



Date	11 February 2026
Time	6.00 - 8.00pm
Location	Rochester Hotel, 202 Jonston St Fitzroy
Chair	Councillor Kenneth Gomez
Secretariat	Brodie Butler-Robey - Coordinator Economic Development
Minute taker	Pip Carroll - Economic Development Officer
Content Manager Reference	

Statement of Recognition of Wurundjeri Land

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.

Attendees

Councillor/s	Councillor Kenneth Gomez (KG)
Committee members	Leah Henry (LH) Andrew Stevens (AS) Fiona Newton (FN) Andrew Phu (AP) Grant Turvey (GT) Nicholas James (NJ) Helen Haines (HH) Sam Rush (SR)
Council Officers	Kate Yuncken (KY) - Manager City Strategy Brodie Butler-Robey (BBR) - Coordinator Economic Development Pip Carroll (PC) - Economic Development Officer Darren Borg (DB) - Coordinator Administration & Prosecutions Compliance and Parking Services Stephen Meloury (SM) - Coordinator Health Protection
Guests	n/a
Apologies	Councillor Evangeline Aston (EA) Councillor Andrew Davies (AD) Councillor Meca Ho (MH) Marija Maher (MM) Phillip Martin (PM)

Item number	Item title or subject	Minute notes
1.	Welcome and Acknowledgment of Country	Chair (KG)
2.	Declarations of conflict of interests of interest	No conflicts
3.	Adoption of the minutes / actions arising from the previous meeting	Previous meeting minutes accepted (KG)
4.	Health Protection Fast Track application	Presenter: Stephen Meloury (SM) Discuss Health Protection proposal for a Fast Track Applications service:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's Environmental Health team registers approx. 1500 Food and Personal Care and Body Art businesses • Currently the process to get Health registration can take up to 3 weeks • Over the last 6mths health team has noticed a growing demand for a fast-track service • Several other Councils already offer fast-track service • Proposal is to have an option to choose a fast-tracked service with the potential of 3-5 days processing timeframes. The service would propose a higher permit fee, to be determined • Seeking BAC feedback on the concept of the fast-track service <p>Discussion held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for fast-track service, delays often caused by waiting for trades. • Currently there is no requirement under the act to provide plans, layout changes are sometimes required • No guarantee of granting permit, just of inspection taking place and advice on registration requirements within 3-5 days • The current 3-week turnaround timeframes seem reasonable. • People in queue don't want to be disadvantaged by fast track extending their wait times • The possibility of a cheaper option for slow tracking an application. • Process for fast-track applications would be managed to have minimal impact on regular processing times • Health team introducing new reporting on timeframes & metrics for Council • Education piece around timelines required for service users • Eco Dev team's business concierge service that supports regulatory teams with advising on expected permit timelines • Eco Dev introductory handbook for businesses starting in Yarra • Commercial property look up is also a service available to Yarra business community • BAC is supportive of fast-track service <p>ACTION: BBR Supply BAC copy of business handbook</p>
5.	Local Laws Review	<p>Presenter: Darren Borg (DB)</p> <p>What is the local law: Under the Local Government Act Councils have power to create local laws that state and federal legislation can't cover. Yarra currently undertaking local laws review. Footpath trading and parklet policy also under review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only had 7% of businesses provide feedback in

		<p>first round of engagement. We are hoping for more feedback from our business community in the second round of engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement open now until 2 March • The review is aiming to cut red tape for business • An example of proposed updates in the policy is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ removing permit requirements for dog walkers & personal trainers in parks ○ Creating instant permit approval for A frames on footpath • Survey takes 10-20 min to complete <p>Discussion held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to raise interest of small business and potential strategies. • Communication of small wins to community, when red tape is cut and business interests are supported. • Utilisation of trader associations to engage business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge Rd, Victoria St, Gertrude St & Brunswick St all have formal or informal trader associations • Potential advocacy strategies to state govt to support trader associations • EcoDev team members assigned to retail precincts to manage relationships • Requirement for business owners to remove graffiti from parklets, currently in the parklet policy. • Council out of hours services for local laws issues <p>ACTION: DB to follow up after hours number and communicate it to BAC</p> <p>ACTION: BBR Provide clarity to BAC about graffiti removal in precincts and on private property</p>
6.	Update on Economic Development Strategy	<p>Presenter: Brodie Butler-Robey (BBR)</p> <p>Eco Dev team has been working on new Strategy for about 8 months. Consultants were engaged to develop a background and engagement report to support the development of the draft strategy. The first round of engagement consulted with business associations, business and key stakeholders. Today we are looking for input on the draft themes and strategic directions.</p> <p>Discussion held on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail is under more pressure; how to manage the mix of our precincts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Planning scheme provides for mix of uses ○ Need to avoid giving away employment land to residential • The need to lift our thinking to focus on big issues • Positive feedback for current draft, evident that feedback given in the engagement process has

		<p>been integrated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport, greening, retail mix all need to be considered together • Yarra has ecosystem of businesses, health services, education, creativity and community • Business interested in plans for each precinct, what types of development are likely to be approved. Possibility for developing precinct identities (addressed in theme 1) • Data on demographic and retail mix (addressed in theme 2) • The business concierge service being available to new and existing businesses • Importance of the relationship with State Govt • The tourism economy, need for more accommodation services • Creation of strategy that is more accessible and readable for business
7.	Break & Network	
8.	<p>General Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on projects/council decisions - Business Red tape reduction initiatives 	<p>Presenter: Kate Yuncken (KY)</p> <p>Recommended group review December Council meeting reports, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial Economic Employment Strategy • Live Music precincts resolution • Engaged consultant to look at last 4 years of planning permits • Advocacy around liquor licensing reform
9.	<p>Future Meeting Dates & Times</p> <p>Would you like to nominate your business for a future meeting location?</p>	<p>Future dates are set in the work plan distributed at the meeting.</p> <p>Provision for guest speakers, could invite Events & Festivals team to present on activities in Yarra</p>
Other Business		Nil
Meeting closed		The meeting closed at 8.07pm
Next scheduled meeting		20 May 2026, 6.00 - 8.00pm venue TBC