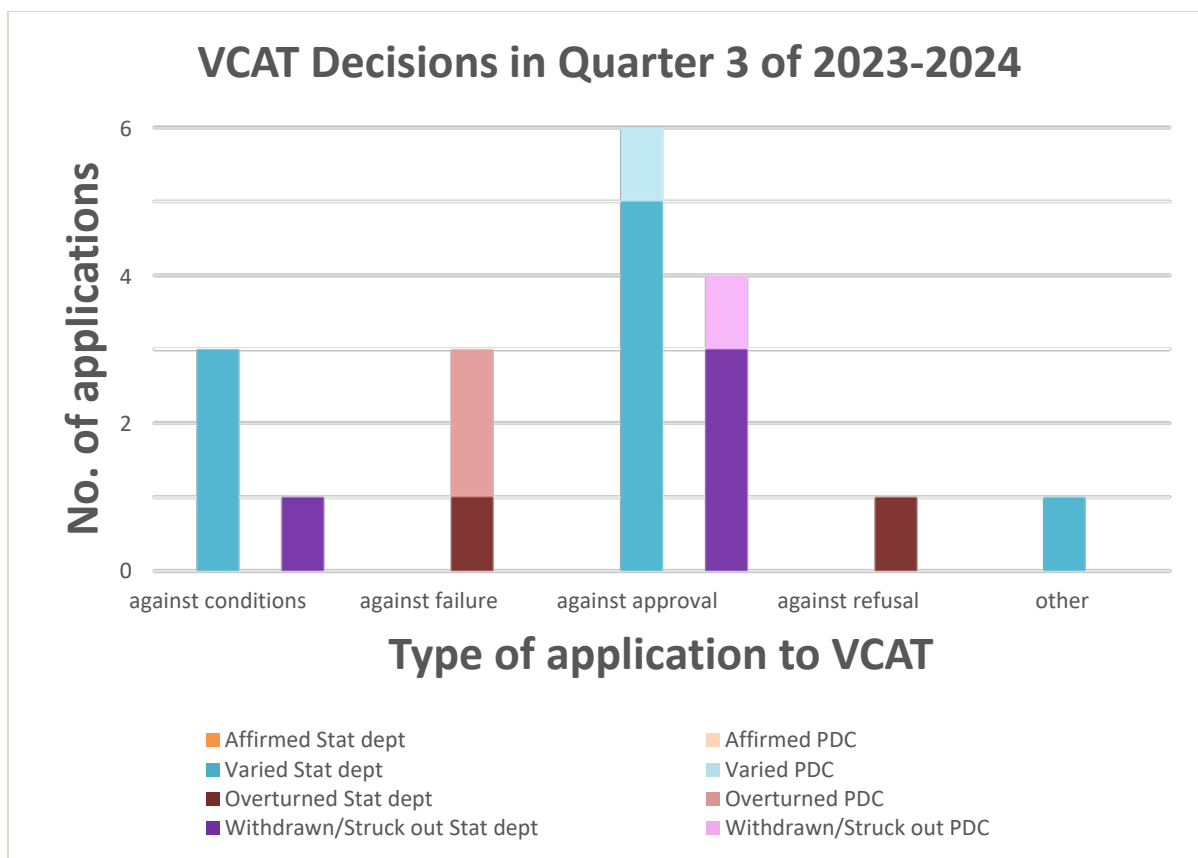
**Total number of applications reviewed to VCAT: 24**



When comparing the type of applications reviewed with VCAT in the third quarter of 2023-2024 with the previous quarter, in the third quarter of 2023-2024 there were:

- (a) 5 more applications 'against conditions';
- (b) the same number (6) of applications 'against failure';
- (c) the same number (8) of applications 'against approval';
- (d) the same number (3) of applications 'against refusal'; and
- (e) 1 less application 'against Other' (Amendments, Extensions of Time, Declarations).

The following graph shows the type of applications determined by VCAT in the third quarter of 2023-2024 and whether Council's decision was affirmed, varied or overturned. A total of 19 decisions were made by the Tribunal, including 5 applications that were withdrawn / struck out.



Of the 19 VCAT Decisions in Quarter 3 of 2023-2024 there were:

- (a) 0x Statutory Department and 0x PDC decisions affirmed;
- (b) 9x Statutory Department and 1x PDC decisions varied;
- (c) 2x Statutory Department and 2x PDC decisions overturned; and
- (d) 4x applications against Statutory Department decisions were withdrawn / struck out; and
- (e) 1x application against PDC decision was withdrawn / struck out.

The third quarter of 2023-2024 has seen the number of applications reviewed to VCAT (24) increase by 4 applications compared to the previous quarter.

The number of applications for review against Council’s failure to determine the application within the prescribed time in the third quarter equates to 25% of all applications lodged in the quarter (total 6 appeals), which is the same number of applications compared to the previous quarter.

## Planning Scheme Amendments Status

The responsible authority for Planning Schemes in Victoria is the Victorian Minister for Planning. All Planning scheme proposals and amendments must be submitted to the Minister for approval. Ministerial approval is required through all aspect and stages of the process including approval to place the proposed amendment on public exhibition, referral to advisory committees. In Yarra the Minister appointed the Yarra Activity Standing Advisory Committee to provide advice to the Minister and Council on referred planning matters and draft planning scheme provisions. Final adoption/rejection of all planning scheme amendments rests with the Minister, this process can take months and even years.

The following provides an outline of the status of Yarra’s current proposed planning scheme amendments.



The amendments include:

- Amendments being progressed via the standard amendment process;
- Amendments being considered via the Yarra Activity Centres Standing Activity Committee; and
- Requests for interim planning controls via a Ministerial amendment. These amendments are applied for while permanent planning controls are being pursued.

The amendments are at various stages of the process, including:

- Awaiting authorisation / consent from the Minister for Planning to publicly exhibit the amendment;
- Have been publicly exhibited;
- Are being considered by an independent planning panel or the standing advisory committee or
- Have been adopted by Council and are with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) awaiting a decision by the Minister for Planning.

## City-wide amendments

### **Amendments C286yara and C306yara – Public Open Space Contribution Rate**

- C286 seeks to introduce an updated permanent public open space contribution rate to the scheme
- C306 sought to introduce an interim rate to the scheme at 7.4%;
- Amendment C306 (implementing a recommendation of the C286 interim panel report) was submitted to DTP for approval in June 2022;
- Council was advised in December 2023 the Minister for Planning had rejected Amendment C306);
- Council considered a report in December 2023 on C306 and resolved to write to the Minister for Planning, Secretary and Deputy Secretary of DTP requesting reasons for the decision. (A letter providing reasons for the decision was received on 28 February 2024);
- The reconvened Panel Hearing for C286 (permanent POS contribution) commenced on 5 February 2024 and concluded on 9 February (3 hearing days);
- Council received the Final Panel Report on 4 March and publicly released it. The Panel recommended adoption of a public open space contribution rate of 8.65% (amongst other things);
- Council adopted the amendment (with changes) on 9 April 2024;
- The amendment has been forwarded to the Minister for Planning for approval.

### **C309yara – Elevating environmental standards** (amendment is with 24 other Councils and CASBE)

- C309 seeks to introduce zero carbon standards for new apartment buildings into the scheme;
- Submitted to DTP for approval in July 2022;
- The amendment is under consideration by DTP;
- The Victoria Government is also progressing the ESD Roadmap which will make further State-wide changes to the Particular Provisions.

## Local area amendments

### **Amendment C291yara – Bridge Road and Victoria Street Permanent Built Form Provisions**

- Submitted to DTP for approval in August 2022;
- The amendment is under consideration by DTP;
- On 7 March 2023, the expiry date for the interim DDOs extended to 30 June 2025 (via a Ministerial Amendment - Amendment C323yara).

### **Amendment C293yara – Collingwood South Mixed-Use Precinct Permanent Built Form Provisions**

- Submitted to DTP for approval in June 2022;

- The amendment is under consideration by DTP;
- On 7 March 2023, the expiry date for the interim DDO extended to 30 June 2025 (via a Ministerial Amendment - Amendment C323yara).

**Amendment C271yara – Fitzroy-Collingwood Permanent Planning Provisions**

- Submitted to DTP to seek consent to exhibit in December 2022;
- The request for consent to exhibit permanent DDOs is under consideration by DTP officers;
- On 7 March 2023, the expiry date for the interim DDOs extended to 30 June 2025 (via a Ministerial Amendment - Amendment C323yara).

**Amendment C317yara – Cremorne Precinct Interim Built Form Provisions**

- Considered by Council in September 2023;
- A request for a Ministerial amendment (i.e. an amendment without exhibition) was submitted to DTP for approval in October 2023;
- The request is under consideration by DTP officers.

**Draft Amendment C318yara – Cremorne Precinct Permanent Planning Provisions**

- Considered by Council in September 2023;
- Submitted to DTP to seek consent to exhibit in October 2023;
- The request is under consideration by DTP officers.

**Amendment C273yara – Heidelberg Road Permanent Planning Provisions**

- Exhibited in July-August 2023;
- 118 submissions were received;
- Council considered submissions, proposed responses to submissions and a request to refer the amendment and submissions to the Standing Advisory Committee at its meeting on 12 December 2023;
- Request to refer the amendment to SAC was lodged in December and is being considered by DTP;
- Due to delays with referral, the hearing scheduled for April 2024 (as part of the amendment process, Council must pre-set hearing dates) will be rescheduled. Date to be confirmed;
- On 7 March 2023, the expiry date for the interim DDO extended to 30 June 2025 (via a Ministerial Amendment - Amendment C323yara).

# Capital Works Update



Council's 2023/24 Capital Works Program features an investment of \$34.01 million, consisting of a new budget allocation of \$26.76m and carry over projects with a budget of \$7.25m from the previous financial year.

A map of capital works infrastructure projects for 2023/24 is available on Council's website at: <https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/about-us/council-information/current-works>

## All projects

Council continues to plan and deliver projects that improve community safety and usability of our assets, to ensure longevity and reliability of our assets, to increase usability and efficiency, and address our community's current and future needs.

The expenditure to date for the 2023/24 Capital Works Program is \$17.2 million. In this quarter, Council has progressed well in the delivery of a mix of infrastructure works (roads and drainage) and structural works (ovals and pavilions, and community facilities).

In this quarter, Yarra City Council has completed the following:

- 43 road infrastructure projects including: road safety works on Rathdowne St (Carlton); pavement, footpath and kerb renewal works at:
  - o Arnold St, Princes Hill
  - o Wangaratta St, Richmond
  - o Wilson St, Princes Hill
  - o Charlotte St, and Derby St, Collingwood
  - o Curtain St, Carlton North
- Pavement renewal works on:
  - o Fenwick St, Carlton North
  - o Richardson St Princes Hill
  - o Little Alfred St, Fitzroy
  - o Hotham St and Budd St, Collingwood
  - o Caroline St, Clifton Hill
  - o Corns Pl, Richmond
  - o Parkville St, Burnley;
- IDAHOBIT flag renewal on Smith and Peel Street, Collingwood and Smith and Gertrude Street, Collingwood
- Renewal of cricket pitch and cover at Alan Bain Reserve

- Provided additional temporary change rooms for the clubhouse at Yambla Reserve
- Painted and refreshed the flooring of the Richmond Town Hall foyer main customer service point

Budget adjustments as at the end of March have resulted in a net budget decrease of \$3.9m with the revised full year expenditure forecast being \$29.9m.

The following are the major adjustments to the program in this quarter:

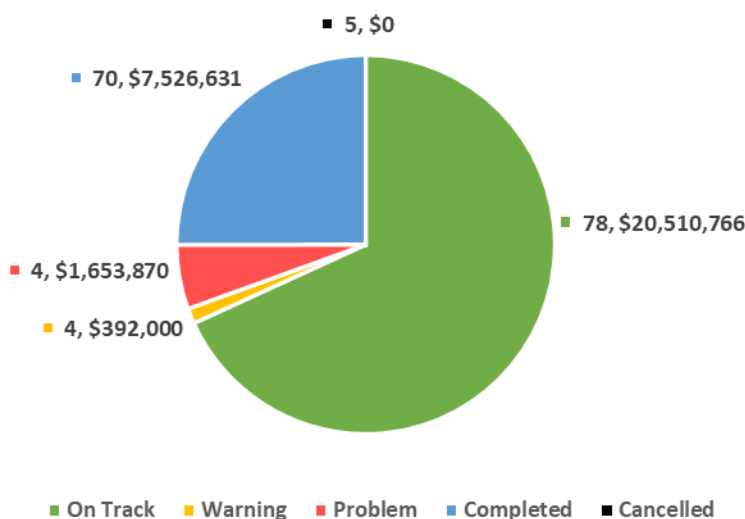
- The inclusion of tree planting and bicycle safety initiatives to the capital works program as per Council resolution funded by savings identified in the program.
- Brunswick Street Oval Precinct Redevelopment – a reduction in budget by \$3.1m due to a change in scope this financial year. The prices tendered significantly exceeded the budget available for the project, meaning a construction contract was unable to be awarded. The remaining budget in this financial will be 23/24 for concept redesign.
- Atherton Gardens Kindergarten - a reduction in budget by \$635k to reflect the total expenditure that will be realised in 2023/24. The remainder of the budget to be budgeted for in 2024/25.

The following provides a description of the summary status indicators used for the capital works program:

Status	Description
Completed	Project has been successfully completed
On-Track	The project is on track for successful completion by the end of the budget year
Warning	There is a moderate level of risk that the project will not be successfully completed by the end of the budget year
Problem	There is a high level of risk that the project will not be successfully completed by the end of the budget year
Cancelled	Cancelled or deferred projects

The summary status of capital works projects is shown in the chart below.

**Proportion of current budget in each project status indicator**



The summary status of capital works projects is shown in the chart above, with 70 projects completed, 78 projects on-track and 5 projects cancelled or deferred. Any expenditure at risk of being utilised this financial year, may be proposed for a future year (2024/25 or beyond) as may be appropriate for the circumstances of each individual project. The capital works planning process for the 2024/25 capital works program is being conducted with awareness of the projects at risk and the likelihood of some planned activities for 2023/24 extending into future budget years.

## Strategy and Plan highlights

### Financial Sustainability

As part of our commitment to strengthen Council's financial health, Council adopted its Financial Sustainability Strategy (FSS) in December 2023. The Strategy will guide Council on how to best manage our resources for the long-term in the best interests of our community.

The Financial Sustainability Strategy identifies seven levers for change: The strategic levers include plans to build reserve funds, responsible borrowing, optimisation of revenue, a focus on well-planned assets, ongoing reviews of the service landscape, digital transformation, robust financial management and a strengthening of advocacy and strategic partnerships.

Strategic Lever 4 of the FSS - Review the Service Landscape commits Council to establishing a (new) robust service planning and review framework to ensure all services are relevant, financially sustainable and can meet future community needs.

To inform this work, a deliberative engagement process was conducted to develop a draft set of community-supported service planning and review principles, which was presented to the Council on 4 April 2024. Council adopted the service planning and review principles and the potential service review prioritisation triggers as outlined below:

When planning and reviewing services, Council will:

1. Actively include a range of First Nations' voices and values in all decision making and placemaking to ensure ongoing community resilience.
2. Be proactive in supporting communities and service providers to dramatically reduce waste and greenhouse emissions and prioritise regenerative systems to improve wellbeing and biodiversity and sustainable outcomes.
3. Ensure Yarra's artistic and cultural identity is valued and supported given their contribution to community resilience.
4. Select service providers that are in line with Council's sustainability policies and goals.
5. Be adaptable and proactive by identifying, planning for, and implementing solutions that respond to dynamic factors and the current and future community needs.
6. Deliver qualitative and quantitative evidence-based outcomes that include community input, which will be shared and communicated in an accessible way with the community.
7. Use a comparative benefit analysis to measure value for money and the positive impact of service reform for the community.
8. Actively engage the community, prioritising those most directly impacted and in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy, where appropriate.
9. Prioritise financial sustainability and appropriate resource allocation to enable us to respond to changing community needs, now and into the future.
10. Prioritise service delivery models where it can maintain control of quality and influence the community benefits and outcomes.
11. Prioritise social benefits, especially those that address the needs of vulnerable and diverse people, within financial means.

12. Seek creative and innovative ways to continually improve and address challenges, including collaborating and partnering with other councils, other levels of government, not-for-profits, businesses, and volunteers.
13. Ensure social impact and equity are accounted for when pricing a user-pays, market-comparable service.
14. When making decisions, be considerate and evaluate the impact a change to one service will have on all other services.
15. When considering a change to service that is also provided by an external market, evaluate the external market against Council's Social Justice Charter principles, of Access, Equity, Rights and Participation.
16. Assess and consider the accessibility of services within a user's ability and means, both geographically and digitally, when proposing changes to service locations.

The following prioritised triggers could initiate a Service Review in order of priority:

Non-negotiable triggers:

1. Changes to the legislative requirements
2. Changes to funding arrangements or cost of delivering service.

Community prioritised triggers:

1. Service has a low social benefit (e.g. not responding to community need).
2. Service has poor community satisfaction.
3. Service has a negative impact(s) on the environment.
4. Service is not well utilised by the community (e.g. low demand).
5. Service is unable to maintain the quality expected by the community.
6. A gap or new community need has emerged (e.g. we need to consider reallocation of resources to meet an identified need).
7. Service is not directly delivering on the Council Plan / Community Vision.
8. A comparable service of same quality and price has become available by external provider(s) (external market maturity and availability).

## Active and Healthy Ageing Action Plan



*A member of the Bent Twig Alliance (Yarra's LGBTI Elders and Allies social group) smiles in front of a mural*

The Active and Healthy Ageing Action Plan aims to ensure our residents aged 50+ remain engaged, active, and independent in the community, and able to connect and participate in everyday life.

Achievements this financial year include:

- The Seniors and Sprouts pilot program held in Term 4 2023, connected 4-year-old kindergarten children from Richmond Kindergarten with older volunteers from the Yarra community. The program genesis was derived during Global Intergenerational Week in April of 2023. The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and contemporary research demonstrates that the establishment and maintenance of strong intergenerational links enriches the lives of the whole community. Due the success of the program in building intergenerational connections, it will be held again later this year.
- The October Senior's Festival was celebrated in Yarra, with Neighbourhood Houses, U3A, Council and other local groups hosting 29 free or low costs activities over this period. Highlights of Council's activities included: Willowview's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration; the launch of "Our Clubs, Our Stories" telling the stories in film of 11 culturally diverse seniors clubs; and supporting the U3A's "Ageing Well in a Changing World" forum and the Bent Twig Alliance's luncheon.
- Aged and Disability Services delivered over 800 packs to our aged services clients throughout December 2023. This focused on wellbeing and staying cool in summer and included an insulated water bottle to encourage people to keep hydrated during summer and reduce use of plastic. These were delivered to the client's front door, providing an opportunity for residents to give feedback on a range of topics and the insights gained were valuable in planning our services and support.
- Council is participating in a national project called "Old is Beautiful", which aims to combat ageism and build respect for older people. A number of older people from Yarra are participating in a workshop to learn how to protect themselves against ageism, explore what beautiful means to them, and have their photo portrait taken.

## Nature Strategy



*A Narrap Ranger Trainee planting yam daisies in the Indigenous food garden at Collingwood Childrens Farm*

In preparation for the citizen science Aussie Bird Count, a group of 11 community members participated in 'Birds in Backyards' identification skills bird walk with an officer along the Merri Creek Trail.

Yarra's team of Gardens for Wildlife volunteers provided the owners of 20 local gardens with a garden specific report that assists residents to create habitat gardens for local wildlife, connect people with nature and each other and increase the abundance and appreciation of biodiversity. A further 5 Garden Guide volunteers have joined the Gardens for Wildlife Program, bringing the total to 15 active Garden Guides.

50,305 local indigenous ground, mid-story and small tree tube stock consisting of over 30 species have been ordered for rewilding projects at Burnley Golf Course, Alphington Wetland, Ramsdens, Quarries Hill, Rushall Recreation Reserve and Quarries soak to be delivered in Autumn 2024.

Year 3 of the Narrap Female Ranger Trainee Initiative, a partnership between Council, Collingwood Children's Farm and Wurrundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, has provided 6 Narrap trainee rangers, including 5 female trainees', the opportunity to be trained on Country at Collingwood Children's Farm delivering 64 hours of healing country work focusing on First Nations garden maintenance and harvesting, revegetation preparation and planting, and manual weed control in Birrarung riparian restoration areas.



# Service highlights

## Collingwood College Kindergarten Update



*Collingwood College Kindergarten*

The State Government has committed to providing free kindergarten to all children in Victoria. In February 2024, our new kindergarten at Collingwood College was open for business with our first group of 19 children attending their first day.

This new kindergarten facility in Collingwood will help to meet the needs of the local community and help make their access to kindergarten easier.

Collingwood Kindergarten is a prefabricated modular building that can accommodate up to 66 children, located on the grounds of Collingwood College, on the northern side of Vere Street.

The kindergarten is funded by the Victorian Department of Education and is a joint project between Yarra City Council, the Victorian School Building Authority, and Collingwood College.

## Yarra Libraries

We offer five vibrant hubs across the City of Yarra, servicing over 580,000 visitors each year. They are welcoming, accessible and flexible third spaces for the community to use in addition to their home or workplace. Our services reflect the diverse social, learning and recreational needs of our community.

Our growing library membership base of 52,106 supports the need to continue to invest in services, programs, technology, collections, and the talent in our team. We have a wealth of online resources available 24/7 including via digital channels, producing and sharing content that supplement our vast physical collections of books, audiovisual, magazines and local history photos and archival objects.

With a focus on community outreach and lifelong learning, we have already delivered 1,592 programs and events that have attracted over 38,834 participants this financial year.

In FY23, our community spent 176821 hours using Wi-Fi and over 15,634 hours using public access computers. By keeping our technology and staff skills current, we will continue to help bridge the digital divide and sustain our valued human connections.

We aspire to deliver vibrant discovery for our community through our collections, programming, partners and places, and connect with our community, leveraging all available digital and physical channels.

In addition, Yarra Open Libraries also offers our community (aged 16 years and older) access to un-serviced hours at Carlton Library, Richmond Library and Bargoonga Nganjin, North Fitzroy Library with Collingwood Library to be launched in April. The City of Yarra was the first metro library to launch an after-hours service, and many other councils are now doing the same. With a library membership card and an induction to the service, our members can gain access to extended hours from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on most days of the week, including public holidays. Since the service launched in December 2021, we have had 22,942 visits and 1744 registered members.

Our hard work is reflected in the 2023 annual customer service satisfaction survey, showing that 82% of Yarra residents surveyed are satisfied with our services. In the 2024 library user survey, 89% of members said the library was an important part of where they lived, 88% of members said they felt safe and welcome at the library and 74% of members said the library helped them to enjoy learning.

Programs and services include:

- Borrowing collections (digital and physical), archive and local history
- Home Library Service
- Free PCs and Wi-Fi
- Printing, photocopying, scanning and media digitisation facilities
- Book Groups
- Literacy programs including author talks and writing workshops
- Digital literacy support (Digital Help and Form Filing)
- STEAM Labs - afterschool programming and access to creative technology such as 3D printers
- Early literacy programming
- Open Library - extended access to the library during unstaffed hours
- Library of Things – a circular economy test lab
- Podcast recording studio at Richmond.

## Yarra Arts

Yarra is a city that offers a range of opportunities for artists, organisations and groups wanting to produce and share their work. A significant and nationally recognised small to medium live music scene draws musicians and audiences to the municipality. It is also home to galleries and visual arts studios, theatre, dance, performance, literature, public art, design, digital arts and film and craft. The spaces in which art making, presenting and participation occur, move beyond traditional spaces, extending the opportunities for engagement across the city.

Yarra's arts and culture initiatives provide everyday experiences enjoyed by our whole community. Investment through collaborating, supporting and enabling creative instigators and participants of all levels aims to maintain and grow opportunities for arts in Yarra. Participating in community life is the key to a healthy, socially connected and culturally rich Yarra. Council aims to enable as well as celebrate Yarra's diversity and support inclusivity. We are committed to recognising the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture to life in Yarra and supporting increased opportunities and visibility for this community.

We design our programs in response to the needs and aspirations of our community including residents, artists, arts organisations and businesses.

Programs and services include:

- Collections Management: care of and access to Council's indoor and outdoor Art and Heritage Collection.
- Public Art planning, programming, policy and delivery
- Arts Grants program
- Room to Create program: affordable spaces, advocacy and creative infrastructure funding
- Exhibition program
- Community programming: workshops, talks and forums.

## Festivals and Events

Yarra supports a wide variety of cultural events and festivals that are a drawcard for locals and tourists, and Council supports more than 20 cultural festivals and events every year.

Our festivals and events calendar includes supporting many opportunities for community celebration and gatherings including Victoria Street Lunar Festival, Johnston Street Fiesta and Victoria's Pride that attract over 140,000 people per year to Yarra. There is support for many small to medium events including Gertrude Street Projection Festival, Harvest Festival, Music from the Wetlands and family fun days.

Council takes a leadership role and produces key initiatives such as the Leaps and Bounds Festival, Fairfield in Feb Series and the Festive Yarra Program. The 2023 Festive Yarra Program included Carols in the Park at Curtain Square in North Carlton with over 1000 attendees and over 60 performers including community choirs and professional musicians; a Projection Artwork by Multimedia Events for Richmond Town Hall and a decorative installation by Vin Tage at Fitzroy Town Hall.

The Event Permit team has issued permits for 128 small to major events to-date this financial year, spanning music events, school fetes, circus shows, AFLW matches, weddings and multiple corporate and private events across parks and open spaces in Yarra.

Programs and services include:

- Major Annual Cultural Events
- Event Permits and Support
- Grants Program, delivery and promotion
- Civic Events Program
- Council Produced Events and Festivals.

Council's Venues and Events unit offers over 50 indoor and outdoor spaces available for hire, catering to diverse needs and preferences within our vibrant and multicultural community. In alignment with our dedication to inclusivity, we extend concession rates and discounted use options to eligible not-for-profit groups, ensuring equitable access to our facilities.

The high-profile Candlelight Series of events continues with rave reviews and over 20 sold out events across both Collingwood and Fitzroy Town Halls.

Programs and services include:

- Room and venue bookings
- Event planning and support
- Public park bookings.

## Bushland regeneration national forum



*Australian Association of Bush Regenerators National Forum Crowd, Fitzroy Town Hall*

On 22nd March 2024, Yarra City Council hosted more than 300 bushland managers and regenerators from across Australia at Fitzroy Town Hall to talk about bushland restoration and protecting local biodiversity.

The Australian Association of Bush Regenerators National Forum connected all levels of bushland workers, from managers and on-ground regenerators to consultants and environmental Non-Government Organisations to learn, share and scale up restoration of our natural environment.

The forum had a strong emphasis on First Nations knowledge and reconnection to Country with presentations that focussed on cultural fire management practices and cultural protocols. Yarra's Biodiversity Officer was a part of the forum organising committee and provided presentation on 'applying the 12 elements from the National Restoration Standards to contract specifications'.

## Environmental improvements

Council is on target to achieve the goal of planting between 400-800 trees annually as set out in Council's Urban Forest Strategy. Multiple tree planting programs are underway including rewilding programs, 250 trees to be planted at the Burnley Golf Course & a further 386 new trees to be planted across Council parks and reserves.

A new fleet operating policy has been implemented which will reduce the number of passenger cars in Council's fleet and this will help to drive down emissions from Council's operational vehicles.

From July 2024, Food and garden organic (FOGO) will be collected from a new lime-green lidded bin. Waste and recycling systems are changing so more can be made from the resources in our kerbside bins.

Yarra's new FOGO collection service will provide a new avenue to reduce waste and recycle more materials. Up to 45,000 households and businesses will receive a food & garden organics bin later in 2023/24 and this will reduce volumes of waste going to landfill.

## Activity centre utilisation



*Diners on Gertrude Street, Fitzroy*

## Precinct vacancy audits

At the beginning of each calendar year, Yarra City Council's Economic Development team conducts audits of our 12 retail and service precincts.

We visit approximately 2,500 ground floor businesses to capture data to upload to our Geographic Information System (GIS).

We record vacancies, business names, business types, opening hours and accessibility of premises. We track these changes over the years to monitor trends and assist with strategic planning.

The below graphs show the number of vacant properties in our 12 retail and service precincts over the last four years.

In 2024, 10 of our precincts have seen a reduction in vacancies on the previous year, with a significant reduction on Bridge Road (16 properties) and Nicholson Village (11 properties), while we only saw a slight increase on Gertrude Street (4 properties) and Queens Parade (2 properties) compared to 2023 figures.

This is an extremely positive shift, as overall vacancy across our 12 major precincts now sits at just 13.9% or 350 properties.

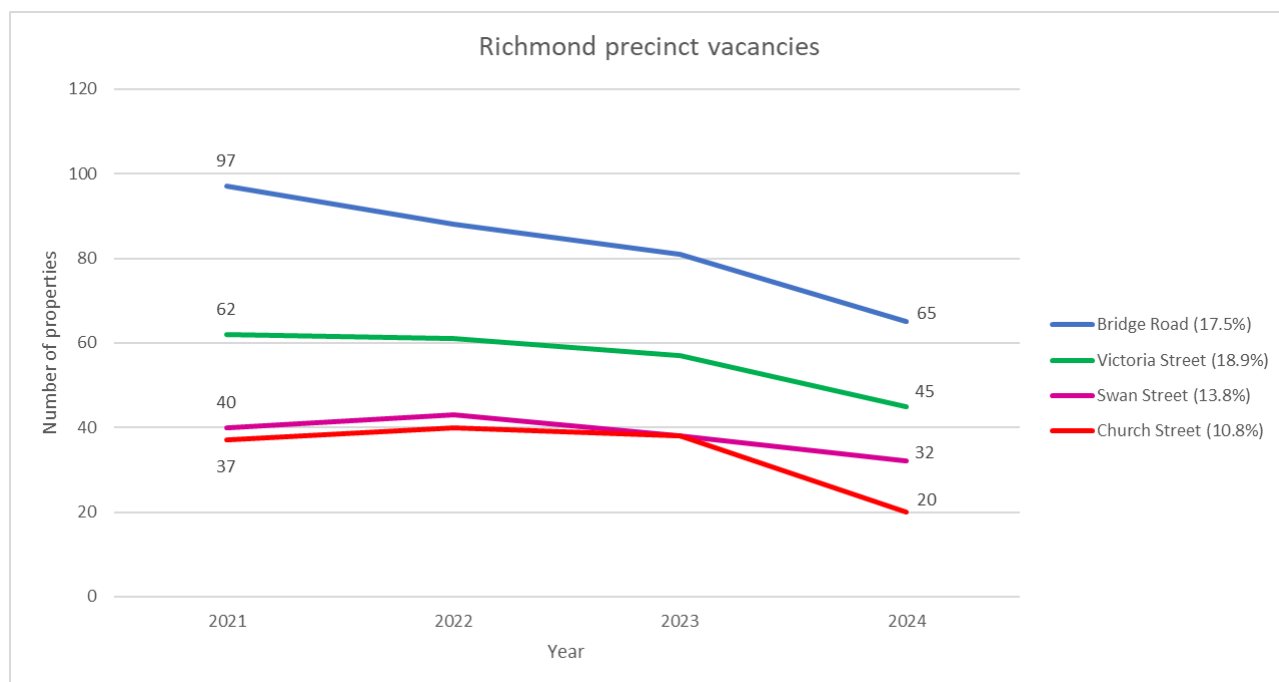
*Note – the audit is a 'snapshot' of a point in time. It does not factor in turnover of properties between audits.*

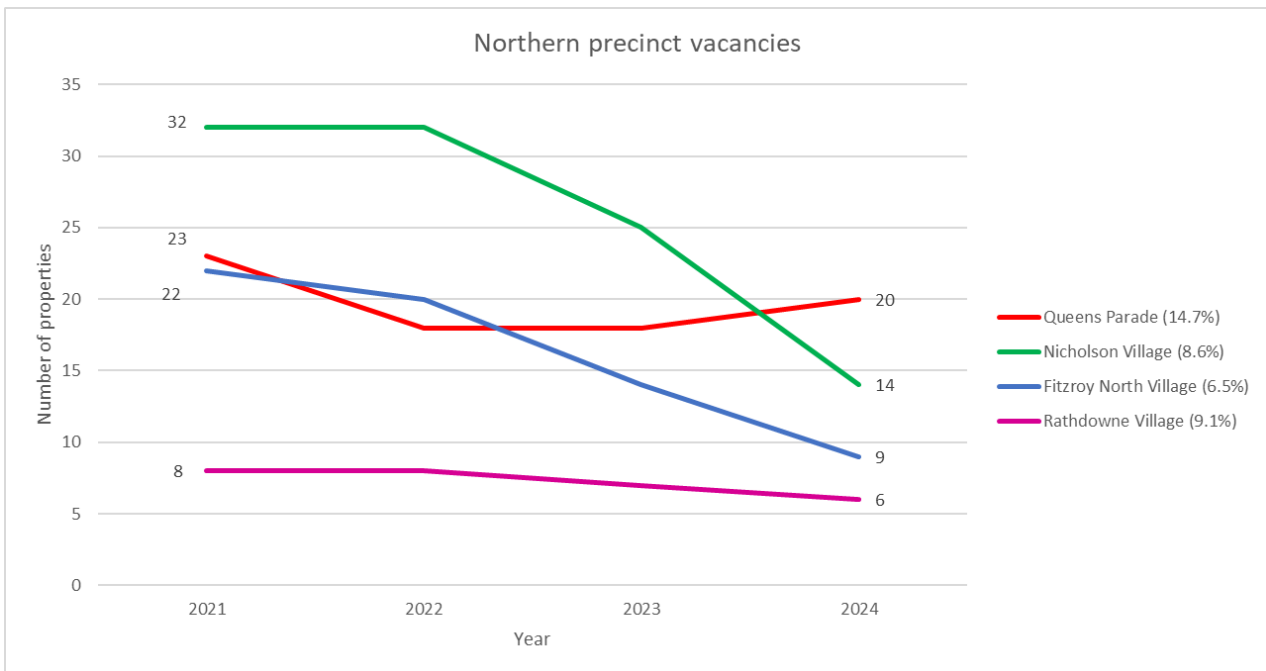
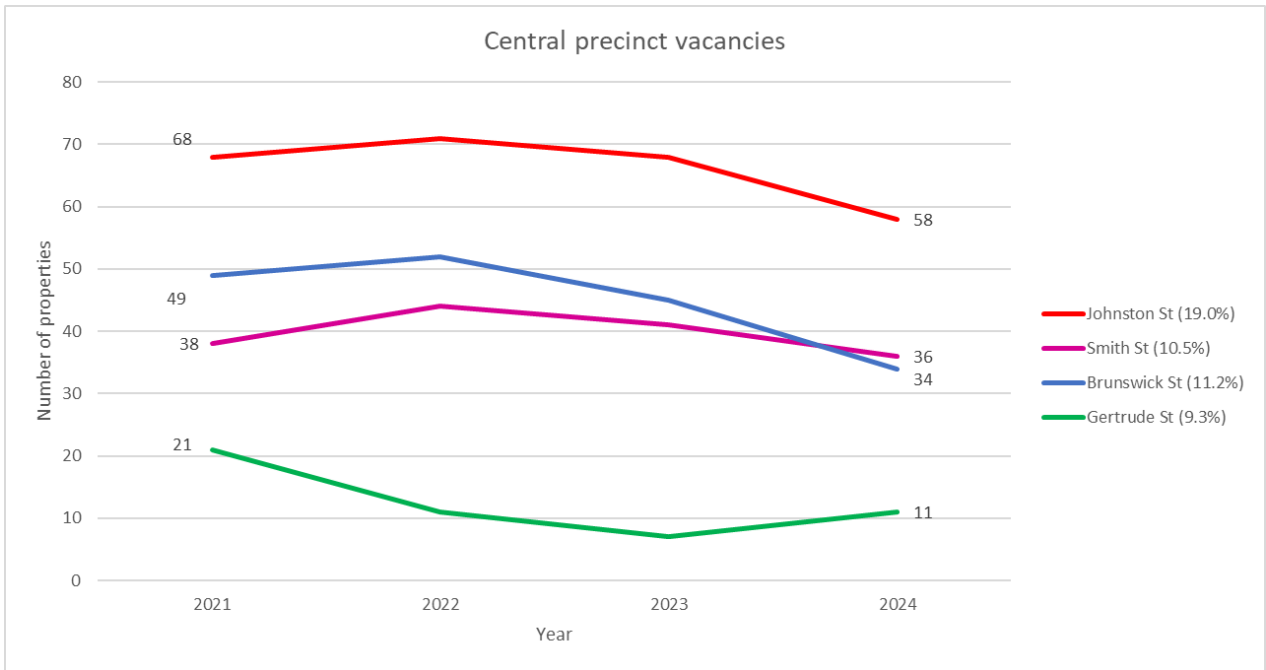
Fitzroy North Village, Gertrude Street, Nicholson Village and Rathdowne Village are our precincts with the least vacancies:

Precinct	No. of vacant properties	% of properties vacant
Fitzroy North Village	9	6.5%
Gertrude Street	11	9.3%
Nicholson Village	14	8.6%
Rathdowne Village	6	9.1%

Johnston Street, Victoria Street and Bridge Road are our precincts with the most vacancies:

Precinct	No. of vacant properties	% of properties vacant
Johnston Street	58	19.0%
Victoria Street	45	18.9%
Bridge Road	66	17.5%





# Annual Plan performance

Council adopted its Council Plan 2021-25 on 19 October 2021. The Council Plan, incorporating the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, sets out the medium-term direction of Council and the outcomes sought by Councillors for their term. This financial year 2023/24, is year three of the Council Plan 2021-25.

The Council Plan 2021-25 has six Strategic Objectives that respond to the Community Vision, which represent the Strategic Direction of Council for their four-year term.

The Annual Plan and Budget operationalise the Council Plan. The Annual Plan identifies several initiatives under each Strategic Objective which are significant projects that Council will undertake towards achieving the Strategic Objectives. The Annual Plan includes actions that link to some, but not all initiatives from the Council Plan.

Council's progress in delivering the 2023/24 Annual Plan for Quarter 3 (January, February, March 2024), is detailed in the next section under our six Strategic Objectives.



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# Annual Plan 2023/24 March Progress



GREEN

At least 90% of action target achieved



AMBER

Between 75% and 90% of action target achieved



RED

Less than 75% of action target achieved



No target set

## 1 Climate and environment

Action Title: 1.1.1.1 Development of the new Climate Emergency Plan

*Develop a new climate emergency plan that builds on the success of the last plan, incorporates current best practice, and builds from a foundation of community engagement. Look to broaden the focus and reach of the Plan as needed and include the strong links to community well-being and strengthening.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Michael Oke - Unit Manager Sustainability	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	75%	75.00%	GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Council engaged Ironbark Sustainability to undertake the review of community greenhouse gas emissions. For the first time this has been built from local utility data and is broken into key sections.

Council undertook significant community consultation for 6 weeks during November-December 2023 to inform the development of a new Climate Emergency Plan. A new draft Climate Emergency Plan has been completed and will be presented to Council in April seeking endorsement for public exhibition and stage 2 consultation.

Action Title: 1.1.1.2 Community engagement and mobilisation on climate emergency

*Deliver targeted programs and activities to key sectors in our community to take climate action. This includes supporting our community to reduce individual and household carbon emissions; bringing people together to be active citizens pushing for change; and helping our community prepare for and cope with worsening climate impacts.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Michael Oke - Unit Manager Sustainability	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	85%	85.00%	GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Council delivered the 'Let's Kick Climate Goals' session in partnership with Richmond Football Club in June 2023 with local sports clubs, fans and members discussing how they might support climate action in their communities. Based on this we are further engaging with our local sports clubs, but also noting the feedback received that post-COVID they are short of volunteers and those they do have carry a heavy load with volunteer fatigue is high, so we need to be mindful of this as we go forward.

Council actively promoted the Climate Action Grants to our community via the Yarra Environment News, other corporate channels, and through direct engagement with key groups and individuals. A strong and diverse mix of community-led climate projects were received and are expected to be presented to Council for endorsement next quarter.

The Neighbourhood House Climate Resilience project, completed with the launch of the joint Climate Action and Resilience Plan, as well as individual plans for each Neighbourhood House, in

October 2023.

Councils annual Climate Active submission was completed and lodged in November 2023. The submission is a requirement for Council to remain a certified Carbon Neutral organisation.

Council reviewed the outcomes of recent sustainable apartments and electrify everything programs, and have launched a new SunSPOT solar calculator tool for households to map where solar can go on their roofs, and have commenced planning with partner councils for a High Life Expo in mid-2024, to support apartments to improve sustainability and electrify. Council also commenced the 'Wired for Tomorrow' project with the Yarra Energy Foundation investigating the potential of an all-electric precinct,


Council launched the '5 Big Ways to Take Climate Action' project in February to support locals to take climate action, reduce household emissions and push for urgent change in the ways we live, work and play.

Each month focusses on a different theme from:

- dealing with the emotional impacts of climate change,
- making sustainable food choices,
- electrifying everything,
- ethical investing and divesting and,
- advocacy/having your say on climate and environmental issues.

Action Title: 1.1.1.3 Community batteries

*Support opportunities to accelerate uptake of renewable energy in Yarra through community battery installations.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Michael Oke - Unit Manager Sustainability	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	71%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** The collaborative 'Fast Tracking Neighbourhood batteries' project is complete. The project has delivered community engagement to understand public sentiment and preferences around neighbourhood batteries locally, and technical assessment to produce a map of areas with good potential and feasibility studies on three locations in Yarra.

A final report and guidance document for future neighbourhood batteries will be delivered in January.


Officers briefed Councillors on the status and direction of community batteries in Yarra at Cr Workshop in September 2023.

The Fast-tracking Neighbourhood Batteries project delivered in collaboration with the Cities of Melbourne and Port Phillip is complete. The project has delivered community engagement to understand public sentiment and preferences around neighbourhood batteries locally, and technical assessment to produce a map of areas with good potential and feasibility studies on three locations in Yarra. A final report and guidance document for future neighbourhood batteries will be delivered in January.

An early draft roadmap to accelerate Community Batteries in Yarra has been completed and is undergoing internal review prior to being presented to Councillors.


Action Title: 1.1.1.4 Zero Carbon Business

*Engage businesses and partners to transition towards zero-net carbon and develop circular economy approaches*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Michael Oke - Unit Manager Sustainability	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	80%	80.00%	
<p><b>Action Progress Comments:</b> Council has promoted the CitySwitch program, a national program supporting office tenants to improve energy and waste efficiency, to Yarra office-based businesses for their consideration to participate. This includes via the Sustainable Business e-Newsletter, our Yarra Website, and direct engagement with our existing sustainable business contacts and through the CitySwitch program manager.</p> <p>Officers worked with YEF to review the Better Energy Better Business (BEBB) program through the process of developing the new Funding Agreement with YEF for 2023/24. YEF has recently provided Officers with a first draft BEBB Solar Guide. This Guide is designed to present potential solutions for larger businesses and include case studies for businesses with different usage scenarios.</p> <p>The second phase of the Business Renewables Buying Group (BRBG) has been completed. Led by Yarra, the BRBG has been expanded Victoria wide, with 32 Councils currently signed on and the program has been promoted to Yarra businesses with more promotions coming.</p> <p>Council continues to support local businesses in Yarra to take climate action. In February Council delivered a Sustainable Business Yarra Breakfast event 'Enabling your business or commercial property investment to benefit from the transition to renewable energy' and in April will host a mini expo on 'Circularity and energy efficiency in the building industry'.</p> <p>Council also continues to bring together and grow the Sustainable Business Yarra Working Group, regular eNewsletter, and the Business Renewables Buying Group,</p>						

Action Title: 1.1.2.1 Collingwood Leisure Centre facility design to support the transition off gas

*Council will undertake design for the renewal of building services at Collingwood Leisure Centre. A major component of this is Heating, Ventilation and Airconditioning (HVAC), which will include full electrification to enable retirement of the use of gas at the facility.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Graham Davis - Manager Building and Asset Management	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	
<p><b>Action Progress Comments:</b> An engineering consultancy specialising in zero-emissions transformations of the built environment were engaged to undertake a study of various options for electrification of Collingwood Leisure Centre, with further due diligence undertaken to have a second consultancy with significant experience in electrified aquatic centres in New Zealand undertake a peer review of the options identified. From this, a recommended approach has been identified that will provide excellent sustainability outcomes whilst keeping the capital investment as low as possible and minimising the implementation risk.</p>						

Action Title: 1.1.2.1 Zero carbon development planning scheme amendment

*A key action in the Climate Emergency Plan, Council is pursuing a 'zero carbon development' planning scheme amendment and developing further environmentally sustainable development guidelines.*


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kathryn Pound - Manager Statutory Planning	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	66%	66.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Council continues to advocate and engage with Department of Transport and Planning and the Minister for Planning to support the progression of the amendment. Offices are also meeting with members of CASBE on an on-going basis.

Authorisation has not been received to enable the proposed amendment to be placed on public exhibition.

Action Title: 1.1.2.1 Circular Economy

*Circular economy is a new way of seeing products and materials, viewing them as valuable resources instead of 'waste'. Instead of dealing with waste materials when we throw things away, Yarra City Council continue to be a leader in this space and drive change through our services and initiatives.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Brett Grambau - Manager City Works	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	78%	85.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Officers continue to work with the State Government to influence what is included in bin content service standards. The draft service standard, corresponding draft regulations, and associated Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) have not been released for formal public consultation, this is expected by the end of 2023. The final service standards and regulations are expected to be made in early 2024.

Officers have been working closely with State Governments, Visy (our network provider) and other Councils to ensure the CDS program is delivered to meet Yarra's objectives of litter reduction, resources recovery and equal community participation.

Council developed and launched an online workshop promoting sustainable local food systems and community growing spaces for residents interested in applying for a planter box.


Officers are working to integrate the Circular Economy Strategy into the Climate Emergency plan, which is being developed and will go on public exhibition in April 2024. Officers have drafted an organisational wide Circular Economy policy.

Council endorsed the rollout of the Food and Green Waste service on 12 September 2023. Officers have developed the communication behaviour change and education program. In December Council awarded contracts for procurement of bins, collection and processing of FOGO material, the service will start on 1 July 2024.

Staff have commenced planning for the Depot open day to take place later this year.

Action Title: 1.1.2.2 Reduce the use of single use plastics

*Engage with businesses and the community to reduce the use of single use plastics and phase out single use plastics across Council's operations.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Brett Grambau - Manager City Works	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** The Single Use Plastic Free Yarra (SUPFY) working group was reformed consisting of 12 staff members from across the organisation. A number of audits have been undertaken, decisions have been made about reducing single use plastics for internal operations and education sessions with staff undertaken. Further consideration on how to impact changes in the community is underway.

Due to State Government legislation banning many single use plastic items, and with further bans on the way, there has been a pivot towards a business focused campaign that aims to educate and engage the Yarra business community in Circularity. Join the Circular Economy aims to demonstrate what circularity can look like in various industries and businesses and celebrate those Yarra business who have already embedded circular principals.


Aspects of the 'Join the Circular Economy' campaign include:

- Increasing subscribers to the Sustainable Business Yarra e-newsletter - Increased by 41 since August 2023,
- Delivery of Circular Economy Map and increasing businesses adding themselves - increased by 22 since launch in October,
- Sustainable business events series run in partnership with the sustainability team –6 events planned across 2024 with first even booked for April 24th in partnership with Provans Timber and Hardware.

## 2 Social equity and health

Action Title: 2.1.1.1 Yana Ngargna – Reflection and future directions

*Work with Yana Ngargna Advisory Group, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and key stakeholders to reflect on the Yana Ngargna 2020-23 plan and its implementation and development of the next multi-year partnership plan.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Malcolm McCall - Manager Equity and Community Development	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	68%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** The last 12 months have been especially challenging for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, emphasising the importance of marking January 26 at the Collingwood Town Hall. The Yarra service, which was sombre, honoured the resilience, culture, and achievements of First Nations peoples in Yarra and beyond. By listening, we demonstrate solidarity and support for our local community.


In addition to work externally, the Principal Advisor Aboriginal Partnerships has worked with internal stakeholders to enhance and promote updated Cultural Protocols. The Protocols give historical context, outline Council policy and commitments, and how we recognise the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, the Traditional Owners of the land now known as Yarra.

A Community Development Officer for the Aboriginal Partnership team has been filled. This role will support community-led projects and capacity-building initiatives, leveraging their background in the arts and health sectors to foster connections and promote well-being.

The Yana Ngargna Advisory Group, a partnership between the Council, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, held its quarterly meeting. Discussions included updates on stakeholder connections between the council, community, and local organisations, reflections on the January 26 service, and planning for upcoming national commemorations like National Close the Gap Day, Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week, and NAIDOC Week. The group also discussed strategies to enhance membership by welcoming new and re-engaging previous members. A key focus was the streetscape masterplan for Gertrude and Brunswick Streets, aimed at creating new spaces that showcase Aboriginal culture and art, integrating public art into the area's streetscape. Following members' advice, additional engagement activities were organised.

Action Title: 2.1.2.1 0-25 Plan

*Implement initiatives within the 0-25 Plan to enhance the health and wellbeing of children, young people and families.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Malcolm Foard - Manager Family, Youth and Children's Services	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	62%	75.00%	 AMBER

**Action Progress Comments:** The voice of the child project supports increased engagement and empowerment of children in our Family Services programs, it is included in the operations manual for family support caseworkers and sets out how we engage with children in our work with their parents and caregivers.

The key areas of strategic plan for children, youth and their families are addressed within other strategic and advocacy work including Council Plan and Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan. Operationalisation of the 0-25 Plan has moved into internal framework to guide service planning, development, quality and practice.

Consideration of the preferred model for parental engagement at the precinct and municipal level in early years planning is progressing. Implementation planning includes Council's adopted Notice of Motion, approved on 12 December 2023, to establish a Child and Family Advisory Committee and for officers to provide a report to the July 2024 Council meeting.

Action Title: 2.1.2.1 Promote access and inclusion for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities

*Address discrimination and tackle systemic barriers to participation in social and economic life for CALD communities and promote access and inclusion to the policies and services of the Council, other levels of government, and relevant agencies.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Malcolm McCall - Manager Equity and Community Development	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	93%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** A new Draft Multicultural Partnerships Policy has now been developed to succeed the Multicultural Partnerships Plan 2019-2023. It outlines Yarra's commitment to our multicultural community, crafted through review, research, and extensive stakeholder engagement from October to November 2023. The Policy centres on five thematic priorities, including standing against racism, effective communication, cultivating connections, building inclusive spaces, and fostering community capacity. It will be presented to Council for adoption in Q4.

Cultural diversity week events were celebrated around Yarra, with particular support provided to Bridges to Harmony and Harvest Festival, while promoting all other events to the broader community via Council's website and social media.


Yarra SOAR (Speak Out Against Racism) was formed between Council, cCohealth, Neighbourhood Justice Centre and Victoria University, a project aiming to address issues around reporting racism, supporting communities who experience racism, and with the ultimate goal of eradicating racism. This group is using evidence from research conducted by Victoria University which reflects the experiences of communities in Yarra around reporting racism and highlighting the barriers to reporting and support. There are a series of forums planned for the remainder of the



year, and a co-design approach with community is underpinning future actions.

**Action Title: 2.1.2.1 Access and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan**

*Implement the Access and Inclusion Strategy’s strategic actions to ensure that Yarra is an inclusive and accessible community and is a place where everyone can live well. In addition to implementing the 2023-24 action plan, a new strategy (2024 – 2030) will be developed, to align with new and emerging priorities and needs.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Adrian Murphy - Manager Aged and Disability Services	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	93%	66.00%	 GREEN


**Action Progress Comments:** Council’s Disability Advisory Committee and the Active Ageing Advisory Committee continue to provide advice on key issues including accessibility initiatives, e-scooters and disability parking, to increase access to local businesses and promote safe use of public spaces.

Community engagement for the development of the 2024-2030 Strategy has been completed using a range of engagement methodologies including Your Say Yarra (635 views resulting in 52 contributions); paid social media reached 11,286 people. Other promotions included digital screens in Customer Service and Leisure Centres.

A draft Access and Inclusion Policy and Plan is being developed to seek Council's approval for public exhibition.

**Action Title: 2.1.2.2 Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy and Action Plan**

*Implement the Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy, action plan to ensure our residents aged 50+ remain engaged, active, and independent. Living well means feeling included and active in the community, being able to connect to other people and being able to participate in everyday life. In addition to implementing the 2023-24 action plan, a new strategy (2024–2030) will be developed, to align with new and emerging priorities and needs.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Adrian Murphy - Manager Aged and Disability Services	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	96%	80.00%	 GREEN



**Action Progress Comments:** The Active Ageing Advisory Committee continued providing valuable guidance and advice regarding the Aged Care Reforms, which informed advice to Council regarding the Aged Care Reforms report approved by Council in March 2024.


The intergenerational initiative “Seniors and Sprouts” commenced at Richmond Kindergarten with local older adults participating each week within the term. Also, the Companion Animal Support Program continues to be supported by Council, and is well received by participants and volunteers.

**Action Title: 2.1.2.2 Youth led engagement**

*Empower young people aged 12–25 to have a greater voice on the issues that affect them through Council’s Youth Advocacy Group. With the support of a project steering committee, and Council, young people will co-design a series of youth-led activities, which build young people’s skills and confidence and help them establish networks and opportunities to amplify their voices in local decision-making and inform advocacy priorities.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
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Malcolm Foard - Manager Family, Youth and Children's Services	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	75%	50.00%	 GREEN
<b>Action Progress Comments:</b> Establishment of the pilot traineeship program commenced in October 2023, involving preparation of the position description, an evaluation template and identification of internal support requirements for business units and participants. The trainees are hosted by Customer Experience and Venues business units and commenced their employment with Council in March 2024.						
Action Title: 2.1.2.3 National aged care reforms						
<i>Ensuring residents and clients are supported across the transitional period of the National Aged Care reforms, expected to commence in full by 1 July 2025. Across 2023-2024, Council will continue to review and assess its role in the new program and existing State based Home &amp; Community Care program for Young People. This will include the range of services Council provides directly and areas of potential re-investment.</i>						
<b>Responsible Person</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>% Complete</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>On Target %</b>
Adrian Murphy - Manager Aged and Disability Services	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	66%	66.00%	 GREEN
<b>Action Progress Comments:</b> In March 2024, Council resolved to transition Council's home care services to its trusted partner, Mercy Health, over a 6-12 month period, as well as to reinvest in Council's current community-based services for older people including: food services, community transport, and social inclusion groups. Additionally, an operational review of Council's Home Maintenance service is underway.						
Officers are actioning Council's position with careful transition planning underway with clients and their families and partner organisations. Information has been provided to all clients receiving services advising of Council's decision and providing information on the new Support at Home program developments.						

Action Title: 2.1.3.1 Sustainable food systems						
<i>Promote sustainable local food systems and building community resilience in the Yarra community.</i>						
<b>Responsible Person</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>% Complete</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>On Target %</b>
Brett Grambau - Manager City Works	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	91%	33.00%	 GREEN
<b>Action Progress Comments:</b> An online Community Growing Spaces workshop for residents interested in applying for a planter box, productive tree, or laneway gardens was completed in September 2023.						
Three My Smart Garden Workshops to inform a holistic approach to 'smarter' and more sustainable home gardening across five elements, including food, shelter, waste, water, and habitat, have been delivered. 15 wooden planter boxes were replaced with recycled plastic boxes that include a wicking bed and soil.						

Action Title: 2.1.3.1 Supporting the community

*Engage with community, local organisations and other key stakeholders to identify, develop and leverage the strengths and passions of the community in responding to identified support needs, including for harder to reach/vulnerable people in the community.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Adrian Murphy - Manager Aged and Disability Services	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	49%	49.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** The renamed Djerring Centre reopened in July 2023 after a refurbishment was completed that included improved accessibility, storage and technology. This work was done to increase utilisation of the facility, with a number of activities booked in October as part of the Victorian Seniors Festival, in addition to regular programs. Support continues to be provided to the CALD senior groups and the Bent Twig Alliance.

Utilisation of the centre is increasing, current activities include regular group bookings, sessional activities, such as Comedy Connect for older people, piano sessions, drumming sessions, tai chi and intergenerational activities.

Council has continued to support local senior clubs with regular contact through workshops and advice to strengthen their governance and sustainability.

Officers have investigated opportunities to establish an additional support program under the Home & Community Care program, including potential partnership opportunities to provide a flexible service response for young people with disability.

15 carers, from hard to reach cohorts, have been supported with free digital equipment or aids and equipment, with linking support and referrals to the Carer's Gateway as needed.

Action Title: 2.1.3.1 Celebrate LGBTIQ+ community, enhance visibility and promote inclusion

*Support the LGBTIQ+ community through inclusive Council policy and programs, strategic advocacy, local visibility campaigns and cultural events.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Malcolm McCall - Manager Equity and Community Development	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	75%	78.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Implementation of the LGBTIQ+ visibility campaign commenced in the previous reporting period with the completion of Phases 1 and 2:

- Phase 1: Creation of a visual identity for 'Rainbow Yarra' in the form of a logo used across all digital and print platforms was launched on IDAHOBIT May 17th 2022.
- Phase 2: Video Campaign – Visibility campaign of LGBTIQ+ Yarra with intersecting identities: Launched on Wear it Purple Day 26 August 2022.

The Rainbow Advisory Committee have provided guidance on the following topics:

- Completing the update of the Rainbow footpaths on Smith/Gertrude streets and Smith/Peel streets to have the Pride Progress flag, which represents our trans, gender diverse, intersectional and intersex communities.
- Phase 3 of the Rainbow Yarra Visibility Campaign has been launched which included the creation of a Rainbow Yarra webpage, where community can source all things LGBTIQ+ in Yarra, including safe spaces.
- Phase 4 of the Rainbow Yarra Visibility campaign involving a street rock poster campaign running in Yarra during Pride season from 22 Jan-12 Feb. The photographic campaign profiles LGBTIQ+ people who work, live and play in Yarra including RAC members with intersecting identities. The posters have been displayed around the streets and council facilities celebrating


Yarra being the well-known LGBTIQ+ home-ground.

- Participated in and guided the LGBTIQ+ places of historical and cultural significance study, undertaken by GML and Yarra Heritage.

While planning for an inclusive gym and swim event at a Yarra Leisure venue to support diversity and inclusion officers identified issues with the initial timeline but also considered the event could be better promoted as part alongside the next Midsumma activities. Officers are currently working on the development of this alternative.

Action Title: 2.1.4.1 Alcohol and other drugs harm minimisation

*Through a program of action research, investigate and develop strategies to reduce alcohol-related and other drug harm in the community through a multi-faceted approach (e.g., education, enforcement, support, harm reduction, and responsible drinking promotion).*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Sarah Ernst - Senior Policy Advisor	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	95%	75.00%	 GREEN


**Action Progress Comments:** Funding was received from VicHealth to support the development of Council’s Alcohol Harm Prevention Plan which is now completed.

Further funding has also been received from VicHealth to carry out community training around alcohol harm prevention. The next Council Plan (and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) will investigate this in further detail and align with the release of additional relevant population health data.

The Yarra Liquor Forum is a quarterly meeting where licensed premises operators, Victoria Police, Liquor Control Victoria, and representatives of Council (e.g., Policy and Partnerships, Local Laws, Economic Development, Festivals and Events, etc.) meet to learn and discuss matters of policy, regulation, enforcement and consider strategies to promote safe and inclusive venues locally. The December meeting included a discussion on New Year's Eve (i.e., regulated trading, the local law and blanket ban on public liquor consumption, and police operations) and a presentation from Midsumma Festival Inc. on the event planning for 2024 and licensing conditions. The ‘Immediate Help Locally’ resource is also being updated to promote the cohealth-run Sobering Up Service and outreach, based in Collingwood, and the North Richmond Community Health run outreach service in the North Richmond area. Both services are now partners in Yarra Zero, alongside other local health and support services.

Action Title: 2.1.4.2 Supporting the National Alliance for Gambling Reform (MPHWP)


*Minimise the social and economic harms caused by gambling via the Yarra Gambling Policy, which outlines how Council works to reduce gambling through i.e., advocacy, planning controls, community education and supporting gambling-free initiatives). Our membership of the Alliance is a critical means to advance Council objectives to reduce gambling-related harm.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Malcolm McCall - Manager Equity and Community Development	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Council continues to support education campaigns for Gambling Harm Awareness Week through a mix of partnerships, social marketing and in-person events within the municipality. Council membership was renewed with the Alliance for Gambling Reform, officers attended forums and other Alliance events.

Action Title: 2.1.5.1 Access for all and community connections

*Access for all, Council's Library Strategic Plan 2022-2026 outlines the direction for library services over 4 years. Library services will support our community to access spaces and services, build skills and knowledge, connect and discover learning opportunities that enables our community to thrive. Our goal is to ensure access for all by reducing barriers for our community.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Vicky Guglielmo - Manager Libraries Arts and Events	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	62%	50.00%	 GREEN


**Action Progress Comments:** The Learning Bank is a new community space located in Victoria Street, Richmond, for residents and businesses to connect, create and learn. Throughout June 2023 the 'Be Connected' digital literacy program was delivered at The Learning Bank to support its operation as a community hub.

Development meetings are occurring between Council teams to scope new initiatives and opportunities for the libraries outreach program to deliver workshops that benefit the local neighbourhood in and around the Learning Bank, Following from the Library outreach stall at this year's Lunar Festival in Victoria Street, a community workshop is planned for June 2024 at the Learning Bank with a focus on financial literacy and taxation.

The Libraries outreach program offers a pop-up library with LOTE material available for borrowing, and staff engaged to speak with community and encourage new memberships. Further opportunities to deliver outreach programs in North Richmond is currently being scope.

Action Title: 2.1.5.1 Sport Club development workshop

*Develop and host three club development workshops across the 2023/24 financial year, specifically designed for Yarra's community sports clubs. The workshops aim to support local sports clubs to develop and improve the sustainability and capacity of their organisation, the capability of their people/volunteers and connect them with specific tools and resources to inform the direction and priority of activities and investment, as well as deliver quality, inclusive and accessible sport and recreation programs that are aligned with Yarra's Sports Ground and Facilities Allocations Policy 2022.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Steven Jackson - Acting Manager Recreation and Leisure	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	71%	75.00%	 GREEN


**Action Progress Comments:** The first workshop was successfully undertaken with Yarra Club. The aim of the development workshops is to assist clubs to upskill club volunteers in key focus areas, as well as satisfying the essential Sportsfields and Facilities Allocation Policy criteria.

The workshop focused on recent changes made to the Fair Play Code (an update of the 2018 blueprint) that sets out the standards of behaviour expected of everyone involved in sport and active recreation. These changes to the Fair Play Code have been made to support greater national consistency, reflecting the National Principles for a Child Safe Organisation developed following the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Planning is currently underway to support clubs with Grant Writing and Participation Programming.

Action Title: 2.1.5.1 Promote initiatives to celebrate Yarra’s cultural diversity

*Host events that bring Yarra’s artists, communities and generations together, provide skills- and resource-sharing opportunities, and build connections between artists and representatives from other sectors.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Vicky Guglielmo - Manager Libraries Arts and Events	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	90%	100.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Council’s Public Art Policy is currently under review to increase public and private art opportunities within public spaces and private developments/spaces.


Council’s New Year’s Eve family friendly event took place at Edinburgh Gardens with strong support and attendance from our local community.

Featured throughout February 2024 is Yarra’s Major Festivals Program that includes Victoria’s Pride, Midsumma event, Lunar Festival and Johnston Street Fiesta. These events were successfully delivered and staged to celebrate Yarra’s diverse community and vibrant precincts. Council worked closely with event organisers, local businesses and service agencies to ensure events were welcoming and safe, promoting significant visitation while balancing the impacts on each precinct.

Council’s 2024 Civic Events Calendar has been finalised. It details important key events and initiatives, to ensure that Council proactively acknowledges and commemorates important events throughout the year.

Action Title: 2.1.5.1 Richmond Youth Hub

*Undertake a project evaluation of the Richmond Youth Hub and advocate to the State government for appropriate funding to continue activities to vulnerable young people living on the North Richmond Estate.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Malcolm Foard - Manager Family, Youth and Children's Services	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	 GREEN


**Action Progress Comments:** The Richmond Youth Hub Evaluation Report was undertaken in July 2023 and endorsed by Council in September 2023. The Richmond Youth Hub Evaluation Report highlights its short and medium-term success in creating a safe space for young people, which fosters social connection, encourages community involvement, and supports youth leadership.

The report forms part of strategic advocacy for Council to secure further funding for the Richmond Youth Hub from the State Government beyond the current agreement which ends in June 2024.

Since the Richmond Youth Hub opened in March 2021, almost 170 young people have registered through Yarra Youth Services and accessed the service. In total, over 10,000 contacts have been made with Yarra Youth Services programs, activities, and individual support.

Action Title: 2.1.6.1 Strategic activities to advance the Yarra Homelessness Strategy

*Work to deliver an enhanced coordinated and compassionate crisis response to people experiencing homelessness and connecting with secure housing working with local partners, particularly Launch and cohealth.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Malcolm McCall - Manager Equity and Community Development	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	 GREEN


**Action Progress Comments:** Yarra Zero is a collective impact initiative with key partner agencies that is part of the Melbourne Zero project. It addresses issues of homelessness in Yarra. Backbone project governance was established in June 2023 and the project is now well underway, having been publicly launched on 11 October 2023. Ongoing data collection enables monitoring and analysis of progress in reducing homelessness and its impacts in the municipality, monthly progress reports are incorporated in the Yarra Zero initiative reporting and through the Melbourne Zero website.

By the end of March 2024, the Yarra Zero partners had identified a total of 71 individuals rough sleeping in Yarra, from which a total of 45 people are currently active on the By Name List and a total of 20 people have been placed in permanent housing across the life of the project.

### 3 Local economy

Action Title: 3.1.1.1 Precinct Activation Program

*The Economic Development unit will work with trader groups and associations to co-design and deliver 4 projects/campaigns within Yarra's retail and services precincts. The purpose is to create awareness, drive visitation, increase spend and revitalise our main streets.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kate Yuncken - Manager City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	90%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Funding for the 'Vic St East' trader's activation program has been provided to the Head On agency, they are currently developing a new brand for the local area. Promotion should commence in the next Quarter.


Officers are currently identifying which businesses in Brunswick Street are keen to participate in an activation program, to date traders have expressed a range of wants and needs. A trader meeting with police is planned for early 2024 address local concerns and provide ideas for at least one Brunswick Street activation.

The Everyday Nicholson campaign on Nicholson Street North Fitzroy was a huge success, with 8 new business being added. The installation of a 30m banner on the fence of the Kinetic bus shelter has elevated the look of the precinct and the Trick or Treat trail attracted over 1000 people to it. Council continues to work with our partner agency to ensure the ongoing promotion of the precinct.

The 'Greening Gertrude St' project, funded via Department of Jobs Skills Industry and Regions and business contributions, is implementing the roll out of planter boxes, hanging baskets and upgrading of some planter beds. This project is on track to be completed by June 2024.

Action Title: 3.1.1.2 Night Time Economy Action Plan


*The economic benefit of Night Time Economy to the city is largely unknown, so a gap analysis is required to be carried out, which can then lead to a short term action plan, followed by a draft Night Time Economy strategy.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kate Yuncken - Manager City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	5%	75.00%	

**Action Progress Comments:** Night Time Economy Action Plan is now proposed to be developed in collaboration with members of the M9. An initial background research piece is being delivered in late July 24 and scope of the joint project will be delivered and agreed in Q1 of 24/25. This will form a new action in the 2024/25 Annual Plan.

Action Title: 3.1.2.1 Promote arts and culture within Yarra

*Ensure the integration of Arts and Culture into Yarra’s built form and public realm design.*


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Vicky Guglielmo - Manager Libraries Arts and Events	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	66%	66.00%	

**Action Progress Comments:** Installation of artwork at the Chas Farquhar Complex by Rebecca Atkinson was completed. The new works are called Queep Queep (‘birds’ in Woi-wurrung language), and include a mural artwork and powder coated aluminium wall sculptures.

The installation of the William Eicholtz and Reko Rennie artworks as part of Otter Street and Cambridge Street Reserve redevelopments is scheduled to take place once the projects are completed. The Otter Street project is to be completed end of December while the Cambridge Street Reserve was completed in 2023.

Action Title: 3.1.2.2 Enable opportunities in the planning development process for spaces for artists to work to enhance the arts sector and everyday creative experiences

*Facilitate and encourage landowners and planning permit applicants to provide affordable spaces for creatives in support of Council’s Room to Create scheme.*


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Vicky Guglielmo - Manager Libraries Arts and Events	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	75%	100.00%	

**Action Progress Comments:** Building works for the Wellington and Vine Arts and Craft space have been complete. Process to commence Expression of Interest on occupants for the space are in progress. Tenancy anticipated by Q4. Delays are expected due to legal matters relating to licencing.



Action Title: 3.1.5.1 Joined-up response to promote local safety and wellbeing

*Promote community safety through interagency partnerships including the Local Safety Reference Group, Yarra Liquor Forum, and supporting initiatives with VicPol, Department of Justice and Community Safety, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Department of Housing and agencies commissioned locally to promote health and wellbeing.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Malcolm McCall - Manager Equity and Community Development	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Representatives from the Sobering Up Service are partnering with the Yarra Zero homelessness service coordination. As a collective impact project, Yarra Zero has also provided opportunities for regular partnership meetings between officers from Council, DFFH and Victoria Police, including a monthly housing catch up and Hot Spots group that was established in Q3. The Local Safety Reference Group continues to meet quarterly, including representatives from Council, Victoria Police, North Richmond Community Health and the Neighbourhood Justice Centre.


In Q3, Council Officers are working met with the Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Outreach and Community Engagement Service at North Richmond Community Health, a specialised outreach team for the North Richmond Area. Informational materials are being updated to promote the outreach team’s contact details to the community. This outreach team also participates in Yarra Zero and is linked in through the project with other local health and safety community service providers.

The Yarra Liquor Forum also meets quarterly and includes licensed premises operators, Victoria Police, Liquor Control Victoria, and representatives of Council (e.g., Policy and Partnerships, Local Laws, Economic Development, Festivals and Events, etc.), who come together to learn and discuss matters of policy, regulation, enforcement and consider strategies to promote safe and inclusive venues locally. The December meeting included a discussion on New Year's Eve (i.e., regulated trading, the local law and blanket ban on public liquor consumption, and police operations) and a presentation from Midsumma Festival Inc. on the event planning for 2024 and licensing conditions.

## 4 Place and nature

Action Title: 4.1.1.1 Opportunities for new and expanded open space in Yarra

*Construction of Otter Street new pocket park and expansion of Cambridge Street Park by converting road space into park to increase open space provision in Collingwood.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kate Yuncken - Manager City Strategy	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** The Cambridge Street Park extension works were completed and the park reopened in November 2023.

Construction of the new Otter Street Park commenced in July 2023 and was completed in December, the new park was officially opened in February 2024.

Action Title: 4.1.1.2 Opportunities for new open space in Yarra

*Roads to Parks programme to increase open space in areas identified as deficient in the Open Space Strategy.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kate Yuncken - Manager City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Feasibility studies completed, new opportunities to convert road space into open space identified and Charlotte Street temporarily closed with a pop-up park to undertake a genuine traffic diversion experiment.

Action Title: 4.1.1.3 Gipps Street Employment Precinct Local Area Plan

*Preliminary investigation into the Gipps Street Employment Area.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kate Yuncken - Manager City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	42%	75.00%	 RED

**Action Progress Comments:** Officers have commenced preliminary work and planning to move these actions into 2024/25 Annual plan.

Action Title: 4.1.1.4 LGBTIQ+ Cultural Heritage


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kate Yuncken - Manager City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	68%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** The draft report on the LGBTIQ+ Heritage Study Part 1 (Thematic Statement and a comprehensive list of places of significance to community) was completed and presented to Councillors in October 2023.

A consultant has been appointed and work on the preparation of place citations and statements of significance is progressing.

Action Title: 4.1.1.5 Charlotte Street New Public Space

*Continue to consult and prepare designs to convert road space in Charlotte Street into public open space.*


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Susan Stanes - Senior Coordinator Design and Place Making	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	80%	80.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** The draft concept design for the Charlotte Street new public space was placed on public exhibition on Council's website. A report on the consultation findings, and revised concept design works were completed and posted on Council's web site in November 2023.

A temporary trial of a road closure for a permanent park and traffic study commenced in February 2024.

Action Title: 4.1.2.1 Cremorne implementation

*Continue work to implement built form controls for Cremorne and implement the Cremorne Implementation Plan.*


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kate Yuncken - Manager City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	50%	85.00%	 RED

**Action Progress Comments:** A Council report on the revised Cremorne Urban Design Framework; and interim and permanent Design and Development Overlays. was presented to Council in September 2023. Council's request to apply interim built form provisions and exhibit permanent planning provisions has been lodged with the Department of Transport and Planning, Council is awaiting a response, in the interim consultation material to support the public exhibition of the amendment is being prepared.

Officers contacted the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions to clarify the status of the Cremorne Place implementation Plan group and encourage the State Government to reconvene.

Action Title: 4.1.2.1 Brunswick Street Oval precinct redevelopment

*This project will redevelop the sporting and community facilities in the immediate vicinity of the Brunswick Street Oval (WT Peterson Community Oval) within Edinburgh Gardens, North Fitzroy, along with improvements to the landscaping and civil infrastructure in the area.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Graham Davis - Manager Building and Asset Management	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	61%	66.00%	 GREEN


**Action Progress Comments:** Tenders for the project were received and evaluated. Unfortunately, the prices tendered significantly exceeded the budget available for the project, meaning a construction contract was unable to be awarded.

An architectural consultancy has been appointed to explore options for rescoping the project to develop a revised concept plan that can be delivered within the available budget whilst meeting the key project objectives.

Three different options have been developed in draft form and shared at a design workshop with sporting club stakeholders and the funding partner. Feedback received from this workshop is being used to finalise the design options and a recommended design.

Action Title: 4.1.2.1 Permeable pavement study

*Commence a study into the optimised use of permeable pavement in partnership with the University of Melbourne and the Australian Research Council.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Peter Moran - Manager Infrastructure Traffic and Civil Engineering	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	86%	66.00%	 GREEN


**Action Progress Comments:** Council and memorandum of understanding representatives conducted a workshop to define the key deliverables of this research project.

Following on from the workshop the MOU was signed by all involved. The MOU will ensure that Council receives high quality deliverables.

Locations assessment and identification process is currently in progress.

Action Title: 4.1.2.2 C286 Open Space Contribution Rate

*Continue to pursue Open Space Contribution Rate changes.*


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kate Yuncken - Manager City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	72%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** A workshop on the Open Space Contribution Rate peer review was held with Councillors. Two Council reports to progress the amendment and request the Planning Panel Review process be reconvened were presented to Council in August and September 2023.

The final report from the Panel hearing was received by Council on 4 March 2024. This is scheduled to be presented to Council in April for consideration.

Action Title: 4.1.2.3 Permanent built form provisions

*Continue work to implement permanent Built form controls.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kate Yuncken - Manager City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	35%	74.00%	 RED

**Action Progress Comments:** The following Planning Scheme Amendments are with the Minister for Planning to action:

The C273 Heidelberg Road amendment exhibition period closed with 119 submissions received. Officers have analysed submissions and reported to Council in December 2023 with a recommendation to progress the amendment to the Yarra Activity Centre Standing Committee. Awaiting response from the Minister for Planning and Planning Panels Victoria on Council's requests to refer the amendment to the Standing Advisory Committee. Preparations for the hearings has commenced with preliminary dates set for April.


Council submitted Amendment C271 Fitzroy-Collingwood to the Minister seeking permission to place it on exhibition in December 2023. Council is waiting on consent from State Government

to place amendment on public exhibition. All the preparatory work for the exhibition has been completed.

Amendments C291 and C293 which propose to apply permanent built form provisions to Bridge Road and Victoria Street, Richmond and the Collingwood South Mixed-Use Precinct are awaiting approval by the Minister for Planning.

Action Title: 4.1.3.1 Direct Seeding and Cultural Burning

*Adopt innovative integrated bushland management approaches to achieve cost effective and efficient bushland management and site-specific targets in partnership with Yarra's Bushland Contractor and Wurrundjeri Woi Wurrung Narrap Team.*


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Brett Grambau - Manager City Works	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	56%	33.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Council's liaison with Narrap Fire lead has commenced and site preparation is underway to deliver an autumn ecological cultural burn in the endangered Plains Grassy Woodland EVC in Burnley Park. A pre-burn habitat hectare assessment has been undertaken by ecological consultant.

Site preparation completed for the 1000m2 of autumn direct seeding of parkland adjacent to the Merri Creek, to reinstate endangered Plain Grassy Woodland and Escarpment Shrubland.

Action Title: 4.1.3.2 Education and awareness program

*Deliver Yarra's community based education, awareness, and nature engagement program as outlined in the Yarra Nature Strategy Action Plan 2020-2024.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Brett Grambau - Manager City Works	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	79%	66.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** As part of the 2023 National Tree Day 158 community members planted 4000 local indigenous species at Kevin Bartlett Reserve


Yarra's volunteer Garden Guides have assessed 20 household gardens as part of Yarra's Gardens for Wildlife Program.

Council continues to partner with the Merri Creek Management Committee to host the City of Yarra Waterwatch Program. The Yarra program achieved the following during 2023/24:

- Engaged with 1078 students over 33 education sessions;
- Conducted 5 x Community Waterwatch Training Days and;
- Conducted 6 x Litter Clean Ups, education and data collection sessions.

Action Title: 4.1.3.3 Yarra citizen's science program

*Encourage Yarra's community to further appreciate and actively enhance Yarra's natural landscape by offering engagement and education opportunities.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Brett Grambau - Manager City Works	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	77%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** The grassland walk was changed to a Zine making workshop in September to celebrate Biodiversity month and Yarra threatened species. The Gardens for wildlife (G4W) book launch took place in September 2023.


In preparation for the citizen science Aussie Bird Count which took place on 16–22 October 2023, a group of 11 community members participated in 'Birds in Backyards', an identification skills bird walk with an officer along the Merri Creek Trail.

Biodiversity officers in partnership with Water Watch Officers, conducted a community Frog Watch during spring, recording observations on the Melbourne Water Frog Census Application.

Planning has commenced to encourage Yarra's community to contribute to the Greater Melbourne City Nature Challenge Event. Yarra's community can help us compete with cities around the world by recording observations (photos or sounds) of wild plants, animals and fungi on iNaturalist application.

Action Title: 4.1.3.4 Greening Yarra

*Reduce the urban heat island effect, enhance amenity, improve wildlife corridor connections and overall biodiversity values across the community through the planting of trees, shrubs and grasses, and increasing canopy cover.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Brett Grambau - Manager City Works	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	53%	42.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Planning for additional street tree locations to accelerate the annual street tree planting programme commenced in July 2023.


Winter/Spring planting in progress to date 5,500 local indigenous tube stock have been planted as part of the program to aiming at planting a minimum of 10,000 locally indigenous plant species to improve habitat hectare condition score and reinstate endangered Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC) including riparian woodland, escarpment shrubland, plains grassy woodland EVCs within Yarra's bushland areas and consolidate and reinstate areas of strategic biodiversity value by increasing indigenous vegetation extent within Open Space by 5000m<sup>2</sup>.

100 advanced local native trees will be planted in June 2024 as a part of Bringing Nature Back to Yarra Initiative.

A feasibility study of street tree locations and species selection has been completed as part of our accelerated tree planting program and infill planting program, confirmation of locations is currently in progress.

Action Title: 4.1.4.1 Special Building Overlay update

*Review provisions within the Yarra Planning Scheme as they relate the Special Building Overlay in Yarra.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Kate Yuncken - Manager City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	34%	67.00%	

**Action Progress Comments:** 'Keeping Yarra Flood Resilient' community engagement was conducted from July to August 2023 to understand the community's lived experiences of flooding and to promote flood resilience. The program aimed to inform the community of the Council's current actions and objectives, as well as the terminology and issues related to flooding events. The City of Yarra faces higher risks of flooding due to its inner-city location, which limits the ground absorption of water and the overland flow of stormwater.

The findings was that the engagement fostered a significant dialogue within the community about flood management, the varying levels of severity experienced across Council areas, and the overall impact on the community. recommendations were that Council proceed with the implementation of Special Building Controls as a proactive measure to further protect the community from potential flood risks.


Council is in discussions with Melbourne Water regarding timing of a future planning scheme amendment to update the planning controls for buildings in the areas potentially affected by flooding from the drainage system.

*Last Updated: 15-Apr-2024*

## 5 Transport and movement

Action Title: 5.1.1.1 Transport Action Plan

*Continue to develop actions that support the implementation of the Yarra Transport Strategy, including, finalise the Transport Action Plan, commence development of a parking strategy and design and construct new and upgraded walking and cycling infrastructure on key transport corridors.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Simon Exon - Unit Manager Strategic Transport	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	93%	100.00%	


**Action Progress Comments:** Community engagement was undertaken for both the Draft Transport Action Plan, the engagement also provided input to inform the scope for the Parking Strategy.

The Transport Action Plan was adopted by Council on March 2024.

An RFQ has been developed and issued to commence development of the new Parking Strategy.

Action Title: 5.1.1.2 Transport New Deal implementation

*Council will implement the three New Deal programs outlined in the Yarra Transport Strategy, New Deal for Cycling: design and construct new and upgraded cycling infrastructure in priority locations, New Deal for Walking: develop clear processes for implementing the outcomes of the Yarra Transport Strategy and continue to deliver safer walking infrastructure, such as pedestrian improvements in Cremorne and New Deal for Schools: commence the first round of the New Deal for Schools program to encourage and enable active travel.*


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Simon Exon - Unit Manager Strategic Transport	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	69%	80.00%	 AMBER

**Action Progress Comments:** A detailed New Deal for Walking operational process will be informed by strategic study work scheduled in the Transport Action Plan for next financial year that will tie in with the parking management and kerbside strategy. Several walking projects have been delivered or are underway, these include the 30km/h speed limit trial expansion, shared zones an upgraded crossing at Clifton Hill Interchange and the delivered raised Cremorne Street crossing with flashing lights.

Action Title: 5.1.2.1 Transport advocacy

*Advocate to other stakeholders, including the State Government, for priority transport needs identified in the Yarra Transport Strategy by raising awareness of these and being proactive in identifying solutions, including:*

- Accessible tram stop upgrades across all of Yarra’s network, including Smith Street, Gertrude Street, Swan Street and Bridge Road
- Increased bus, tram and rail services and reliability to support current and future needs
- Funding and/or delivery of active transport infrastructure in priority locations, such as strategic cycling corridors and areas with high pedestrian activity

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Simon Exon - Unit Manager Strategic Transport	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Notifications have been issued to internal and external stakeholders of the Transport Action Plan.

Council continues to assess and apply for relevant external grant funding to assist with delivering active transport projects. Conversations have taken place with State Government to encourage them to fund the new deal for cycling and walking projects. These are continuing.

Council has lodged bids for multiple grants under the federal blackspot program as part of our road safety studies.

Multiple meetings have occurred with the State Government to discuss priority tram stops and promote tram stop upgrades on route 86.


Action Title: 5.1.2.2 Transition to Zero-Emission Transport

*Encourage, facilitate and advocate for policies and projects that result in an increased use of electric and other zero-emission modes of transport in Yarra, including: Accelerated use of electric and other zero-emission vehicles on bus routes.*

*Increased replacement of internal combustion engines with electric and other zero-emission means of propulsion in cars.*

*Increased adoption and use of electric bicycles, including for ‘last kilometre’ freight and local business use.*




Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Simon Exon - Unit Manager Strategic Transport	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Officers have provided inputs to the M9 group of Council's and Inner Metro Partnership, advocating for State and Federal Government to show leadership on the uptake and development of all types of electric vehicles. Recent announcements by State Government suggest that action on e-vehicles is now ramping up.

A consultant brief has been prepared to look at the role of Yarra in accelerating the rollout of electric vehicle charging points in Yarra and to forecast e-car charger demand over the next 10 years. The Transport Action Plan also covers e-car chargers and feedback from that consultation will be an input and agreement on next steps. The work done to date has shown that finding sites for chargers on public land at least in Yarra is not easy when all practical factors are considered.

Action Title: 5.1.3.1 Fitzroy and Collingwood 30km/hr pre-trial study

*Undertake a pre-trial study to investigate the feasibility of expanding the current 30km/hr speed limit trial to cover the entire suburbs of Fitzroy and Collingwood.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Peter Moran - Manager Infrastructure Traffic and Civil Engineering	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** 30km/hr pre-trial study was completed and a report brought to Council in November 2023 that recommended implementing the 30km/hr Trial Extension which was unanimously supported by Council subject to DTP approval.

In April 2024 we received formal approval from Department of Transport and Planning approving the 30km/hr Trial Extension, which is scheduled to be implemented in May 2024.


Officers have agreed with stakeholders that the 30km/hr trial should initially begin with a soft touch approach with existing signs and line marking to be replaced with 30km/hr signs and line marking. An infrastructure plan based on this has been completed and submitted to the Department of Transport and Planning for review.

There has been ongoing engagement with stakeholders since mid-2022. A community sentiment survey of 6000 randomly selected properties (including households and businesses) took place in August and September 2023. The surveys show between 59%-68% support for 30km/hr speeds. on the street the respondents live on. The results of the survey and the findings of the wider pre-trial study were presented to Council in November 2023. The report can be viewed on Council's website.

## 6 Democracy and governance

Action Title: 6.1.1.1 Councillor engagement program

*Develop and promote Council's enhanced engagement program to provide more opportunities for the community to engage with Councillors.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Anya Murray - Unit Manager Strategic Communications and Engagement	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** The Councillor Engagement Program was launched in February 2023 and activities have been scheduled every month until November. The program responds to requests for more in-person community engagement activities.


In the last quarter we have held the following in person engagement activities for councillors

- Dinner event with health agencies which brought together Councillors, Community Health Organisations, local GPs, the local Public Health Unit and the local Primary Health Network to discuss what is happening locally regarding primary health care, what actions are being taken to address issues and what is needed for future advocacy
- Yarra Conversations: 'Zeroing in on homelessness' – Dinner for Homelessness Week, including local stakeholders and guest speakers was held in August
- Ward listening posts were held across the three wards in September
- Four Meet the Mayor sessions will held in Carlton, Alphington, North Fitzroy and Fitzroy this quarter
- Three Councillor Conversations with Community events were held this quarter in Abbotsford, Fitzroy North and Alphington.

An evaluation of the program from February to July this year was also undertaken this quarter which provided important insights into what is working and also identified some areas for improvement. This report was presented to a Councillor Briefing in September.

Action Title: 6.1.2.1 Financial Sustainability Strategy


*Develop and begin implementation of the Financial Sustainability Strategy.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Wei Chen - Chief Financial Officer	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Council adopted the Financial Sustainability Strategy in December 2023 after extensive internal and community consultation. It includes strategic levers on revenue generation and cost efficiencies. Implementation of the Financial Sustainability Strategy has started and the budget guidelines for 2024/25 were developed and assisted staff in the development of the budget towards the key objectives of the Financial Sustainability Strategy.

Action Title: 6.1.3.1 Service Review Program

*Develop and implement the service review and improvement program for identified Council services.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Joe Daniel - Manager Business Transformation	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	98%	100.00%	 GREEN


**Action Progress Comments:** Council has endorsed the engagement plan which includes a two stage community engagement process. Stage one of engagement which included social research and Your Say Yarra is complete. Stage two Deliberative Engagement was completed in March 2024.

Support is being provided to a number of existing service review projects. Aged Care Service Review is now completed and recommendation adopted at the March Council Meeting. A number of internal service reviews are completed, and more are underway.

Analysis and planning for a council wide service review framework and service catalogue has been completed and will be used to plan services and identify opportunities for review. Benchmarking and analysing all services to identify best 4 for service review is currently underway.

Action Title: 6.1.3.1 Digital Agenda

*Deliver a series of digital projects to transition Yarra technology into a contemporary future state and enhance employee and customer experience.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Sandra Sanderson - Chief Information Officer	In progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	20%	25.00%	 AMBER


**Action Progress Comments:** The new City of Yarra Data Governance Framework will align with Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Program. This alignment ensures the accurate assignment of roles and responsibilities for individuals involved in data collection and management. Furthermore, it guarantees the attainment of high data quality as we transition the council's critical data from legacy systems to the new ERP system. The project scope has been developed and procurement processes are underway.

As part of our data and information governance procedure, we have successfully developed a comprehensive due diligence checklist. This checklist serves to verify the data sovereignty of applications and third-party systems that hold the council's data. Its implementation enhances our ability to safeguard sensitive information and maintain compliance with data regulations.

We are doing iterative roll out. This foundational work is essential for creating a robust structure to support our data management efforts effectively. We are diligently working towards completing this framework, with a strategic aim to coincide its finalisation with the initial implementation stage of the ERP.

Action Title: 6.1.4.1 Electoral representation review

*The City of Yarra will actively engage in the Electoral Representation Review to be conducted by the Victorian Electoral Commission in preparation for the 2024 Council election. We will make a submission to the process on behalf of the Council and advocate for a system that provides for representation that reflects Yarra's diverse community. We will encourage and support the community to make their own direct submissions to the review.*


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Phil De Losa - Manager Governance and Integrity	Completed	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Council undertook a publicity campaign to encourage members of the community to make submissions to the Victorian Electoral Commission in relation to the electoral representation review. The campaign included social media, newspaper advertisements and SMS messages to approximately 40,000 voters in Yarra.

A formal submission was endorsed by Council on 18 July 2023 and submitted to the Minister on 20 July 2023. The final report was released and a determination gazetted by the Minister for Local Government on 15 February 2024. From the next election, Council will consist of nine Councillors in nine wards, with boundaries varying only slightly from the Panel's preliminary report. The Panel and Minister agreed to Council's request not to name the wards according to suburb boundaries and determined a new set of ward names.

Action Title: 6.1.4.1 Website strategy and redevelopment of the Council website.

*Develop and implement a website strategy and redevelop the Council website, with a focus on accessibility and ease of finding information, to increase community awareness and encourage broader participation in decision making.*


Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Louisa Moy - Unit Manager Digital Communications and Marketing	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	78%	90.00%	 AMBER

**Action Progress Comments:** Development of the website strategy to guide the development of the new website and future improvements has been completed.

Website content rewrite is in progress and will be completed in May. Launch of new site is currently on-track for June.

Action Title: 6.1.5.1 CX Program 2022-2024

*Implement the CX Strategy's program of initiatives to realise and deliver the best service value for Yarra's customers, community, and internal teams. This is delivered through four strategic objectives Mindset | Systems Discipline | Collaboration | Empathy. This year Council will deliver service experience improvements with the official launch of additional digital channels, a relaunch of the CX program internally, establishment of a CX Centre of Excellence and creation of a Customer Service Charter.*

Responsible Person	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Rose Barletta - Manager Customer Experience	In Progress	01-Jul-2023	30-Jun-2024	97%	75.00%	 GREEN

**Action Progress Comments:** Promotion of digital customer service options and channels is progressing with engagement of the Communications Team. The online promotion will be completed by end of year.

The CX working group has been re-established, research and benchmarking have been completed and a draft Customer Service Charter developed, Ongoing work is taking place with the working group to implement the program organisation wide.