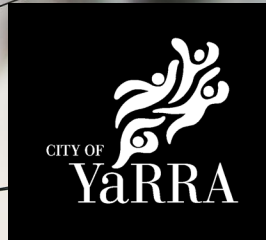


Our Victoria Street

A Revitalisation Plan for Victoria Street

Enhancing Amenity, Boosting the Economy and Fostering Local Pride

Draft for Community Consultation
May 2026



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.

DRAFT



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Introduction

Victoria Street is a culturally significant and economically important precinct which continues to play a central role in the life of the Richmond and Abbotsford communities.

Renowned for its strong Vietnamese connection and the longstanding contribution of residents and business operators who give the street its distinct character. The 1.6km stretch of Victoria Street from Hoddle Street to Burnley Street is sustained by many small businesses, service providers and hospitality operators which reflect the changing mix of people who are choosing to live near and visit the precinct.

While Victoria Street remains a valued destination less than 3kms from the CBD and close to many employment hubs, ongoing challenges related to public safety, drug use and amenity continue to limit how many people use and experience the precinct. These issues place pressure on local businesses, reduce community confidence, and along with fragmented land ownership and planning uncertainty constrain the precinct's ability to fully realise its potential as a destination for residential and commercial operations.

In April 2025, Yarra City Council unanimously resolved to prepare the Victoria Street Revitalisation Plan, a locally led initiative to deliver targeted improvements in partnership with residents, businesses, and the broader community. This was a signal: the Victoria Street precinct matters, and Council is committed to getting this right.

The State Government is requiring 44,000 new homes in Yarra over the next 25 years. The Victoria Street precinct is identified as an activity centre for transformational change and has significant renewal opportunities in and around the precinct available to help meet that target.

This Revitalisation Plan outlines a deliberate approach. The Plan focuses on delivering visible improvements to public spaces, enhancing safety and amenity outcomes and providing the environment to attract new investment and development. To do this work, a concerted effort from government, business and community partners is required.

By implementing this plan, our aim is for *“Victoria Street to be a safe, vibrant and welcoming precinct celebrated for its food, creativity, culture and retail experiences. With inviting public spaces, accessible transport options, strong community connections and a resilient local economy, it is a place where people want to live, work and visit.”*



Key priorities

There is deep affection for the Victoria Street precinct across long-standing and new business operators and residents alike. People came to our engagement sessions with a clear picture of what they want this place to be and are determined to see it happen.

The community wants to see Victoria Street buzzing again: respected as a cultural icon, alive after dark, safe enough to simply enjoy on any ordinary day of the week and in general attract more people. Key priorities for the Plan have been built together with input from the Community Reference Group comprising of residents and local business operators and incorporating feedback from the broader community.

- 1. A safe, vibrant, and welcoming precinct:** The precinct is safe, green, and clean. The streets, shops and public spaces are well maintained. People find it easy to get around.
- 2. A strong local economy:** The precinct is lively, day and night. Visitors are attracted to its shops and character. It offers a range of urban experiences and is well supported by the community.
- 3. A place that celebrates its communities and cultures:** Victoria Street celebrates the people, cultures and communities who call it home. The precinct is inclusive and a place where everyone feels they belong.
- 4. A precinct ready for new development and investment:** There are clear planning controls giving investors and the community a level of certainty. The precinct continues to grow and accommodate new businesses and more people living in a variety of housing options.
- 5. A shared commitment to revitalisation:** Council leads with purpose and in partnership with community partners, the business sector and government.

Precinct area



The precinct includes the footprint of properties facing Victoria Street as well as the roads to the south, such as Little Butler Street, Victoria Place, Eureka Street and Coles Terrace.

Strategic alignment

The Victoria Street Revitalisation Plan will assist in delivering the Community Vision 2036 and Council Plan 2025-2029, specifically under Strategic Objective 3 'Working and Playing in the City'. It responds directly to Year One action: to develop a comprehensive Urban Renewal Strategy for Victoria Street while implementing short term improvements.



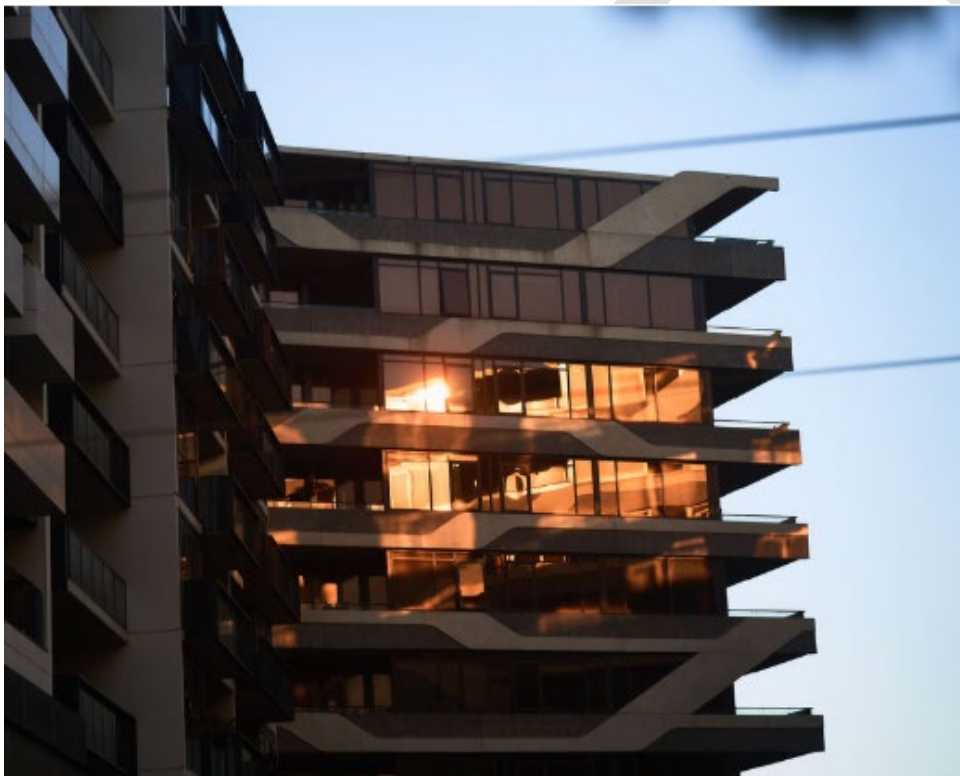
Lunar New Year February 2026

Game Changers

Not all actions are equal. We have identified five bold ideas ‘Game Changers’ in the Revitalisation Plan which have the potential to fundamentally shift how the precinct looks, feels and functions. Some require greater investment, longer timeframes, and genuine partnership with the State Government and other stakeholders. Each idea will be progressed through dedicated feasibility work, stakeholder engagement and partnership as the revitalisation program matures.

To support the delivery of the Game Changers, where possible, actions will be delivered using a trial-based approach ensuring flexibility and adaptability based on community and stakeholder feedback.

Successful trials will be refined, replicated and expanded for broader implementation. This approach specifically includes delivering on the ‘Game Changer 1 – Deliberate disruption’.



Game Changer 1

Deliberate disruption. Expect change - not more of the same

- This Game Changer commits Council and partners to boldly reimagine the precinct through trials aimed at reshaping streets, spaces and experiences to meet evolving community needs. Moving beyond incremental change, we will test, learn and adapt quickly, prioritising welcoming, safe and people-focused places and positive experiences over uses which undermine safety and economic vitality.

Game Changer 2

Build a Community Service Hub in the heart of the precinct

- Victoria Street needs an anchor for growth and neighbourhood activation, a landmark that signals transformative change. The hub will become the heart of the precinct. The place where people connect with each other and the precinct. It is the place where people receive and use much needed services.

Game Changer 3

Use planning as an enabler to unlock development

- Proactively use planning to create an enabling environment to make development easy, fast and attractive. Provide clear planning controls and a concierge service to guide businesses and property owners through the process and fast-track pathway for approvals. Use 3D modelling to show what can be developed and the potential yield on consolidated sites.

Game Changer 4

Bring developers and property owners together for renewal

- Meet with developers and host forums offering planning tools and our commitment to find developers with the right track record who want to work in the precinct.
- Bring property owners together and show the value of acting collectively including the benefits of site consolidation.

Game Changer 5

A Victoria Street Precinct Revitalisation Board

- Transforming the precinct can't be achieved by Council alone. A State-led Revitalisation Board with Department Secretary level representation would maintain strategic oversight of the precinct transformation, guide long term investment and drive the delivery of tangible outcomes.

Advocacy priorities

While Council will play its part and dedicate investment and resources to the Plan, Council cannot revitalise Victoria Street alone. The State Government must partner with Council to:

- Make Victoria Street safe;
- Activate the area with residential and commercial development using its own under-utilised land in this process; and,
- Build the North Richmond Community Services Hub as an anchor for growth and neighbourhood activation.

Council's advocacy priorities are:

- 1. Policing and achieving a reduction in crime and enhancing safety.** Increase Victoria Police presence and use proactive policing models that work in partnership with outreach services. We are also asking:
 - I. To undertake a trial with Public Safety Officers in the Victoria Street precinct.
 - II. For the establishment of a temporary Victoria Police hub in Victoria Street.
 - III. Funding to increase and monitor the CCTV network.
- 2. Medically Supervised Injecting Room (MSIR).** Move the MSIR away from the primary school, homes and businesses, and provide expanded drug rehabilitation and recovery services.
- 3. Planning certainty.** Approve Planning Scheme Amendment C291yara (or equivalent) to provide developers and the community with certainty on development parameters and built form outcomes.
- 4. Development and land consolidation incentives.** Waive land tax for the first three major residential/commercial developments to 'break ground' (>250 dwellings) and explore other tax incentives such as capital gains to help incentivise development. Provide financial and tax incentives tied to land consolidation outcomes.
- 5. North Richmond Community Services Hub.** Fund development of a Business Case to deliver a new Community Services Hub. North Richmond lacks community infrastructure and services for a library, maternal and child health, kindergarten, youth services and community spaces. The centre would become the significant anchor tenant and a catalyst for new investment in residential and commercial developments in the precinct.
- 6. North Richmond Station.** Upgrade North Richmond Station to be safe, welcoming and accessible for people living with disability. This would complement Council's proposal to create an attractive, well-lit open space on the corner of Jonas and Victoria Streets, abutting the station entrance.

- 7. Maintain State Government owned sites and acquire strategic sites.** Request all Government sites within the broader precinct are proactively maintained, well-lit and safely activated with appropriate interim uses to support vibrancy, safety and community confidence. Acquire strategic sites which have been identified to expand future North Richmond public and private housing opportunities.
- 8. Lunar New Year Festival.** Provide ongoing funding to support the Victoria Street Business Association to deliver the annual Lunar New Year Festival.
- 9. Free tram zone.** Extend the CBD free tram zone along Victoria Street to Church Street and extend Tram Route 78 along Victoria Street to create a north-south tram route that avoids the CBD.
- 10. Establish a Revitalisation Board.** Establish a State-led Revitalisation Board with Department Secretary level representation. The Board would maintain strategic oversight of the precinct transformation, guide long term investment and drive the delivery of tangible outcomes.



A staged approach to build momentum

The precinct's challenges are interconnected, and so are the solutions—no single action will transform Victoria Street. Early gains in safety and amenity will demonstrate visible change and build the confidence needed for the more complex work. This Plan outlines actions and interventions to deliver immediate improvements, to strengthen a partnership approach, and 'Game Changers' which lay the foundations for long term transformation.

Timing matters

The interventions within the Action Plan have been divided into the following timeframes:

- **Now to 2 years:** which will include visible improvements that people can see and feel, signalling real change and building confidence.
- **2 to 4 years:** which will include deeper improvements that support the local economy, upgrade public spaces and improve the street for everyone.

Structural transformation enabled by new development, sustained investment and long-term renewal will be set in motion through the actions within this first four years.

Tracking progress

Council endorsed the Victoria Street Revitalisation Plan with the objectives of *'enhancing amenity, boosting the economy, and fostering local pride'*.

Baseline measures for each intended benefit will be set in the first quarter of FY26/27, with performance assessed at the two-year mark and at the end of the program.

In addition, community 'pulse checks' on key measures including perceptions of safety, cleanliness and pride will be undertaken on a more regular basis (approx. every 6-12 months) to help understand how the implementation of the Plan is progressively meeting its intended benefits.

Tracking benefits over time will help demonstrate impact, guide decisions, and keep the program on course. Results and achievements will be reported regularly to the community and Council through the Quarterly Community Report.

Intended benefits and measures of success

The table below outlines the objectives, intended benefits and measures which will be used to track progress.

Objective	Intended benefits	Measures
<p>Amenity To improve the physical quality, safety and activation of the Victoria Street precinct so that it is a place people choose to spend time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More people experience Victoria Street as clean, attractive and well-maintained. -More people feel safe in the precinct during the day and at night. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Survey results indicate improved perceptions of precinct cleanliness and amenity. -Survey results indicate an increase in the proportion of people who feel safe in public areas during the day and during the night.
<p>Economy To strengthen the economic activity and business mix of Victoria Street, supporting a resilient local economy that trades into the evening.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More businesses are trading in Victoria Street, including after dark. -More investors and developers are choosing Victoria Street for new development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The proportion of businesses trading after dark has increased. -Spend data indicates an increase in economic activity. -An increase in the number and value of planning permits for development within the precinct. - A decrease in the number of long-term vacant shops.
<p>Pride To build community and investor confidence in Victoria Street as a precinct that reflects the identity and aspirations of its community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More residents and visitors feel proud of Victoria Street as a place that reflects their community. -More residents and locals are taking 'ownership' of the street and the precinct such as community gardening and care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Survey results indicate the proportion of respondents are feeling proud about Victoria Street.

Action Plan

Priority 1. A Safe, Vibrant and Welcoming Precinct.

The precinct is safe, green, and clean. The streets, shops and public spaces are well maintained.

Deliberate disruptors – Undertake targeted interventions in the precinct and along Lennox Street. prioritising welcoming, safe and people-focused places and positive experiences		Y1-2	Y3-4
Interventions such as:			
- Prepare urban design options for Council consideration on the redesign of Lennox Square.		✓	✓
- Deliver a trial Roller Door Removal Program to improve passive surveillance.			
No.	Actions	Y1-2	Y3-4
1.1	Continue to make Victoria Street presentable through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - graffiti removal and prevention strategies - a street greening program including green walls - a syringe collection and regular cleaning of the street - improved lighting, visibility outcomes, laneways and side streets based on CPTED*principles - improvements to existing public spaces in Butler Park, Regent Street and Williams Reserve. *CPTED - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design	✓	✓
1.2	Increase the amount of public space through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - piloting outdoor dining in side streets - investing in a new pocket park at Jonas Street. 	Y2	✓
1.3	Continue to prioritise crime prevention and community safety by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improved safety and services through advocacy and coordinated responses with other organisations - encouraging participation in Neighbourhood Watch and community safety forums. 	✓	✓
1.4	Work collaboratively with Victoria Police to address safety in the precinct by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encouraging businesses and residents to register cameras on the Victoria Police CCTV Registry - monitor trends and respond to issues including drug dealing, vandalism, and theft. 	✓	✓
1.5	Deliver shopfront improvement programs to encourage businesses to upgrade their facades. This includes improving window displays, enhancing awnings and updating windows and signage.	✓	✓

Priority 2. A Strong Local Economy

The precinct is lively, day and night. Visitors are attracted to its shops and character. It offers a range of retail experiences and is well supported by the local community.

Deliberate disruptors aimed at strengthening the local economy, shifting perceptions and build positive experiences		Y1-2	Y3-4
Trial interventions such as:			
- Undertake an EOI to find a 'game-changer' type of business wanting to take up a five-year lease and fund six months of rent in fourth year.		✓	✓
No.	Actions	Y1-2	Y3-4
2.1	Continue to support Victoria Street businesses by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - delivering the Business Concierge to streamline permit and approval processes. - allocating a statutory planner for business related planning permits - keeping businesses informed on Council's economic development initiatives, including the business grants program - providing guidance and support to help businesses improve their sustainability - providing education and support to businesses to comply with Council's regulations including health, footpath and planning. 	✓	✓
2.2	Resolve business issues quickly through the Revitalisation Project Team.	✓	✓
2.3	Deliver a vacant shop program to enhance night-time activity and attract new business. Pilot offering new businesses' incentives, along with other support to encourage activation of long-term vacant shops.	✓	✓
2.4	Deliver a marketing strategy to make Victoria Street a destination, a place to do business and encourage local spending.	✓	✓
2.5	Create a guide for potential tenants and investors which offers information such as business mix, customer demographics and spending habits.		Y3

Priority 3. A Place that Celebrates its Communities and Cultures.

Victoria Street celebrates the people, cultures and communities who call it home. The precinct is inclusive and a place where everyone feels they belong.

Game Changer - Build a Community Service Hub in the heart of the precinct			
Fund the business case to deliver a North Richmond Community Services Hub. North Richmond needs a library, maternal and child health, kindergarten, youth services and community spaces.			
No.	Action	Y1-2	Y3-4
3.1	Continue to support local community and cultural recognition by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - providing in-kind support to deliver the Lunar New Year Festival and community-led activities through our grants program - delivering a public art project to mark the 50th anniversary of Vietnamese migration to Australia. 	✓	✓
3.2	Define Victoria Street's key strengths and articulate a clear place identity through an identity study. Embed findings across revitalisation initiatives including marketing, programming, design, creative installations and signage.	Y1	
3.3	Support an increase the number of community-led events, activities and activations which encourages participation, boosts visitation and inspires community pride by leveraging partnerships and funding opportunities.	✓	Y3
3.4	With partners, build community capacity and support place-led opportunities which draw on local knowledge and skills, increasing the number of community members who volunteer or take an active role in the Victoria Street precinct.	✓	✓

Priority 4. A Precinct Ready for New Development and Investment

There are clear planning controls giving investors and the community certainty. The precinct continues to grow and accommodate new businesses and housing options.

Deliberate disruptor – ‘Consolidate to Activate’ Pilots		Y1-2	Y3-4
Identify property owners who own land which forms part of a potential land cluster and invite them to participate in a ‘Consolidate to Activate’ Pilot. Council would share planning certainty, indicative yield, and built form requirements and 3D modelling. As a partner the State Government would provide the financial and tax incentives tied to a land consolidation outcome.		Y2	✓
No.	Actions	Y1-2	Y3-4
Game changer - Use Planning to Unlock Development			
4.1	Reducing planning permit triggers through changes to the Planning Scheme to make setting up business easier.	✓	✓
4.2	Streamline the planning process for major planning applications and provide case management to developers.	✓	✓
4.3	Ensure new planning policies for Victoria Street include safety and activation through building design.	✓	
4.4	Provide clear guidance to property owners dealing with heritage issues through a heritage study, which is underway. Share this work with the property owners	✓	
4.5	Council to investigate strategic planning opportunities to support increased activity in and revitalisation of the Victoria Street Activity Centre.	✓	✓
Game changer - Bring developers and property owners together for renewal			
4.6	Prepare 3D modelling to represent the precinct's potential. Share this with stakeholders to showcase the precinct’s revitalisation prospects and attract investment.	Y2	
4.7	Host forums and meet with developers to understand and address barriers to investment. Council would share planning tools, our commitment and deep precinct knowledge to attract and encourage development.	✓	✓
4.8	Take a proactive approach to bringing property owners together and show the value of acting collectively to consolidate land and reduce barriers to revitalisation.	✓	✓

Priority 5: A Shared Commitment to Revitalisation

Council leads with purpose and in genuine partnership with community, business and government.

Game Changer - A Victoria Street Precinct Revitalisation Board			
Establish the Revitalisation Board to maintain strategic oversight of the precinct transformation, guide long term investment and drive the delivery of tangible outcomes.			
No.	Action	Y1-2	Y3-4
5.1	Establish an internal governance structure with defined roles across Council.	✓	✓
5.2	Establish a structured working group focused on delivery, partnerships, and evaluation.	✓	✓
5.3	Fund a dedicated team for the life of the Plan as the key community liaison and to coordinate the streams of work.	✓	✓
5.4	Deliver communications to celebrate milestones and outcomes and provide quarterly community reports.	✓	✓
5.5	Review the Learning Bank's role and function to help with revitalisation initiatives to support community safety, activation, and service coordination.	Y1	
5.6	Review Council's strategic work for the precinct and provide the State Government with a list of properties needed to be acquired to expand any future North Richmond public and private housing opportunities.	Y1	