

Council Meeting

Agenda

Tuesday, 28 May 2024

Council Chamber - Civic Centre
and via Videoconference

Information for Councillors and the community

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways.

We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging, who have been, and always will be, integral to the story of our region.

We proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.



COUNCIL VISION

Whether you live here or visit, you will see how much we care for country, how inclusive and connected our communities are, and how sustainable balanced growth makes this the best place in the world.

VALUE OF HISTORY

We acknowledge that history shapes our identities, engages us as citizens, creates inclusive communities, is part of our economic well-being, teaches us to think critically and creatively, inspires leaders and is the foundation of our future generations.

COUNCILLOR COMMITMENT

We'll be truthful, represent the community's needs, be positive and responsive and always strive to do better.

OUR COUNCILLORS

Billanook Ward: Tim Heenan
Chandler Ward: David Eastham
Chirnside Ward: Richard Higgins
Lyster Ward: Johanna Skelton
Melba Ward: Sophie Todorov

O'Shannassy Ward: Jim Child
Ryrie Ward: Fiona McAllister
Streeton Ward: Andrew Fullagar
Walling Ward: Len Cox

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER & DIRECTORS

Chief Executive Officer, Tammi Rose
Director Built Environment & Infrastructure, Hjalmar Philipp
Director Communities, Leanne Hurst

Director Corporate Services, Andrew Hilson
Director Planning and Sustainable Futures, Kath McClusky

GOVERNANCE RULES

All Council and Delegated Committee meetings are to be conducted in accordance with Council's Governance Rules, which can be viewed at: <https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Council/Corporate-documents/Policies-strategies/Governance-rules>

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Members of the community can participate in Council meetings in any of the following ways:

- making a verbal submission for up to 5 minutes on matters not listed on the agenda.
- submitting a question.
- speaking for up to 5 minutes to a specific item on the agenda. For planning applications and policy issues, the Chair will invite one person to speak on behalf of any objectors and one person to speak on behalf of the applicant. For other matters on the agenda, only one person will be invited to address Council, unless there are opposing views. At the discretion of the Chair, additional speakers may be invited for items of large interest.
- speaking for up to 5 minutes to a petition to be presented at a meeting.

For further information about how to participate in a Council meeting, please visit: <https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Council/Council-meetings/Submissions-questions-petitions-to-Council>

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CONTACT US

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YARRA RANGES COUNCIL

**AGENDA FOR THE 603RD COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY
28 MAY 2024 COMMENCING AT 7.30PM IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE,
ANDERSON STREET, LILYDALE AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

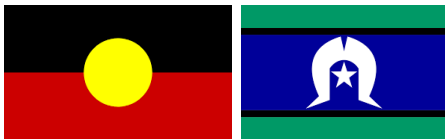
1. MEETING OPENED

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways.

We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging, who have been, and always will be, integral to the story of our region.

We proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.



3. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS PRESENT

OUR COUNCILLORS

Billanook Ward: Tim Heenan
Chandler Ward: David Eastham
Chirnside Ward: Richard Higgins
Lyster Ward: Johanna Skelton
Melba Ward: Sophie Todorov
O'Shannassy Ward: Jim Child
Ryrie Ward: Fiona McAllister
Streeton Ward: Andrew Fullagar
Walling Ward: Len Cox

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER & DIRECTORS

Chief Executive Officer, Tammi Rose
Acting Director Built Environment & Infrastructure, Phil Murton
Director Communities, Leanne Hurst
Director Corporate Services, Andrew Hilson
Director Planning & Sustainable Futures, Hjalmar Philipp

4. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

There were no apologies received prior to the commencement of this meeting.

5. MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held Tuesday 14 May 2024, as circulated, be confirmed.

7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In accordance with Chapter 7, Rule 4, of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

The Local Government Act 2020 defines two categories of conflict of interest:

- *a general conflict of interest, which is defined as "...a relevant person has a general conflict of interest in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that the person's private interests could result in that person acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty", and*
- *a material conflict of interest, which is defined as "...a relevant person has a material conflict of interest in respect of a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter. The benefit may arise or the loss incurred (a) directly or indirectly; or (b) in a pecuniary or non-pecuniary form."*

In accordance with section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020, a conflict of interest must be disclosed in the manner required by the Governance Rules and the relevant person must exclude themselves from the decision-making process.

No Conflicts of Interest have been received prior to the Agenda being printed.

8. QUESTIONS AND SUBMISSIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

In accordance with Chapter 3, Rules 57 and 59, of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

A person may make a submission to Council on matters that are not listed on the Agenda. A submission may be on any matter except if it:

- (a) is considered malicious, defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial, or objectionable in language or substance;
- (b) is substantially the same as a submission made to a Council meeting in the preceding 12 months;
- (c) relates to confidential information as defined under the Act;
- (d) relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer; or
- (e) relates to any other matter which the Council considers would prejudice the Council or any person.

There were no Questions to Council or Submissions from the Public received prior to the Agenda being printed.

9. PETITIONS

In accordance with Chapter 3, Rules 60, of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

A person may submit a petition to Council on matters that are not listed on the Agenda. Every petition or joint letter submitted to Council must:

- a) identify a 'Lead Petitioner' who Council can correspond with;
- b) be legible and in permanent writing;
- c) be clear and state on each page the matter and action sought from Council. Every page of a petition or joint letter must be a single page of paper and not be posted, stapled, pinned or otherwise affixed or attached to any piece of paper other than another page of the petition or joint letter;
- d) not be derogatory, defamatory or objectionable in language or nature;
- e) not relate to matters outside the powers of Council; and
- f) clearly state the names and addresses of at least seven (7) people who live, work, study or do business in the Municipal district.

PETITION TO COUNCIL

Report Author: Governance Officer
Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
Ward(s) affected: Walling; All Wards

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

The following petition be received:

General Petition

1. Request that Yarra Ranges Council restrict parking on Greeves Drive, Unity Way and Friendly Court, Kilsyth.
75 valid signatures.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following General Petition be received and noted and referred to the appropriate officer.

1. ***Request that Yarra Ranges Council restrict parking on Greeves Drive, Unity Way and Friendly Court, Kilsyth.***

MORRISON RESERVE MASTER PLAN - CONSIDERATION FOR ADOPTION

Report Author: Project Manager - Recreation Planning
 Responsible Officer: Director Planning & Sustainable Futures
 Ward(s) affected: Billanook

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

A draft master plan for Morrison Reserve (the draft Master Plan) has been prepared, providing a 15-year strategic approach to improve recreation facilities at Morrison Reserve in response to identified community needs, opportunities, and externally funded projects. It has been developed following extensive consultation with local Mount Evelyn residents, Morrison Reserve user groups, local schools and community groups, Council's Advisory Groups, and the broader Yarra Ranges community.

Suggested improvements include an upgrade to soccer, athletics and court facilities, the path network and park furniture on Council land. The draft Master Plan also recommends an upgrade of the school oval, currently used by community clubs as a secondary ground, and advocacy for a future sports stadium at the Yarra Hills Secondary College.

The draft Morrison Reserve Master Plan is presented in Attachment 1 for adoption by Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

- 1. Notes the findings of community engagement undertaken for public exhibition of the draft Morrison Reserve Master Plan.**
- 2. Adopts the Morrison Reserve Master Plan 2024 – 2039 in accordance with Attachment 1.**
- 3. Writes to submitters to advise them of the outcome of the Council Meeting.**

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

During the development of the draft Master Plan, the creation of a Youth Activation Space was identified as an exciting new opportunity for the area. The Youth Activation space will include an upgraded playspace, gender-inclusive social spaces and a new bike park offering a range of experiences.

An application to seek co-funding through the Victorian Government's Growing Suburbs Fund for the Youth Activation Space was supported by Council (Council Meeting 12 July 2022). The \$3.4 million project application was successful, receiving a \$2.6 million Growing Suburbs Fund grant and an \$800,000 contribution from Council.

On 25 July 2023 Council resolved:

That Council

1. *Consider the recommendations of the draft Morrison Reserve Master Plan.*
2. *Support the release of the draft Morrison Reserve Master Plan for community consultation.*
3. *Receive a further report considering submissions.*

The motion was Carried unanimously.

This report provides a summary of the feedback received and community support that underpins the request for consideration by Council to adopt the Master Plan.

DISCUSSION

Purpose and Background

This report provides an update on the outcomes of the community engagement process relating to the draft Morrison Reserve Master Plan, and presents the subsequent draft Master Plan.

The draft Morrison Reserve Master Plan (Attachment 1) was developed to address a range of current and growing outdoor sport, recreation and indoor stadium court needs identified in the urban/hills area. The draft plan has a strong research basis, informed by the findings of many investigations with the following support documents available on request (also included in previous reports):

- Morrison Reserve Stadium Feasibility Study and Master Plan - Issues and Opportunities Report 2018.
- Draft Indoor Sports Facilities Plan 2020.
- Morrison Reserve Synthetic Pitch Feasibility Study 2022.
- Mt Evelyn Bike Park Draft Master Plan 2022.
- Playspace Concept Design 2022.

Matters considered in the preparation of the draft Master Plan include:

Yarra Hills Secondary College – Sports Stadium

In 2018 Council was approached by the Yarra Hills Secondary College, seeking financial support to partner in the construction of a stadium on education land. Gymnastics Victoria was also supportive of the inclusion of a gymnastics centre at the school.

At the time there was an anecdotal shortage of court space across Yarra Ranges to meet basketball, netball and volleyball demands. During 2018-2019, in discussion with officers it was agreed that the school and Council co-fund a feasibility study to establish if there was evidence of demand, and the associated level of development appropriate for school and community use at the school site. The identification of a viable business model not reliant on significant Council investment was a key factor. There are existing examples of effective school/basketball association stadium partnership models established at other schools.

A feasibility study was undertaken to determine what an appropriate stadium development to support school and community use might consist of. Aligned with the study was the development of a Master Plan for the Morrison Reserve site. The stadium feasibility study determined that the initial school proposal of up to seven courts with a gymnastics hall was not feasible. A four-court concept with additional amenities underneath to support increased oval use was deemed a more financially sustainable model. The inclusion of a gymnastics hall was discounted, as the likelihood of an external investor at this location was unlikely.

According to a local community representative, the recent sudden closure of a nearby private Futsal stadium has left “thousands of young people of Mount Evelyn” without an indoor stadium facility. Whilst Council does not have more accurate information on actual numbers, it is a reasonable observation that this facility closure will intensify the community drive, need and justification for the redevelopment of the school stadium to meet current and future diverse needs of youth in the area.

Soccer Infrastructure

Increased demand for soccer facilities across Yarra Ranges, coupled with the aged soccer infrastructure at Morrison Reserve, prompted feasibility investigations into the conversion of one of the soccer fields to synthetic. This would enable more intensive use of the pitch without increasing maintenance and damage to the surface. The potential to bring the pavilion amenities up to industry standards for gender equity was also considered.

The soccer pitch feasibility study determined that a full-sized competition field with warm up area/training space and technical areas could be provided in the space available. Preliminary investigations by Council’s Major Projects officers indicated that a pavilion upgrade with tiered spectator seating could be accommodated to support the upgraded soccer field. Upgrading facilities and capacity at this site was considered more cost effective than the establishment of an additional facility elsewhere.

Recreation Opportunities

Provision of no/low-cost recreation activities for youth was a gap identified at Morrison Reserve. The recommendation for a bike park was supported by a separate study into provision of bike facilities in Yarra Ranges and confirmed in the site-specific Mt Evelyn Bike Park Master Plan drafted in 2022 to inform future development. A range of non-bike recreation opportunities have also been supported to engage a broader range of youth, especially girls and young women.

Traffic and Parking

The intensification of activity in the precinct will require further traffic and parking studies. The draft Master Plan proposes investigation of opportunities around the old playground site, and a careful assessment of vehicle movements and resident amenity at Mikado Road. Increased vehicle movements onto Old Hereford Road may require further improvements to increase safety and sightlines. Enhanced pedestrian linkages between the Youth Activation precinct and the existing main and southern carparks will encourage utilisation of current parking provisions.

A separate Traffic and Parking study is being carried out as part of the Youth Activation Space project, which will assist with more specific recommendations to manage increased visitation and address local resident impacts.

Options considered

Officers have considered the following options:

1. Support the Master Plan

In response to support and feedback from community and observed issues and opportunities in the area, the Master Plan will offer a coordinated suite of projects to improve amenity and value for community and respond to growing popularity of the park. This will also strengthen the design inputs into the Youth Activation Space project, which is about to commence design stage.

2. Deliver projects on demand

Whilst this brings some value to community, it can result in lost opportunities and inefficiencies through lack of coordination. This option is not recommended.

3. No further upgrades at Morrison Reserve

Officers are aware of traffic management and drainage concerns that need to be considered through individual project development. These are the subject of community feedback and complaints. The role of Morrison Reserve in offering active recreation spaces has increased recently, with the closure of a privately owned indoor sport facility. It would be detrimental to the long-term development of sport and recreation opportunities in Mount Evelyn if the implementation of the Master Plan did not proceed. Therefore, this option is not recommended.

Recommended option and justification

Officers recommend proceeding with adoption of the Master Plan, to allow orderly and integrated delivery of projects in a prioritised program of works and provide an evidence-based platform for advocacy for external funds.

Improvements proposed in the draft Master Plan include, but are not limited to:

- Creation of a Youth Activation Space incorporating an upgraded district level playspace, social spaces, informal active recreation opportunities and a bike park offering a range of skill development opportunities for beginner to advanced riders. Funding of \$3.4 million secured.
- Toilet, barbeque, and shelter facilities to support the Youth Activation Space.
- Inclusion of social nodes for people to sit, relax or engage in other recreation activities e.g. informal performance space, playable landscape features, lineal experiences that encourage movement.
- Improvements to the path network across the site for walking, dog walking, fitness and cross-country running activities.
- Upgrade of soccer facilities including the pavilion and conversion of the southern field to a synthetic surface.
- Netball/tennis court and clubroom improvements.
- Car park improvements to support additional reserve usage.
- Upgrade of the school oval to support community sport usage.
- Advocacy for the construction of a four-court stadium at the Yarra Hills Secondary College.

The proposed upgrade of the playspace and inclusion of a new Youth Activation and Bike Park with social spaces has already received external (the Victorian Government's Growing Suburbs Fund) and Council funding, with the playspace about to commence construction. However, there is still strong scope for the Master Plan to influence the design for the Youth Activation and Bike Park. Consultation on these projects is aligned with finalisation of the Master Plan but conducted separately due to them seeking funding prior to the Master Plan. The design for the funded Youth Activation Space will be developed this year (2023/2024) and progress to delivery in 2024/2025. Design consultants are about to be appointed to commence this process.

Conversations with other community user groups will be ongoing as future plans in the south-west corner become clearer. Timing and scope will remain flexible until this has been confirmed.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The actions outlined in the draft Master Plan are an indication of Council's desired outcomes for the space, and the timing of delivery reflects Council's intent, but this does not pre-commit these actions for delivery. As with all master plans, each action must be considered in the context of the full Council program of projects and will be assessed against existing asset condition, demand, available funds and across organisation priorities.

Delivery of the full recommendations of the draft Master Plan (based on Council owned land) is estimated to cost \$14,539,000 over the 15-year lifespan of the Master Plan. A further \$27,115,000 would be required to deliver the stadium and oval improvements on the Department of Education land, and would be dependent on external funding for this to be viable.

Other than the already funded Youth Activation Space (\$3.4 million), the implementation of the draft Master Plan does not have an allocated budget. All other recommended improvements are reliant on competitive funding bids from Public Open Space funding, Asset New and Improved Reserve funds, co-funding sourced via grant applications and where applicable, contributions from community groups and organisations that would have direct benefit from the improvements.

The ability to advocate for and receive external funding will be strengthened by the evidence-based research and consultation undertaken for the Master Plan if approved. Opportunity exists for the school, in collaboration with external providers/sports associations, to work together with Council support (advocacy, advice) to develop a submission(s) for funding of the proposed stadium.

The Masterplan includes an Implementation and Draft Cost Plan with an indicative funding model, summarised in the following table. It is noted that costs continue to escalate in the construction sector, although less dramatically than recent years, and estimates would need to be updated closer to delivery. A degree of flexibility of timelines is inferred, as there is a high level of competition for Council funds.

Draft Morrison Reserve Master Plan Cost Projections		Proposed Funding Contributions		
Activity Area	Estimated Cost	Council	State / Federal Government Grants*	Other**
Recreation Area	4,841,000	1,733,000	3,108,000	
Sport Area	8,918,000	3,438,000	4,795,000	685,000
Southwest Entrance and Carpark Area	780,000	420,000	340,000	20,000
Total Master Plan Implementation Cost (Council land)	14,539,000	5,591,000	8,243,000	705,000

Draft Morrison Reserve Master Plan Cost Projections		Proposed Funding Contributions		
Less confirmed funding for the Youth Activity Space	(3,400,000)	(800,000)	(2,600,000)	
TOTAL UNCONFIRMED COST COUNCIL LAND	11,139,000	4,791,000	5,643,000	705,000
School Area (Education land)	27,115,000	865,000	16,250,000	10,000,000

* Government grants or education department allocations sought to co-fund projects.

** Where applicable, contributions to be sought from the schools, community groups and organisations that would directly benefit from the improvements.

Council's proposed contribution to improvements on education land has been limited to:

- Path linkages to connect users to Council land and activities
- Upgrade of the school oval to provide playable conditions, including for community use (surface restructure, lighting, cricket nets and amenities).

Where possible, efficiencies will be found by aligning projects with regular operational improvements planned at the site.

Council would seek a Joint Use Agreement with the Victorian Department of Education regarding the school oval – this would recognise Council's investment and identify Council's maintenance responsibilities, in return for community use of the oval and support facilities by the community out of school hours. State Government funding would be sought to offset Council's contribution to the oval works.

The draft Master Plan recommendations are underpinned by a need to increase condition of ageing assets and participation (for women, girls and gender diverse participants), improved capacity and choice applicable to all members of the community.

An Asset Maintenance Plan will be developed to identify maintenance costs attributable to the new items proposed in the draft Master Plan, assuming they are supported by the community and Council.

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

This report contributes to the following Council strategic objective(s):

Council Plan 2021-2025

- Connected and Healthy Communities

Communities are safe, resilient, healthy, inclusive and socially well connected. Quality services are accessible to everyone.

- Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places

Quality facilities and infrastructure meets current and future needs. Places are well planned hubs of activity that foster wellbeing, creativity and innovation.

Action 2: Develop and implement a strategic approach for activating and providing functional and affordable community assets and spaces that are welcoming to all and support the wellbeing and connectedness of the community.

The provision of improved facilities at Morrison Reserve will deliver facilities and infrastructure that meet the growing and diverse needs of our expanding community.

Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

- Increase active living, and
- Improve mental wellbeing and social connection.

New and improved facilities will contribute to improved health and wellbeing, with increased opportunities to socialise and exercise.

Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2013-2023

The Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2013-2023 sets out directions for creating healthy and active environments and services in Yarra Ranges and provides a framework to guide future development and management of Council's recreation reserves, parks and community spaces, including Morrison Reserve.

Equity, Access and Inclusion Strategy 2013-2023

Through this Strategy, Council recognises that inclusion for people with a disability in all aspects of community life is a human right that also brings many social, cultural and economic benefits for the wider community. It further states as one of the goals that Council buildings and infrastructure are accessible to everyone in our community.

The topography of Morrison Reserve is challenging and the ideal 1:14 or better path gradient is not possible in all parts of the hilly terrain. However, all facilities existing and proposed will be assessed and upgraded to provide access for prams, wheelchairs and other mobility aids wherever possible.

Child and Youth Strategy 2014-2024

This Strategy has the vision that Yarra Ranges will be a place where every child and young person will be able to thrive, reach their potential and actively participate in decision making. Outcome 2 has the most relevance to this draft Master Plan, recommending that “Adequate Infrastructure exists to meet the needs of children, young people and their families.”

RELEVANT LAW

Gender Equity Act 2020

The draft Master Plan is considered to have a direct and significant impact on the Yarra Ranges community; hence a Gender Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of this work.

Throughout the extensive consultation and development of the Morrison Reserve Master Plan, the identified needs of community members of all ages, gender, abilities, and cultural backgrounds were taken into consideration. The resultant recommendations of the Master Plan have a community wide application benefiting the diverse community and aligned with the equality objectives of Council and the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

The draft Master Plan has been developed from a whole of community perspective, including consideration of equitable opportunities for use of the reserve by women, men and gender diverse people. Underpinning the recommendations is the objective to provide a reserve that encourages people of all ages, abilities, gender and cultural background with a space that is safe, welcoming and has the potential to improve individual health and wellbeing.

During the development of the draft Master Plan, it was noted that other than formal sport, walking and path-based fitness, there was an absence of recreation activities for youth, in particular girls. To support and encourage girls to get involved and feel comfortable transitioning into bike activities, the inclusion of contemporary seating and group social spaces is an important aspect of the youth activation space. Girls can have areas to meet and participate in less structured activity, perform, explore, relax, watch and connect with their peers (all genders).

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Implications

The construction of the Youth Activation Space is expected to create short term employment opportunities, supplier revenue and financial income for local

businesses. Ongoing, local businesses will benefit from trade generated by the thousands of visitations anticipated each year.

In the longer term, the upgrade of the soccer facilities will attract increased membership, more spectators and generate extra income and economic sustainability for the clubs.

Should the school stadium project receive financial support, this would greatly increase the profile of the school and its offerings in the education and community sport and recreation provider space. Access to indoor stadium facilities has potential to meet the indoor soccer void recently created and address the needs of sports such as volleyball that struggle to find court space in Yarra Ranges during peak after hours and weekend timeslots.

Social Implications

There are strong links to social and community impacts resulting from the development and improvement of local reserves such as Morrison Reserve in Mount Evelyn, which include:

- Enhanced community access to infrastructure that encourages alternative health and wellbeing outcomes,
- Revitalisation of local communities,
- Reduction of social isolation,
- Increased visitor footprint, and
- Increased female participation in active recreation.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy identifies high levels of obesity, dementia, and poor mental health as significant issues for our community. Provision of walking, play, sport, and bike skills opportunities are important contributors to improved health and intergenerational interactions. Coupled with multiple education and community service facilities, Morrison Reserve is a true 'active community destination'.

Environmental Implications

Climate Change has been a strong influencer throughout the draft Master Plan development. The increasing frequency of storm events, in particular rain events will need to be factored into all major improvements. A series of water retention and catchment facilities are already in place, with a significant Water Sensitive Urban Design installation at the base of the Youth Activation Space.

All projects that affect water flow must mitigate impacts on the drainage on-site and capacity to accommodate change in flow. The layout and landscaping of the bike park will need to direct increased flows to retention systems and prevent higher velocity overland flows through landscape treatments, soaker pits, tree planting and vegetation. This will seek to increase percolation of water while providing natural shading and landscape values on the hill.

Background research noted high usage by the tenant clubs, especially for junior soccer on the two natural turf pitches and resultant wear and tear issues. Conversion of the standalone pitch to synthetic would improve the standard and capacity of the dedicated soccer pitch, to support the growth of junior boys and girls teams at this site. It would also take pressure off the need to develop new sports facilities, including supporting infrastructure elsewhere, and has a life cycle of around 15 years before needing replacement. As a plastic material the end-of-life has been traditionally difficult to manage sustainably and previously would require disposing into landfill. Recent developments by Sustainability Victoria have established a new Synthetic Turf Recycling Hub which officers will investigate further as a more sustainable option.

During the feasibility study for the conversion of the southern soccer field to a synthetic surface, the impact of a new semi-permeable surface was investigated to mitigate potential environmental impact. The proposed subsurface is a vertical filtration/capture system that retains water for longer, thereby easing immediate deluge pressure on the stormwater system.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The development of the draft Master Plan was informed by workshops and consultation with stakeholder groups utilising the reserve and associated facilities on a regular basis, including:

- Yarra Ranges Athletics Club
- Mooroolbark Baptist Soccer Club
- Lilydale Eagles Soccer Club
- Mt Evelyn Netball Club
- Mt Evelyn Tennis Club
- Mt Evelyn Cricket Club
- Mt Evelyn Football/Netball Club
- Yarra Hills Secondary College – staff discussions and student workshops
- Yarra Ranges Special Development School
- CIRE Services
- Fernhill Kindergarten
- Morrison House Mens' Shed
- Disability Advisory Committee
- Yarra Valley Water
- Local Community
- Eastside Flyers Dog Club

Officers across Council were involved throughout the process, including initial workshops to identify issues and opportunities, site meetings and invitation to provide feedback on the concept plan and versions of the draft Master Plan.

Key stakeholders have been consulted during the various feasibility studies connected with the draft Master Plan development.

Consultation and engagement opportunities leading to the current draft Master Plan to be presented for adoption include:

- 2019/20 (during covid): conversations with stakeholders to establish background knowledge.
- May 2022: the community was invited to provide feedback to the Morrison Reserve upgrade priorities, and specifically to inform the playspace redevelopment.
- June 2022: a series of workshops was held involving 60 students (10 girls) from Yarra Hills Secondary College to assist offices in the planning for the Youth Activation Space.
- June/July 2022: primarily through social media, the community was asked to provide feedback on the playspace, and bike park designs under consideration.
- August – September 2023: consultation on the draft Master Plan was undertaken with the key stakeholders (listed above). The community engagement program included:
 - Letterbox drop (750 houses).
 - Pop-up sessions (6): Morrison Reserve (3), Mount Evelyn Library, Mount Evelyn shops, Elizabeth Bridge Reserve Roadshow.
 - Information distribution through the schools (3), Men's Shed and sports clubs (8) networks and Council's Youth contacts.
 - Social media.
 - Online survey (Shaping Yarra Ranges) 1,062 visitors, 98 contributors.
 - Presentations: Disability Advisory Committee and Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group.

Strong support has been received from the latest round of engagement to publicly exhibit the draft Master Plan. The feedback received aligns with the directions of the draft Master Plan and has confirmed support for the Plan and the improvements proposed. Matters raised by the community have already been considered and addressed in the Master Plan. Therefore, significant changes to the recommendations were not required following public exhibition. Key findings from the public exhibition phase include:

- Overall, 93 per cent of the 98 respondents to the survey supported the proposed changes in the Master Plan.
- 91 per cent of 70 respondents felt that the improvements would meet the needs of children and young adults in their care.
- 86 per cent of 87 respondents thought the proposed changes would improve accessibility at Morrison Reserve.

A summary of the engagement and consultation analysis is in Attachment 2. General comments were also made in support of the Master Plan, as well as support for the new Youth Activation Space and new playspace.

Additional suggestions made but not incorporated in the master plan included a designated dog area, outdoor gym and refresh of the community/school garden. Consideration has been given to site suitability and appropriate distribution of facilities across the municipality. Furthermore, a People and Dogs in Parks Plan is being developed, which will inform the provision of designated dog off leash areas in Yarra Ranges.

Key themes to emerge from the engagement and relationship to the master plan are:

Community engagement theme	Relationship to Master Plan
Improve paths, parking, and more park furniture to improve accessibility around the reserve.	The draft Master Plan recommends provision of improved path network and park furniture. It also recommends undertaking a car park study and design to determine parking requirement and layout to support current and anticipated additional usage.
Need toilets near the playspace.	Toilet facilities are recommended in the draft Master Plan, located in proximity to the Youth Activation Space and playspace.
Consider impact on site drainage, water flow and catchment.	The draft Master Plan stipulates that any development of the site must incorporate a stormwater plan to manage flow, retention and reuse to protect nearby neighbours and sports infrastructure at the low levels of the reserve.
Landscape / vegetation opportunities.	The draft Master Plan includes additional landscaping and planting, to enhance biodiversity values.

Earlier student workshops and community consultation informed the concept that was successful in receiving Victorian Government funding. The location and design for the upgraded playspace has been tested through public consultation and project reference group meetings, including the Disability Advisory Committee. Since completion of the community consultation, officers have been coordinating with the Youth Activation Space project to ensure the design aligns closely with the feedback received. In addition, there have been further discussions with key disciplines such

as the stormwater and traffic team to embed the future requirements into individual projects to make sure community concerns are included in the scope.

The draft Master Plan package has been updated with the consultation findings and the Gender Impact assessment reports and has been prepared for presentation to Council for adoption.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Council has an existing 'maintenance for community usage' arrangement with Yarra Hills Secondary College for the use of the school oval. A catalyst for the inclusion of stadium capacity in the Master Plan was the request from the school for Council to support the construction of a seven-court stadium and gymnastics centre. Officer advice indicated that the proposal was excessive for the site and needed further investigation. A feasibility study was undertaken in collaboration with the school and the resultant four-court stadium proposal developed to better respond to the school needs and potential local community demand. The benefit for Council was a review of existing stadium provision in the Yarra Ranges, including usage and projected deficit anticipated in the future. If adopted, the draft Master Plan will enable the school to advocate for delivery funding through Department of Education.

While undertaking the feasibility study for the synthetic soccer surface conversion, Council officers collaborated with Yarra Valley Water and consultants to workshop the issue of a stormwater inspection pit within the proposed playing area. Yarra Valley Water officers considered the possibility of relocation at an affordable rate. A position was negotiated that would be acceptable to all parties, including Football Victoria, whereby the new layout of the field left the inspection pit in situ but in the field run-off zone, with a synthetic carpet covering that could be removed. An innovative vertical draining sub-surface system has been designed to minimise impact on the local stormwater system in times of heavy rainfall.

RISK ASSESSMENT

As identified earlier in this report, drainage and the impact on the water retention and storage system by major rainfall/storm events poses the greatest risk at Morrison Reserve. Council's drainage team has previously undertaken extensive works to mitigate the potential impact to residents on Mikado Road.

A recommendation of the draft Master Plan is the inclusion of drainage and water sensitive design initiatives in all major projects proposed, especially where the topography and drainage may be impacted.

It is acknowledged that the development of a bike park on the current open hill area has raised concerns from the local residents, with regard to run-off impacting their properties and traffic disturbance in Mikado Road. These matters will be addressed through traffic investigations and design development. The detailed design of the bike park will be cognisant of the importance to retain the opportunity to take in the views of the countryside and exercise.

The bike park has the potential to attract many new visitors to the area. Improved wayfinding signage will be incorporated to encourage active transport via the nearby Warburton Rail trail, and parking opportunities to the east and south of the bike park. Parking will be monitored and reviewed as part of the implementation plan.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. Morrison Reserve Draft Master Plan
2. Community Engagement Summary

MORRISON RESERVE DRAFT MASTER PLAN 2024 - 2039

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways.

We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present and emerging, who have, and will always be, integral to the story of our region. we proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.



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1. MORRISON RESERVE MASTER PLAN

1.1 Purpose

The Morrison Reserve Master Plan has been undertaken to address a range of current and growing outdoor sport and recreation and indoor sports courts needs in the area. The Morrison Reserve Master Plan will function as a guide for the future development or redevelopment of the reserve taking into consideration:

- Community recreation needs and aspirations.
- Environmental impacts and site management.
- Current and future infrastructure requirements.
- Facility design considerations especially regarding universal design principles and the provision of facilities that support junior growth and female participation.
- Assets and investment required to deliver integrated, inclusive community, sporting, and recreational infrastructure.

The Master Plan will:

- Determine the objectives for the provision of sport and recreation facilities at the Morrison Reserve, Mt Evelyn.
- Provide a strategic approach for the future provision of sport and recreation facilities for Mt Evelyn and surrounding communities.
- Determine the suitability of any proposed works within the Reserve.
- Assist in seeking funding for improvements to the Reserve.

1.2 Principles

The following planning principles based on community consultation and site analysis have been developed to guide the development of the Master Plan:

- Responsive to changing participation trends, community needs and demands.
- Consolidation of assets for more efficient and cost-effective asset management.
- Facilities that are fit for purpose and meet contemporary compliance guidelines.
- Maximise net open space.
- Improving facilities while maintaining local amenity.
- Provide for a variety of open space uses including a balance between structured and unstructured activities
- Improve community wellbeing and encourage healthy active lifestyles.
- Encouraging active/sustainable transport modes.



1.3 Site Context

Morrison Reserve is a district reserve and is 23 ha. The Reserve is situated on Old Hereford Road, Mt Evelyn, within Council's Urban planning precinct. The reserve is zoned PPRZ (Public Park and Recreation Zone), PUZ2 (Public Use Zone Education) and PUZ6 (Public Use Zone) and has planning overlays that recognise the land is subject to Bushfire Management and Erosion Management. The reserve is surrounded by residential properties.

The site is a multi-use precinct that supports a range of uses including:

- Educational organisations
- Community facilities
- Structured sporting activities
- Unstructured recreational activities

The components include:

Education

- Yarra Hills Secondary College
- Yarra Ranges Special Development School
- Fernhill Pre School
- Cire Services

Community

- Morrison House Men's Shed

Sporting Facilities

- Sporting oval – Cricket/AFL (Department of Education)
- Soccer pitches
- Athletics track
- Netball courts



The site also includes a range of unstructured recreational facilities and supporting amenities including:

- Playground
- Pathways
- Car Parking.

1.4 Master Plan Recommendations

The recommendations and implementation plan are presented under the following key themes and objectives:

- Reserve Recreation Area
- Sports Area
- Yarra Hills Secondary College
- Yarra Ranges Special Development School

The implementation plans are presented under the following key headings:

- Recommendation
- Priority
- Indicative cost

The recommended actions have been prioritised as follows:

- Short term 1- 5 years
- Medium term 6 – 10 years
- Long Term 10 – 15 years

Key Issues and Challenges

The key requirements driving the study have been:

Yarra Ranges Council’s Recreation and Open Space Strategy supports the original Morrison Reserve Master Plan, adopted in September 2017. It has been mostly achieved with the development of the regional athletics centre, soccer fields and maintenance and improvements to the play space as well as large water tanks installed to manage the storm water fall down the Reserve to mitigate the impact to nearby residents.

There is a growing demand for active sports fields in the Urban District of the Yarra Ranges and the Morrison Reserve soccer fields are under constant pressure. They are home to home to three junior boys’ and girls’ soccer clubs.

Over the years, the upgrade of the Yarra Hills Secondary College oval has been flagged to cater for AFL football and cricket that cannot be accommodated at nearby Mt Evelyn Reserve, and as a third pitch for soccer.

Improving the size, standard and capacity of the College oval could benefit the growth of field sports into the future. Fill from the redevelopment of the soccer fields and development of the regional athletics centre was transferred to extend the school oval, however it has never been established.

The College has also been approached by Kilsyth Basketball Association and Gymnastics Victoria about developing additional indoor courts and a gymnastics facility to replace the existing aged and undersized indoor sports hall.

In 2018, the College provided Yarra Ranges Council with a concept under consideration for a multi-sport court development. The College believes that investment into sport infrastructure for education and community use will attract student enrolments.

Yarra Ranges is home to Australia’s largest basketball and netball associations, and indoor court space is in high and growing demand. Existing facilities (seven indoor sports facilities containing 23 multi-purpose courts) are reportedly at capacity in peak times and Yarra Ranges regional basketball and netball associations are under pressure to find venues to keep up with demand for their activities.

Need and future demand for indoor sports courts locally is supported by a number of recent regional studies including the Melbourne East Regional Sports Strategy, Sport and Recreation Victoria’s Indoor Stadiums Needs Assessment Research Project and the Netball Victoria State Facilities Plan and Basketball Victoria State Facilities Master Plan.

A growing population with a high number of young people and families will continue to fuel demand for indoor sports facilities into the future. The Yarra Ranges Council area population is forecast to grow by 17% to 185,902 by 2041 and around 19% of the area’s population was aged between 0 and 15 compared to 18.3% for Greater Melbourne in 2016.

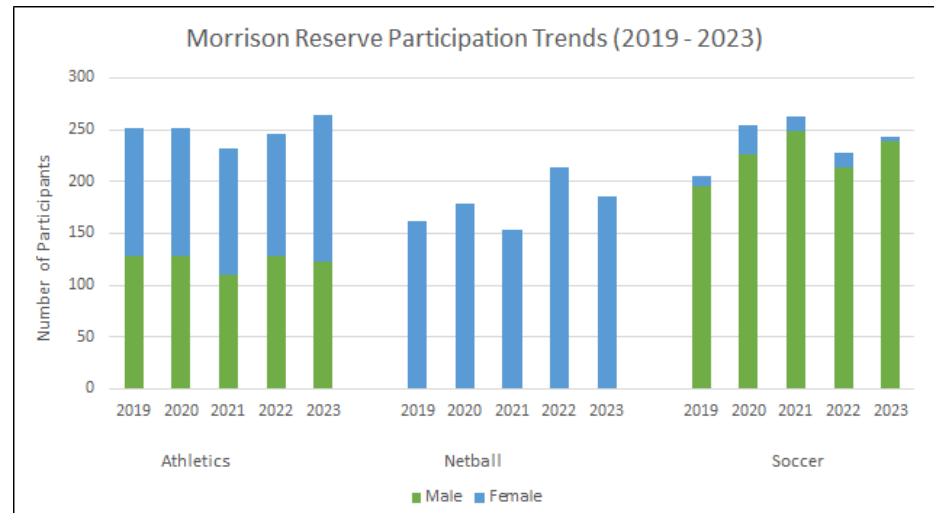
The Yarra Ranges population and projected growth is reflective of the Yarra Hills Secondary College student population, which is currently 870 students with 180 students based at the Mt Evelyn Campus.

Who Uses the facility?

The following organisations currently use the sporting facilities at Morrison Reserve:

- Yarra Ranges Athletics Club
- Mt Evelyn Netball Club
- Mooroolbark Baptist Soccer Club
- Lilydale Eagles Soccer Club
- Mt Evelyn United Christian Soccer Club (to 2021)
- Mt Evelyn Football Club
- Mt Evelyn Cricket Club
- Kilsyth Basketball Association
- Lilydale Yarra Valley Netball Association

The following graph indicates the current participation levels of the key tenant sports:



2. WHAT HAS BEEN DONE?

Yarra Ranges Shire Council engaged Otium Planning Group to:

- Develop a Master Plan for Morrison Reserve with new ideas for improvements to meet the current and future needs of sport, school and community use.
- Explore the feasibility of further developing the Yarra Hills Secondary College site to enhance the education and community joint use of facilities, including a multi-court stadium and gymnastics facility.

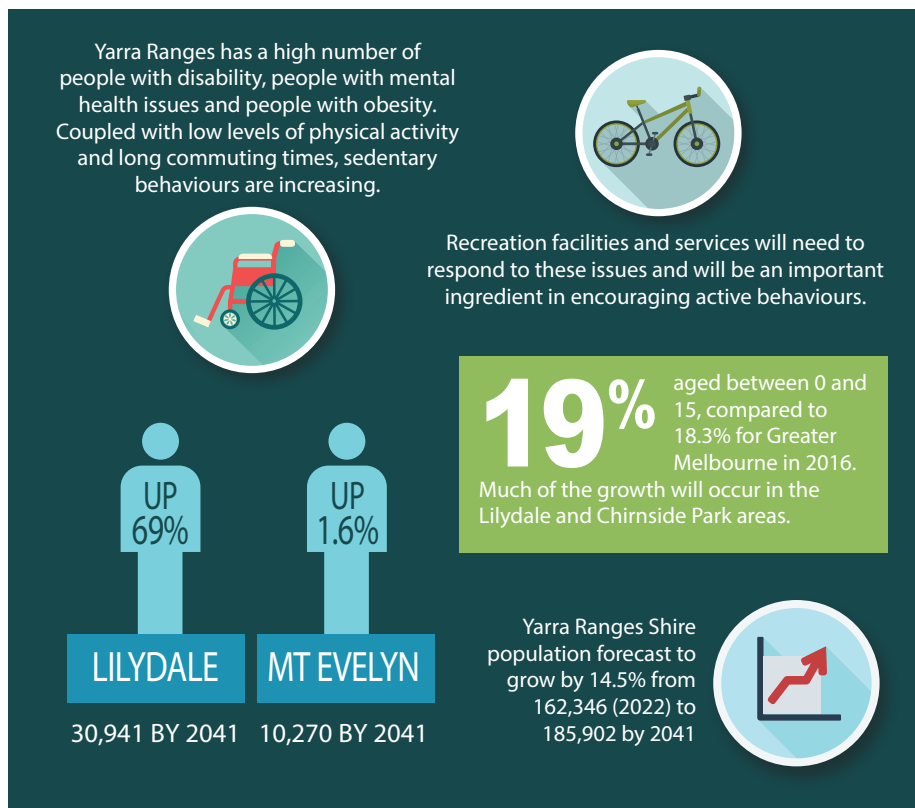
The tasks involved in preparing the final report are described in this diagram.



3. WHAT HAS OUR RESEARCH TOLD US?

Population profile

A growing population, with a high number of young people and families, will continue to fuel demand for a mix of sports facilities, active recreation and play spaces in the Yarra Ranges Council area, and a need to improve the support amenities at the site, including:



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Structured Outdoor Sporting Facilities

The following issues have been identified for structured outdoor sports:

- There are an insufficient number of sports ovals in Mt Evelyn to support the growth of soccer and female participation in Australian Rules football in Yarra Ranges.
- The three local soccer clubs in Mt Evelyn are restricted to accessing two quality sports fields. Two of the three clubs train or compete on most days of the week.
- There is an identified need or additional soccer facilities to service the needs of residents living in the urban areas.
- Providing access to an improved competition size school oval with lighting (and cricket training nets) will accommodate will also provide an alternative training venue for Australian Rules football and cricket in Mt Evelyn where demand is increasing with the introduction of girls and women teams.
- Conversion of the existing southern soccer pitch to a synthetic surface will increase capacity to cater for additional soccer usage.

Unstructured Sport and Recreation Facilities

The reserve provides a range of facilities that support the unstructured recreational needs of residents. There is an opportunity to enhance this use through the development of:

- Dedicated mountain bike facilities catering for differing levels of ability (beginners, intermediate and advanced).
- Upgraded pathway network to support walking and cross-country running activities.
- Upgraded play spaces.
- Places to rest, socialise and enjoy the view.



Indoor Sports Facility

- Demand for indoor sports facilities in Yarra Ranges will continue to be fuelled by a growing population and a high number of young people and families.
- There are an insufficient number of courts to meet future indoor sports demand.
- There are nine indoor sports stadiums that provide 25 indoor sports courts in Yarra Ranges. All venues are lined for multi-sport activities but only two are compliant to netball standards.
- There are three venues with 15 courts used in the Urban District, primarily for the domestic basketball association. These venues are reportedly at capacity during the peak times of 5.00pm to 10.00pm.
- A new four-court stadium has been built at Melba College (Maroondah) where Kilsyth Basketball Association (KBA) has provided funding and is a major user outside of school hours. This venue will only provide for unmet demand in the short term.
- Local basketball associations may in the future consider contribution towards a four-court stadium at Morrison Reserve if feasible. Given the potential for additional courts to be developed at Lilydale Heights Secondary College the priority and timing of the possible development would need to be determined.
- The Yarra Hills Secondary College population is growing, with 870 students enrolled in 2018. Approximately 180 students are based at the Mt Evelyn Campus, predominantly a junior school (years 7-10).
- The school's Physical Education and sport program has been and will continue to be influenced by the sports facilities available at Morrison Reserve.
- Improvements at the Mooroolbark Campus have accommodated growth in the school over the last five years, however as the school population grows, the Mt Evelyn Campus will need to provide for additional students. The school recorded over 200 students in Year 7 in 2018 but is currently at 180.



Other Reserve Amenities

The site assessment identified opportunities to improve the support amenities at the site including:

- Improved main entrance and intersection treatment.
- Formalisation of remaining car park area.
- Improved landscaping including pathways/fitness trails.
- Improvements to signage, shade, and seating to improve the reserves functionality and amenity for students, sport, and community users.
- Improved road crossing to link with the Warburton Rail Trail and township to encourage active transport.



4. WHAT DID OUR CONSULTATION TELL US?

Consultation for this project involved community, school and club surveys as well as workshop meetings and discussions. Stakeholder suggestions for Master Plan improvements include the following:

Structured Outdoor Sporting Facilities

There is contested space in Mt Evelyn for sports fields with the pre-COVID and anticipated return growth of soccer, cricket and Australian Rules football. The two soccer pitches are at capacity and are in poor condition by the end of the winter season. The redevelopment of the Yarra Hills Secondary College oval provides an opportunity to accommodate future growth for all sports.

School Oval

- Upgrade of the school oval with drainage, irrigation, warm season grasses and training lights. Football and cricket would use the school oval for training and weekend competition purposes.
- The installation of change room facilities within a stadium upgrade to support school/ community use of the school oval, would be supported by user groups.
- All soccer clubs welcomed the idea of a synthetic pitch design forecast for the pitch closest to the netball courts, as this would allow for increased participation, training opportunities and less wear and tear of the surface.

Athletics and Soccer

- Review the need for additional storage.
- Investigate the opportunity to access mains pressure water supply near grandstand for cleaning and dust suppression of sand pits.
- Opportunity to have a ground level kiosk.

Netball

- The two back courts would be best positioned to be multi-lined for tennis use also.
- Parking may become an issue for athletics if tennis is played on weekends.
- Upgrade of amenities to include facilities for males.

Unstructured Sport and Recreation Facilities

- Develop a hill Mountain bike trail to support participants of different ability level.
- Play space is in a poor condition in places. An upgrade to District level is recommended in the short term.
- Improved social spaces with support infrastructure i.e., shade, BBQ's drinking fountains.
- Current cross-country route loops through trees behind the athletics track within the fence line. Athletics club suggest installation of footbridge to enable a safe cross-country route



Indoor Stadium

- There is demand for a multi-sport court indoor sports courts by the local Kilsyth Basketball Association (15,000 members) and Lilydale Yarra Valley Netball Association (2,500 members). The demand however has been reduced due to the development of the Melba College courts, drop off in participation numbers following Covid period and the construction of covers over 6 of the 12 netball courts at Pinks Reserve (to be completed later in 2022).
- Yarra Hills Secondary College has had a concept plan for an indoor sports stadium with four courts (basketball compliant only), gymnasium hall and sports pavilion servicing the school oval drafted. Future work is required to confirm the demand.
- The stadium could include a commercial kitchen that would be used by Yarra Hills Secondary College and Cire as a shared community learning resource.
- There is capacity for the growth of badminton and table tennis in existing facilities at Kilsyth Sports Centre for the short term. However, both associations report that if growth continues in the domestic competition, additional courts will be required in the long term.
- The badminton and table tennis associations are concerned about the impact of new indoor stadiums on school sites because schools dominate the off-peak use times of the existing facilities at Kilsyth Sports Centre. Schools' use midweek is a major revenue source for the associations.
- There is a demand for a gymnastics facility in Yarra Ranges. Demand for gymnastics in the area supports an extension of the Monbulk facility as the preferred option.

Cire

- Cire have outgrown this space and now utilise an additional property. The future use of this facility is to be investigated, taking into consideration asset condition, current and future use.
- Previously a request has been made to upgrade amenities.

Men's Shed

- The Men's Shed require access to a larger facility that is fit for purpose.
- Issues with the lack of carparking and inadequate toilets due to sharing with Cire

Yarra Ranges Special Development School

- The proposal of a traffic school available for community use should be retained within the Master Plan.
- The school utilises the netball courts for physical activities and support and encourage community and neighbouring usage of the school facilities.

Other Reserve Amenities

- There are traffic issues at Morrison Reserve, which could be resolved with improved traffic, bollards and formal car parking.
- Alternative access to the Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School should be investigated.
- Assess and treat storm water run-off caused by formed asphalt car park.
- Create a place that is safe for people to participate including welcoming entries, social spaces, maintain site lines and improved park lighting.
- Maintain the green space areas and development options should be designed to blend into hills landscape.
- Community strongly supports the addition of public toilets near the play space.
- Additional parking may be required to support a future play space upgrade and any additional recreation facilities such as a bike park that has been suggested.

5. WHAT IS PROPOSED?

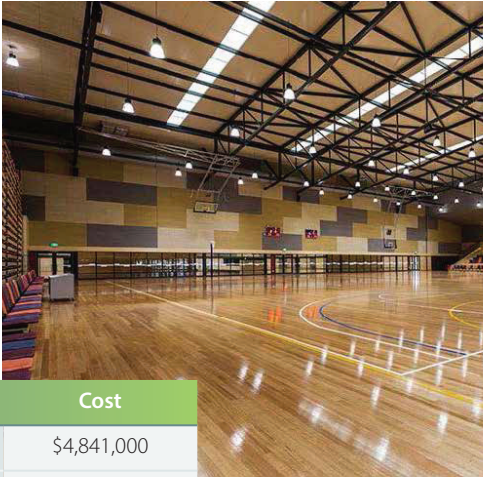
The project findings identified that there is an opportunity to upgrade Morrison Reserve and create a Regional Sport and Recreation Precinct.

The precinct vision includes the following areas:

- Reserve Recreation
- Sports
- Yarra Hills Secondary College
- Yarra Ranges Special Development School

The estimated cost summary by area is as follows:

Area	Cost
Reserve Recreation Area	\$4,841,000
Sports Area	\$8,918,000
South-West Entrance and car Park	\$780,000
School Area	\$27,115,000
Total	\$41,654,000



The vision for the Morrison Reserve Regional Sports Area is:
TO CREATE A PLACE FOR SPORT AND RECREATION, TEACHING AND LEARNING, COMMUNITY EVENTS, PLAY AND ADVENTURE AND COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING.





OBJECTIVES

- 1 Upgrade playspace to District standard in the short term.
- 2 Review BBQ provision and best location with playspace redevelopment.
- 3 Develop a bike path that incorporates a variety of trails suited for beginner, intermediate and advanced riders.
- 4 Install public toilet to cater for playspace, mountain bike track and western reserve usage, exact location to be determined.
- 5 Investigate Cire infrastructure issues and confirm need to extend the community garden area.
- 6 Undertake car park study and design to determine parking requirement and layout to support current usage, new playspace and bike path. All developments are to include a stormwater plan to manage flow, retention and reuse to protect nearby neighbours and sports infrastructure at the low levels of the reserve.
- 7 Connect and improve the pathway network / fitness and cross-country track to connect the activity areas of the reserve, including access to water, way finding signage, distance markers and lighting where appropriate.
- 8 Redevelopment of the school oval with LED lighting to training standard, irrigation, drainage and warm season grass.
- 9 Two cricket training nets for club and community use with a low fence behind the bowlers run ups as per the Cricket Victoria Guidelines.
- 10 Proposed four court indoor sport stadium.
- 11 Proposed multi-activity space with free form social seating spaces that connects and supports the play and active recreation spaces with the Yarra Hills Secondary College.
- 12 Ensure DDA compliance and accessibility from pavilions to athletics and soccer playing facilities.
- 13 Expansion of the Soccer Pavilion to include additional set of toilets / change facilities.
- 14 Investigate feasibility to convert the soccer pitch surface to synthetic and extend the length to include a warm-up/junior training space.
- 15 Soccer technical area.
- 16 Provide tiered spectator seating.
- 17 Multi-line two of the courts for netball, tennis and community use. Upgrade lighting and fencing as required
- 18 Future upgrade of clubrooms to accommodate multiple user groups.
- 19 Seal Car park adjacent to the south of the college, west of the Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School.
- 20 Apply road markings and signage to provide a safer crossing point for students from the car park to the College.
- 21 Consider improved traffic management of entry.
- 22 Bike education concept as part of Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School (Separate Project).
- 23 Work with Morrison House Men's Shed to investigate site issues and opportunities.
- 24 Include multiple spaces, terraced seating etc., to sit, rest, socialise and enjoy the view (locations to be determined).
- 25 Track resurfacing (at end of life).
- 26 Additional car park opportunities and location(s) to be determined in detailed planning.
- 27 Inclusion of additional landscaping and planting to enhance biodiversity values.

KEY

- ▲ Lighting
- Signage
- ▭ Morrison Reserve Recreation Precinct
- ▭ Yarra Hills Secondary College
- ▭ Morrison Reserve Sports Precinct
- ▭ Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School
- Social spaces for active recreation, connection & relaxation

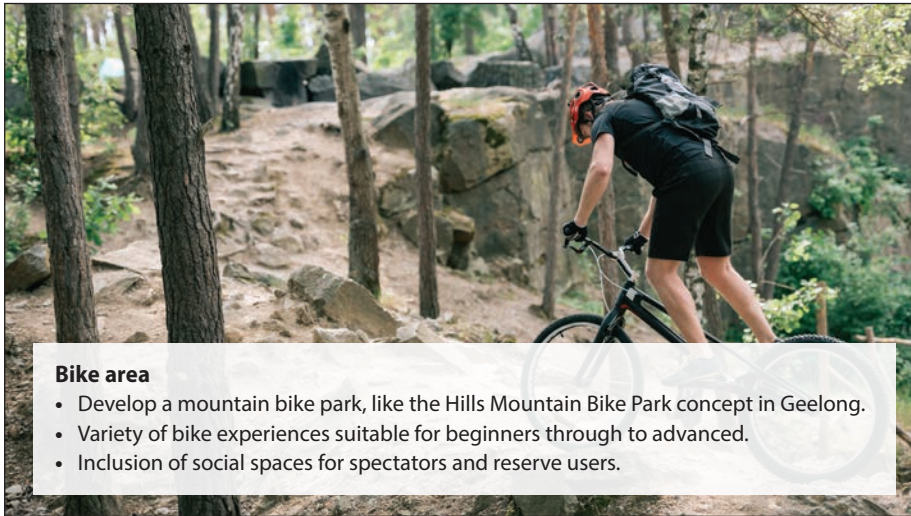


MORRISON RESERVE

Master Plan
March 2023 | Rev G
PLACE

Morrison Reserve Recreation Area

The Master Plan improvements for unstructured sport and recreation at Morrison Reserve are:



Bike area

- Develop a mountain bike park, like the Hills Mountain Bike Park concept in Geelong.
- Variety of bike experiences suitable for beginners through to advanced.
- Inclusion of social spaces for spectators and reserve users.

The plan on the following page details the key actions and objectives for the Recreation precinct.



Support infrastructure

- Provide park furniture adjacent to the playspace suited to youth and families watching bike activities.
- Install a public toilet to cater for the play space, mountain bike track and western reserve usage.
- Review provision of car parking, social spaces and BBQ facilities as part of the playspace upgrade and bike park.



Pathways

- Connect and improve the pathway network/fitness and cross-country track to connect the activity areas of the reserve, including access to water, way finding signage, distance markers and lighting where appropriate.
- Maintain and extend a walking/fitness track.



Playground

- Relocate playspace and consider current site for future parking opportunity.
- Renew the playground to District standard.



KEY

- ▲ Lighting
- Signage
- Morrison Reserve Recreation Precinct
- Social spaces for active recreation, connection & relaxation



OBJECTIVES

Morrison Reserve Recreation Precinct

- 1** Upgrade playspace to District standard in the short term.
- 2** Review BBQ provision and best location with playspace redevelopment.
- 3** Develop a bike path that incorporates a variety of trails suited for beginner, intermediate and advanced riders.
- 4** Install public toilet to cater for playspace, mountain bike track and western reserve usage, exact location to be determined.
- 5** Investigate Cire infrastructure issues and confirm need to extend the community garden area.
- 6** Undertake car park study and design to determine parking requirement and layout to support current usage, new playspace and bike path.
- 7** All developments are to include a stormwater plan to manage flow, retention and reuse to protect nearby neighbours and sports infrastructure at the low levels of the reserve.
- 8** Connect and improve the pathway network / fitness and cross-country track to connect the activity areas of the reserve, including access to water, way finding signage, distance markers and lighting where appropriate.
- 24** Work with Morrison House Men's Shed to investigate site issues and opportunities.
- 25** Include multiple spaces, terraced seating etc., to sit, rest, socialise and enjoy the view (locations to be determined).
- 27** Additional car park opportunities and location(s) to be determined in detailed planning.
- 28** Inclusion of additional landscaping and planting to enhance biodiversity values.

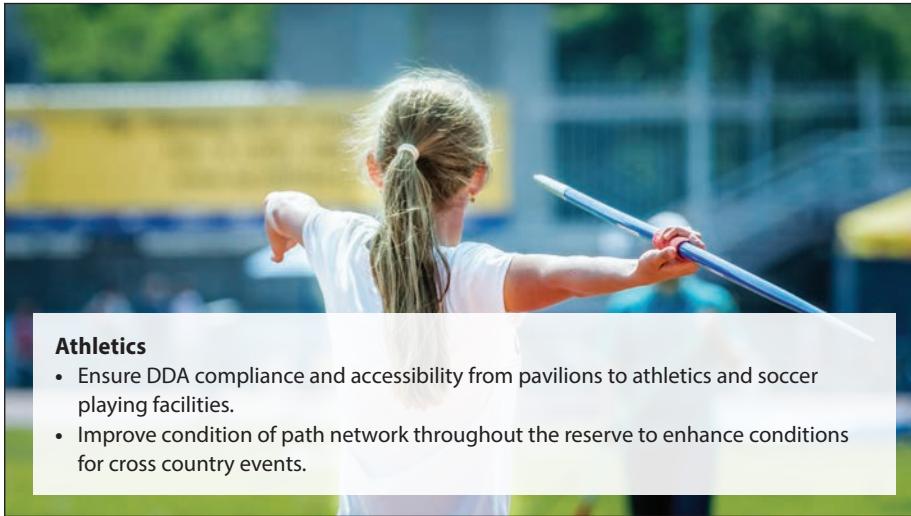
MORRISON RESERVE

Master Plan
March 2023 | Rev G

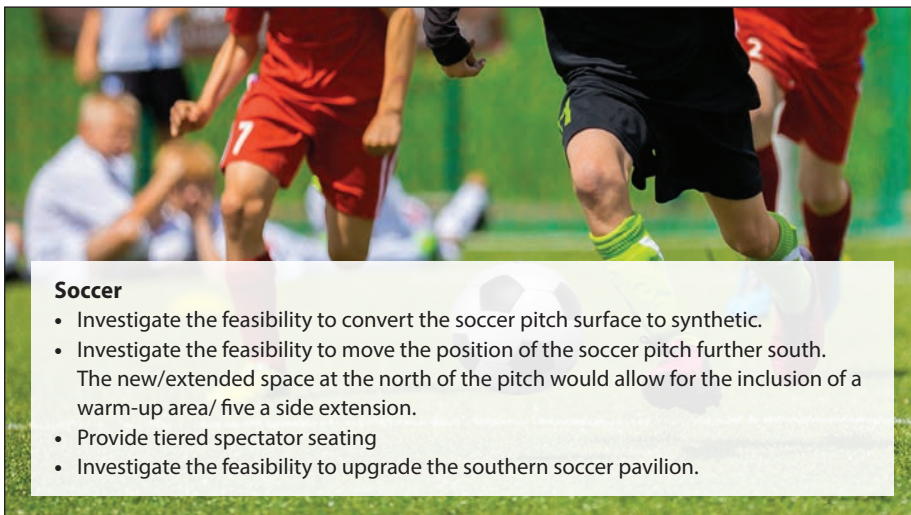
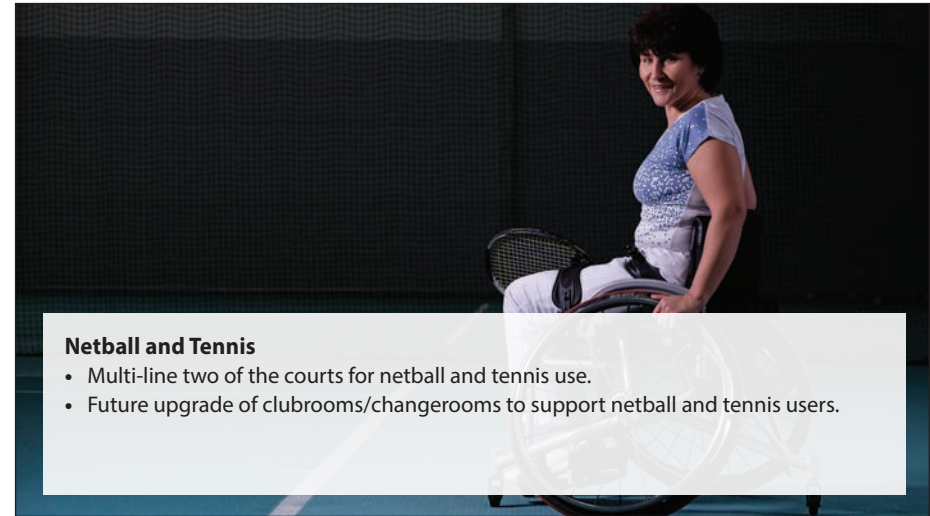
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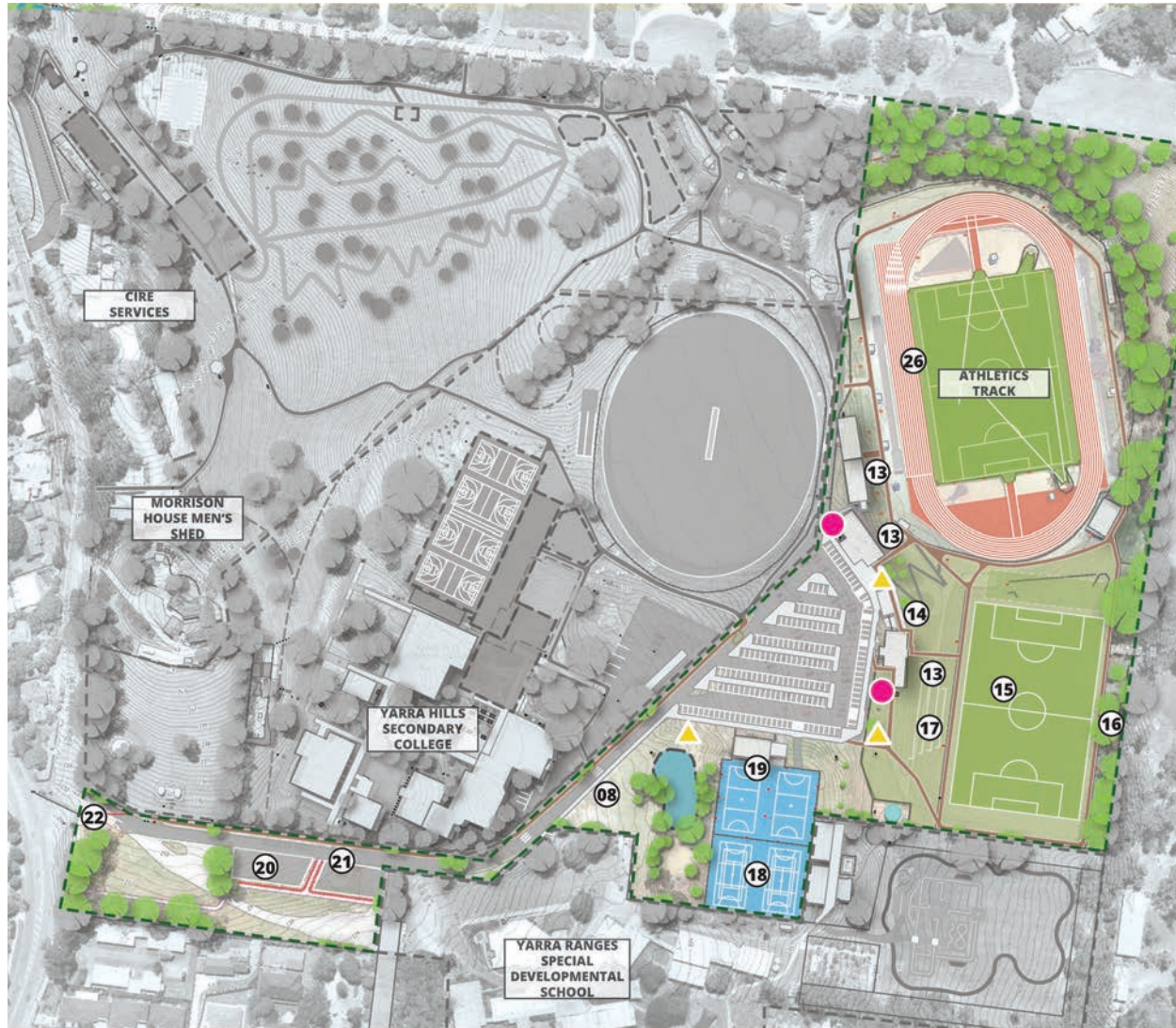
Morrison Reserve Sports Area

The Master Plan improvements for structured outdoor sports provided for at Morrison Reserve are:



The plan on the following page details the key actions and objectives for the Sports precinct.





KEY

- ▲ Lighting
- Signage
- Morrison Reserve Sports Precinct



OBJECTIVES

Morrison Reserve Sports Precinct

- 8** Connect and improve the pathway network / fitness and cross-country track to connect the activity areas of the reserve, including access to water, way finding signage, distance markers and lighting where appropriate.
- 13** Ensure DDA compliance and accessibility from pavilions to athletics and soccer playing facilities.
- 14** Expansion of the Soccer Pavilion to include additional set of toilets / change facilities.
- 15** Investigate feasibility to convert the soccer pitch surface to synthetic and extend the length to include a warm-up/ junior training space.
- 16** Soccer technical area.
- 17** Provide tiered spectator seating.
- 18** Multi-line two of the courts for netball, tennis and community use. Upgrade lighting and fencing as required.
- 19** Future upgrade of clubrooms to accommodate multiple user groups.
- 20** Seal Car park adjacent to the south of the college, west of the Yarra Ranges Special Development School.
- 21** Apply road markings and signage to provide a safer crossing point for students from the car park to the College.
- 22** Consider improved traffic management of entry.
- 26** Track resurfacing (at end of life).

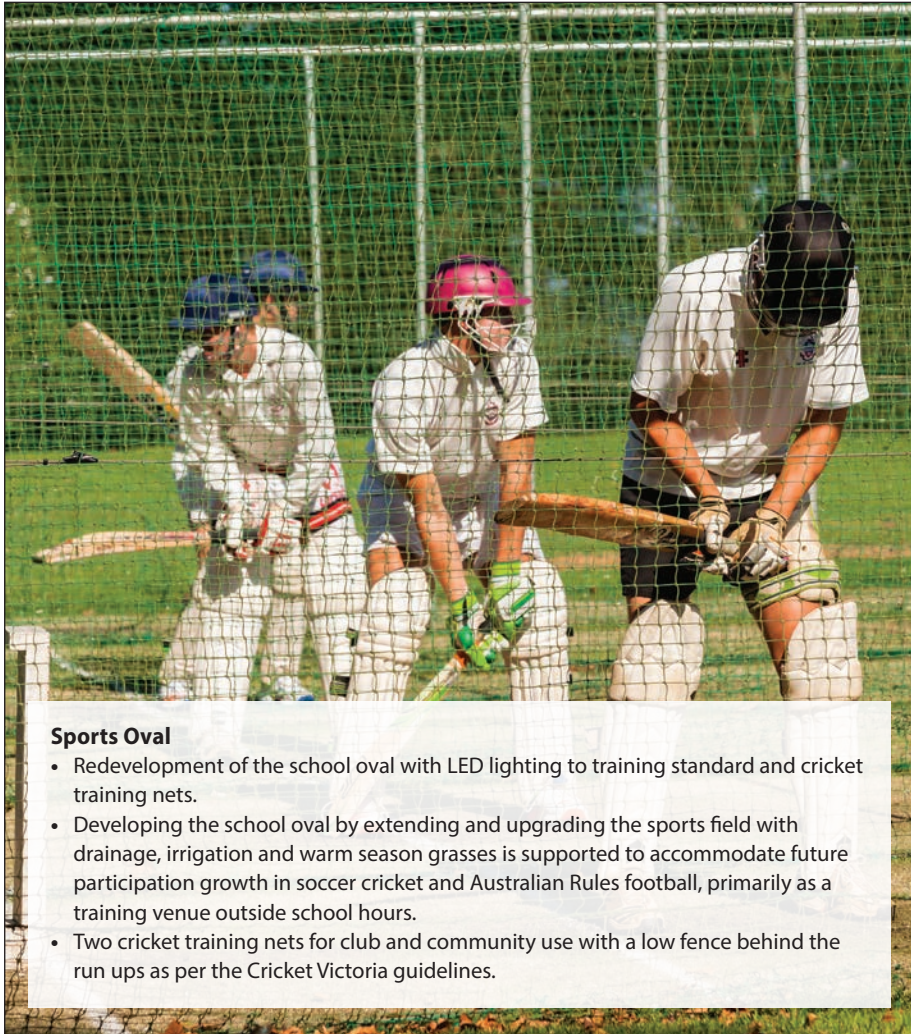
MORRISON RESERVE

Master Plan
Feb 2023 | Rev E

PLA'CE

Yarra Hills Secondary College Area

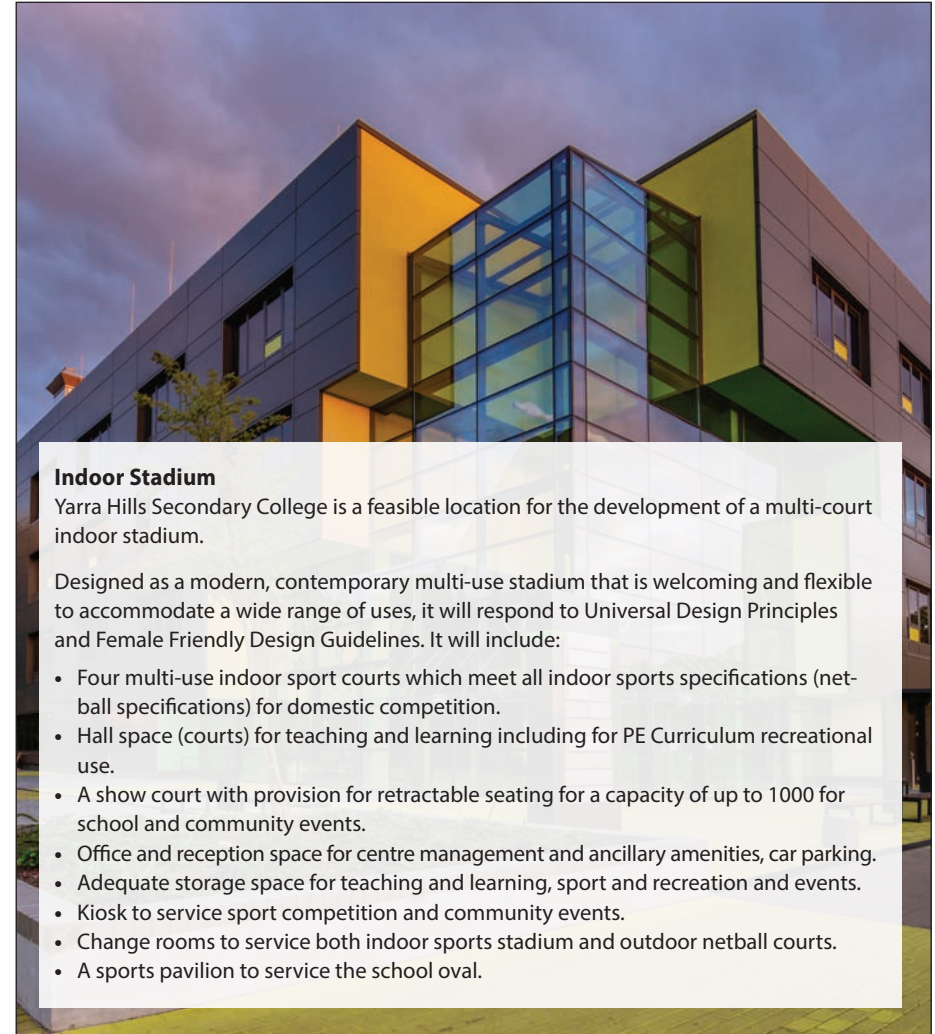
The Master Plan improvements for unstructured sport and recreation at Morrison Reserve are:



Sports Oval

- Redevelopment of the school oval with LED lighting to training standard and cricket training nets.
- Developing the school oval by extending and upgrading the sports field with drainage, irrigation and warm season grasses is supported to accommodate future participation growth in soccer cricket and Australian Rules football, primarily as a training venue outside school hours.
- Two cricket training nets for club and community use with a low fence behind the run ups as per the Cricket Victoria guidelines.

The plan on the following page details the key actions and objectives for the Yarra Hills Secondary College precinct.



Indoor Stadium

Yarra Hills Secondary College is a feasible location for the development of a multi-court indoor stadium.

Designed as a modern, contemporary multi-use stadium that is welcoming and flexible to accommodate a wide range of uses, it will respond to Universal Design Principles and Female Friendly Design Guidelines. It will include:

- Four multi-use indoor sport courts which meet all indoor sports specifications (netball specifications) for domestic competition.
- Hall space (courts) for teaching and learning including for PE Curriculum recreational use.
- A show court with provision for retractable seating for a capacity of up to 1000 for school and community events.
- Office and reception space for centre management and ancillary amenities, car parking.
- Adequate storage space for teaching and learning, sport and recreation and events.
- Kiosk to service sport competition and community events.
- Change rooms to service both indoor sports stadium and outdoor netball courts.
- A sports pavilion to service the school oval.



OBJECTIVES

School Precinct

- ⑧ Connect and improve the pathway network / fitness and cross-country track to connect the activity areas of the reserve, including access to water, way finding signage, distance markers and lighting where appropriate.
- ⑨ Redevelopment of the school oval with LED lighting to training standard, irrigation, drainage and warm season grass.
- ⑩ Two cricket training nets for club and community use with a low fence behind the bowlers run ups as per the Cricket Victoria Guidelines.
- ⑪ Proposed four court indoor sport stadium.
- ⑫ Proposed multi-activity space with free form social seating spaces that connects and supports the play and active recreation spaces with the Yarra Hills Secondary College.
- ⑬ Bike education concept as part of Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School (Separate Project).

KEY

- ▲ Lighting
- Signage
- Yarra Hills Secondary College
- Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School

0m 100m
Scale 1:2000@A3 North

MORRISON RESERVE

Master Plan
Feb 2023 | Rev E

PLACE

Implementation and Draft Cost Plan

Reference	Area/Activity	Recommendations	Cost Estimate	Timeframe*	Potential Funding Contribution**		
					Council unconfirmed	State/Federal Gov Grant	Community Clubs, Associations etc
Recreation Area							
1	Playground	Upgrade playspace to District level.					
2	Reserve	Review provision and location of BBQ near playspace redevelopment.					
3a)	Reserve	Develop a bike park that incorporates a variety of trails suited for beginner, intermediate and advanced riders.	\$3,400,000	2023-25 Funded Project	\$800,000	\$2,600,000	
4	Public Toilet	Install public toilets to cater for playspace, bike park and western reserve usage.					
25a)	Social Spaces	Include spaces where people can sit, relax, socialise and observe activities. Note: This forms part of the \$3.4M project					
3b)	Reserve	Bike Park - Stage 2: Lighting and associated works.	\$616,000	Medium	\$308,000	\$308,000	
5	CIRE	Investigate CIRE infrastructure issues and opportunities and confirm need to extend the community garden area.	\$25,000	Short	\$25,000		
6	Traffic	Undertake car park study and design to determine parking requirement and layout to support current usage, new playspace and bike park.	\$400,000	Short	\$400,000		
7	WSUD	All future implementation projects to include a stormwater plan to feature WSUD initiatives, taking into consideration impact on water flow, drainage, storage and irrigation opportunities.	Incorporate in each project cost	Short - Long			
8	Reserve - Path Network	Connect & improve the path network / fitness and cross-country track to connect the activity areas of the reserve, including access to water, wayfinding signage, distance markers and lighting where appropriate.	\$200,000	Short	\$100,000	\$100,000	
24	Mens' Shed	Work with Morrison House Mens' Shed to investigate site issues and opportunities.	Combined with CIRE investigation	Short	tbc		
25b)	Social spaces	Include additional spaces where people can sit, relax, socialise and enjoy the views.	\$200,000	Medium	\$100,000	\$100,000	
Sub-total			\$4,841,000		\$1,733,000	\$3,108,000	\$0
Sport Area							
8	Reserve - Path Network	Connect & improve the path network/fitness and cross-country track to connect the activity areas of the reserve, including access to water, wayfinding signage, distance markers and lighting where appropriate.	\$150,000	Short	\$75,000	\$75,000	

Reference	Area/Activity	Recommendations	Cost Estimate	Timeframe*	Potential Funding Contribution**		
					Council unconfirmed	State/Federal Gov Grant	Community Clubs, Associations etc
Sport Area							
13	Accessibility	Design works for pavilion redevelopment, including: - accessibility to field investigations - feasibility of accessible toilets & change at track/field level.	\$10,000	Short	\$10,000		
14	Soccer	Upgrade and expansion of the soccer pavilion to include additional set of female friendly toilet/change facilities and spectator/community amenities.	\$4,200,000	Medium	\$1,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$200,000
15 & 16	Soccer	Detailed Design and Construct synthetic soccer pitch with technical support area. Relocate/replace kiosk. Upgrade sports lighting to LED competition level.	\$3,500,000	Long	\$1,375,000	\$2,100,000	\$25,000
17	Soccer	Construct terraced spectator seating on western side of the pitch as part of pavilion & sports field redevelopment.	\$50,000	Medium	\$20,000	\$30,000	
18	Netball/Tennis	a) Renewal of surrounding fencing, court surfaces and lighting. Multi-line two courts. b) Investigate feasibility of pilot study to include court covers (02) with solar power cells.	\$168,000	Short	\$168,000		
19	Netball/Tennis	Upgrade of clubrooms to accommodate multiple user groups.	\$150,000	Medium	\$60,000	\$90,000	
26	Athletics	Track resurfacing (at end of life).	\$690,000	Medium	\$230,000		\$460,000
Sub-total			\$8,918,000		\$3,438,000	\$4,795,000	\$685,000
South-West Entrance and Car Park							
20	Car Park	Seal car park adjacent to the south of the College, west of the Developmental School.	\$690,000	Long	\$370,000	\$320,000	
21	Access Road	Apply road markings and signage to provide a safer crossing point between car park and school.	\$10,000	Short	\$10,000		
22	Traffic	Investigate opportunities to improve traffic management of Old Hereford Road entry to the Reserve.	\$80,000	Long	\$40,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Sub-total			\$780,000		\$420,000	\$340,000	\$20,000
Council Land - MP Implementation Total (Excluding GST)			\$14,539,000		\$5,591,000	\$8,243,000	\$705,000
Less confirmed funding for Youth Activation Space.			\$3,400,000		\$800,000	\$2,600,000	
Council Land - MP Implementation Total - Unconfirmed Funding Required (Excluding GST)			\$11,139,000		\$4,791,000	\$5,643,000	\$705,000

Reference	Area/Activity	Recommendations	Cost Estimate	Timeframe*	Potential Funding Contribution**		
					Council unconfirmed	State / Federal Gov Grant	Community Clubs, Associations etc
School Area							
8c)	YHSC – Open Space	Connect and improve pathway network on education land to connect the activity areas of the reserve.	\$110,000	Short	\$110,000		
9a)	YHSC - Oval	Redevelopment of the school oval, including irrigation, drainage, warm season grass, goal nets and perimeter fencing.	\$1,000,000	Medium	\$400,000	\$600,000	
9b)	YHSC - Oval	Relocate temporary change facilities to support oval usage in the interim until incorporated into the future stadium building.	\$350,000	Medium	\$140,000	\$210,000	
9c)	YHSC - Oval	Oval lighting - LED to training level	\$240,000	Medium	\$100,000	\$140,000	
10	YHSC - Oval	2 bay cricket training nets for school, club and community use	\$265,000	Medium	\$115,000	\$150,000	
11	YHSC - Stadium	Proposed four court indoor sport stadium.	\$25,000,000	Long		\$15,000,000	\$10,000,000
12	YHSC - Open Space	Proposed multi-activity space with free form social seating spaces.	\$150,000	Long		\$150,000	
23	YR Developmental School	Bike education concept as part of the Yarra Ranges Special Development School future options.	tbc	tbc			
Education Land - MP Implementation Total (Excluding GST)			\$27,115,000		\$865,000	\$16,250,000	\$10,000,000
DRAFT MASTER PLAN TOTAL			\$41,654,000		\$6,456,000	\$24,493,000	\$10,705,000

* Timeframe may vary subject to funding availability:

Short (Years 1-5)

Medium (Years 6-10)

Long (Years 11-15)

** Funding contributions are indicative only

- Only the State Government /Council co-funded playspace and Youth Activation Space has confirmed funding (\$3.4million).

All other recommendations are reliant on successful grant and Council funding applications.

- Council funding is unconfirmed, subject to budget considerations.

- Government Grants to be sought to co-fund projects

- Where applicable, contributions to be sought from groups and organisations that would directly benefit from the improvements

6. HOW WILL IT BE FUNDED?

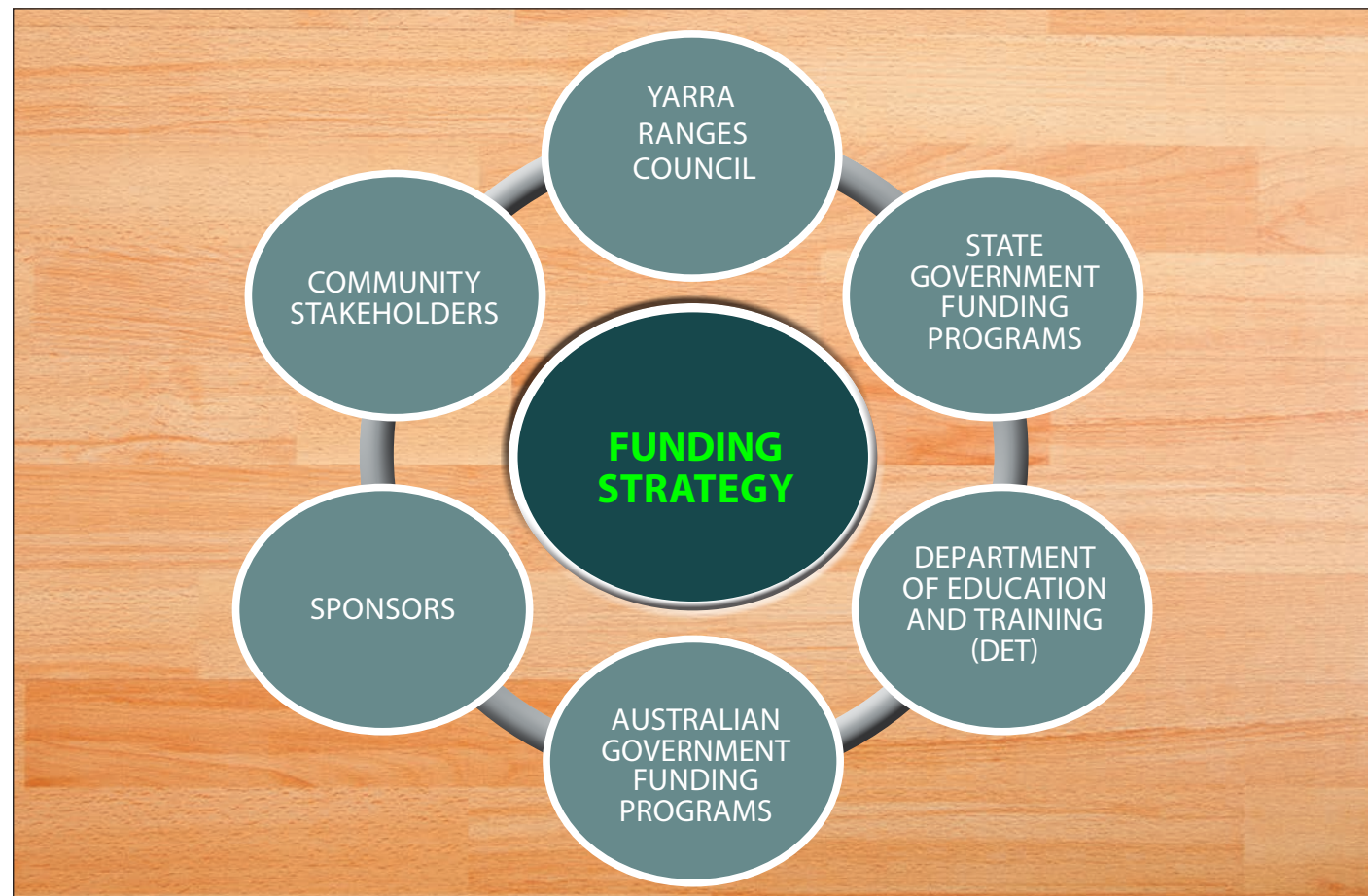
The recommended funding strategy for the implementation of the Master Plan is a partnership approach that leverages external government grant funding off Yarra Ranges Council's current financial commitment towards the project business together with the Yarra Hills Secondary College entitlement to one court in any future development of the school.

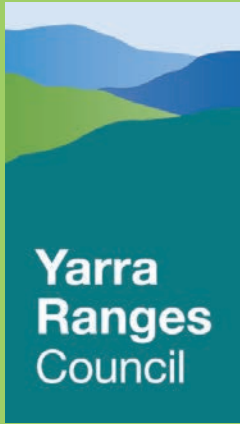
Council contributions towards identified projects is subject to funding in Council's Capital Expenditure Program, and will be prioritised as part of future annual reviews of the Council Budget. Additional (external) partnerships and streams for funding will be required to implement the Master Plan. These are represented in the adjacent figure.

A contribution from key stakeholders and sponsorship could provide opportunities for community contribution to a partnership approach to funding of projects such as the stadium.

Subsequent design and community engagement on the larger projects identified in the Master Plan will further define the financial investment and funding sources required to inform Capital Expenditure Program nominations and grant applications.

Project cost and partnership funding sources





For more information contact:

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Project Manager – Recreation and Open Space Planning

Phone 1300 368 333

Email l.odonnell@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

Write Ms Lynn O'Donnell
Open Space Planning – Morrison Reserve Master Plan
Design and Place
PO Box 105, Lilydale Vic 3140



MORRISON RESERVE DRAFT MASTER PLAN

Community Engagement Report

February 2024

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Yarra Ranges Council has developed a draft Master Plan that provides a 15-year strategic approach to improving community, sport and recreation facilities at Morrison Reserve, Mount Evelyn in response to identified community needs, opportunities and projected population demographics.

Improvements recommended for community consideration include an upgrade to soccer, athletics and court facilities, the path network and park furniture on Council land. The draft Master Plan also recommends an upgrade of the school oval, currently used by community clubs as a secondary ground, and advocacy for a future sports stadium at the Yarra Hills Secondary College.

The proposed upgrade of the playspace and inclusion of a bike park and social spaces have already received external and Council funding.

Early consultation, research and studies have informed the draft plan development. This stage included a literature review, stakeholder and user group discussions, student workshops, stadium feasibility study and synthetic soccer pitch feasibility with schematic design.

The Draft Master Plan was exhibited in August - September 2023 seeking community feedback on whether the proposed improvements had community support. This second engagement period was undertaken through a wide range of formats such as drop-in sessions, letterbox drop, social media promotion and a Shaping Yarra Ranges web-page for the project.

This Engagement Report provides a summary of the feedback provided by the community during the consultation period and offers a snapshot of the revisions based on that feedback. The results have been incorporated into a proposed final Morrison Reserve Master Plan which will seek Council adoption to guide future improvements to the reserve.



WHO WE SPOKE TO

Over a 5 week engagement period (17 August - 24 September 2023) we received feedback from approximately **250 people**. 53% of survey respondents visit the reserve at least once a week, most 2-3 times.



750 letters were dropped into postboxes of nearby residents in the Morrison Reserve, Mount Evelyn area to inform the community about the engagement, provide details about the project and the open period for feedback.



Tenant sports clubs (7), schools (3), community groups (3) and Council's Advisory Groups (5) were asked to circulate information and opportunity to provide feedback to their members, students and families.



More than 100 people in total attended the **six drop-in sessions**. Three held at Morrison Reserve- playspace, school oval, athletics and soccer facilities. A further drop-in sessions was held at the Mount Evelyn Community House, Elizabeth Bridge Reserve and in the main shopping centre.



Council's Disability and Health & Wellbeing Advisory Groups, Youth, Indigenous and Gender Equity specialists were consulted and feedback considered reflecting their specific areas of interest.



1,674 page views of the Shaping Yarra Ranges Morrison Reserve Draft Master Plan page from **1,062 unique visitors**. There were **184 document downloads**, plus two hand delivered.



150 conversations approx. at the drop-in sessions and the street stall. **7 contributions** by emails. **102 contributions** through the Shaping Yarra Ranges Morrison Reserve Master Plan page **from 98 contributors**, **56% from Mount Evelyn**, **15% from Lilydale**.



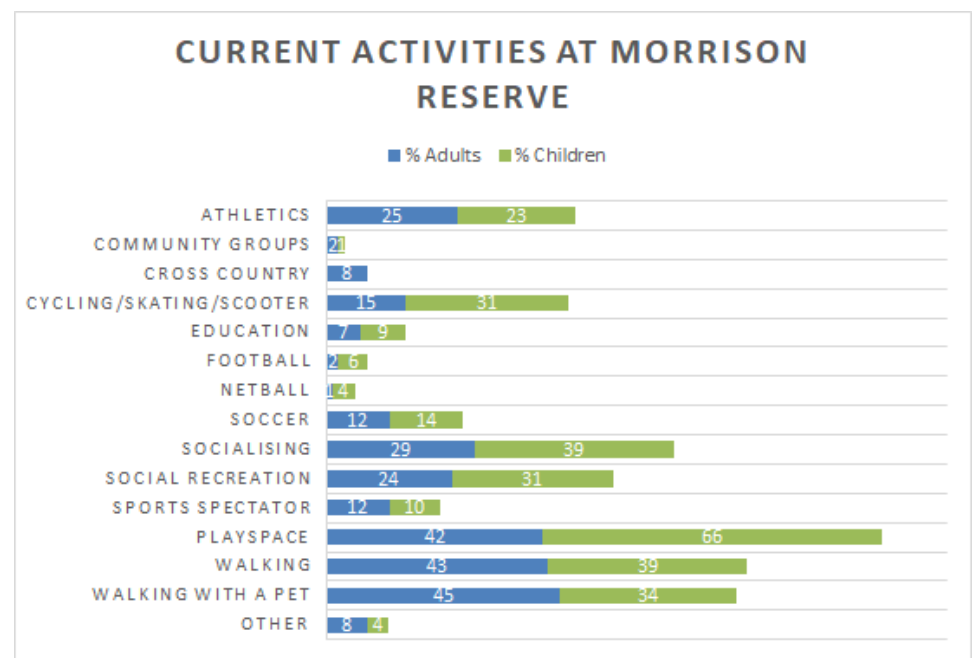
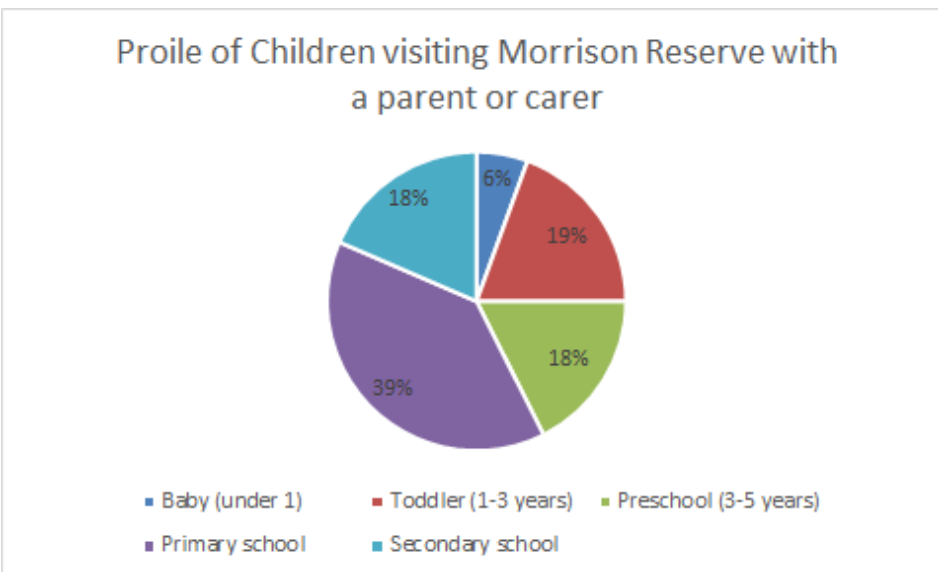
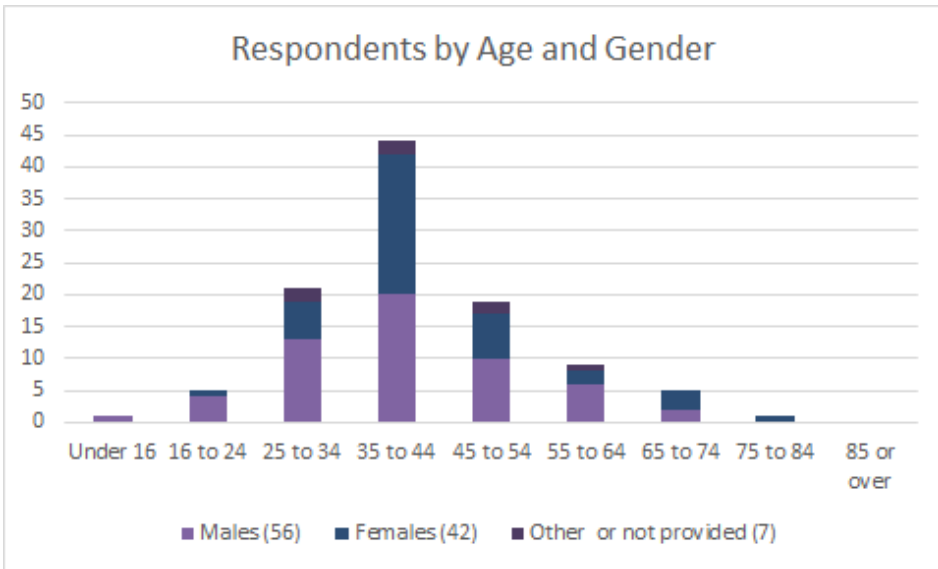
Website Visitors came from: Social Media (**44%**); Direct to Shaping Yarra Ranges (**33%**); External Websites (**5%**); Search Engines (**7%**); and Campaigns (**10%**).

WHAT WE HEARD

We received overwhelming support from the 98 respondents to the survey.

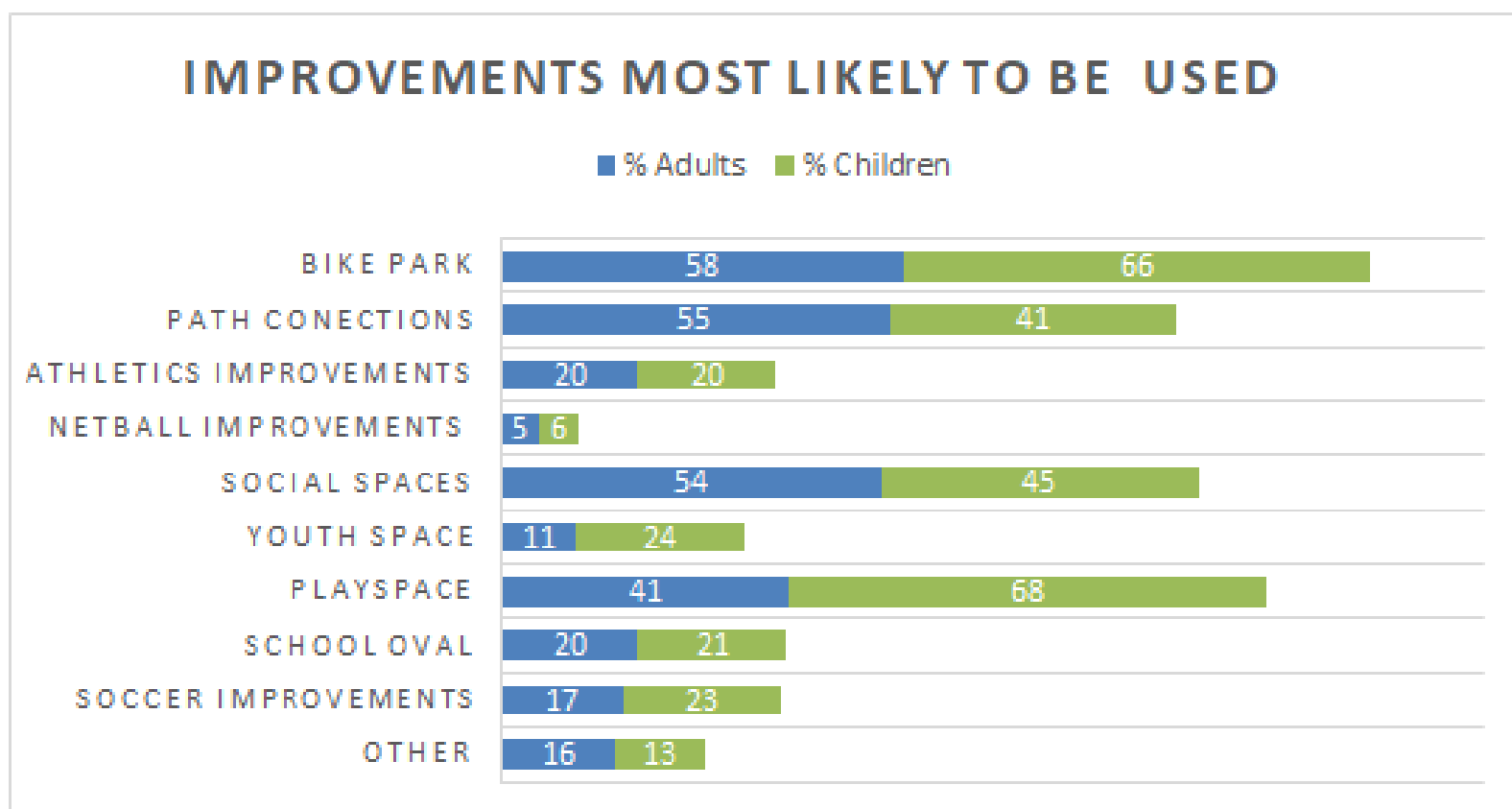
- Overall, 93% supported the proposed changes in the master plan.
- 91% of 70 respondents felt that the improvements proposed would meet the needs of children and young adults in their care.
- 86% of 87 respondents thought the proposed changes would improve accessibility at Morrison Reserve.

WHO RESPONDED AND WHAT ATTRACTS THEM TO MORRISON RESERVE



SUPPORT FOR RESERVE IMPROVEMENTS

The community was asked what of the proposed improvements they and the children in their care would likely use. The bike park, playspace, social spaces and path network received the strongest support.



WHAT WE HEARD:

Feedback from the community and stakeholders has been reviewed and assessed to ensure that the proposed improvements to the Morrison Reserve are appropriate and have broad support. The key themes of comments provided are consistent and supportive with the proposed actions of the master plan and outlined below. Greater detail and design concepts will be presented to the community during the implementation of the Master Plan as funding is secured.

The exception to this is the development of the Youth Activation Space including an upgrade of the playspace, bike park and social infrastructure. The community has already provided their thoughts on the playspace. Further communication on the bike and social aspects will follow in 2024.

KEY THEMES



- Improve paths, parking and more park furniture to improve accessibility around the reserve (18)
- General comments supporting the master plan (17)
- Need toilets near the playspace (16)
- Support for the new Youth Activation Space including bike tracks and social nodes (9)
- Support for the new playspace (7)
- Consider impact on site drainage, water flow and catchment
- Landscape / vegetation opportunities.
- Additional suggestions not incorporated in the master plan included a designated dog area (2), outdoor gym (2) and the refresh of the community/school garden (2).



NEXT STEPS

The following key steps will ensure the Morrison Reserve Master Plan provides strategic justification to support future funding applications.



QUARTERLY FINANCE REPORT – MARCH 2024

Report Author: Manager Financial Services (CFO)
 Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
 Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

The attached quarterly finance report has been prepared as of 31 March 2024.

The report includes financial year-to-date data up to the end of March 2024 for the 2023-2024 financial year and is compared to adopted budget and full year forecast for the financial year 2023-2024.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. ***Receives and notes the Finance Report for the nine month period to 31 March 2024.***
2. ***Approves and adopts the Capital Works Transfers as outlined in the March Quarterly Capital Works Program.***

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

There are no related Council decisions relevant to this item.

DISCUSSION

Purpose and Background

Section 101 of the *Local Government Act 2020* outlines the financial management principles that Council needs to adhere to in its monthly reporting to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and quarterly reporting to Council and the Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC) on Council's financial results.

Summary of year-to-date results

Comprehensive Result (Net Surplus)

YTD comprehensive result of \$10.4m is \$3.5m below the adopted budget. This is due to:

- Overall revenue is \$1.2m below budget, this predominantly relates to over budgeted \$7.6m in operating grants, and no non-monetary contributions received to date.
- Overall expenses are over budget by \$1.4m, this predominantly relates to Depreciation and Amortisation \$3.2m as significant Work-In-Progress (WIP) was capitalised in March ahead of schedule, and other expenses \$0.8m, offset by salary underspends (vacancies) of \$2.4m.

Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement

Cash and investment holdings ended March at \$69.3m (\$31.8m in untied cash) representing a positive cash position. The Balance Sheet presents a working capital of \$16.4m (total current assets of \$118.1m less total current liabilities of \$101.2m). This reflects Council's ability to meet its obligations as and when they fall due.

Capital Program

Capital expenditure finished the month at \$5.3m against a budget of \$4.6m for March.

Year to Date capital expenditure of \$45.2m is \$3.9m or 9.5% above the YTD Adopted Budget of \$41.3m.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The attached report outlines the financial performance and position of Council's activities as at the end of March 2024 with variance commentaries on performance by income/expenditure type.

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

Sound financial management and reporting of Council's activities forms part of Council's commitment to be a High Performing Organisation, one of the five Key Strategic Objectives outlined in the Council Plan.

RELEVANT LAW

Section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to prepare and present a quarterly finance report that compares annual budgeted revenue and expenditure with actual year-to-date revenue and expenditure, at a Council meeting which is open to the public.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Reporting on Council's financial performance highlights specific implications of Council's activities on the broader economic, social and environmental impacts on Council and the Yarra Ranges community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Not applicable.

RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment has been considered in relation to the financial report and deemed an acceptable level of risk.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. Financial Report – March 2024
2. Capital works statement March 2024



Financial Report

for the period July 2023 to Mar 2024

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Executive Summary

	March 2024				YTD March 2024				Annual Total			
	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance	Budget \$'000	Forecast \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance
Total Income	22,806	20,322	2,484	12.2%	183,339	184,525	(1,187)	(0.6)%	245,647	275,424	29,776	10.8%
Total Expenses	20,139	17,701	(2,438)	(13.8)%	172,067	170,627	(1,440)	(0.8)%	225,708	237,386	(11,678)	(4.9)%
Net Gain/(Loss) on Disposal	(1,592)	0	(1,592)	(100.0)%	(895)	0	(895)	(100.0)%	0	(4,395)	(4,395)	(100.0)%
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	1,075	2,621	(1,546)	(59.0)%	10,377	13,898	(3,521)	(25.3)%	19,939	33,643	13,704	40.7%
Operating (Underlying) Surplus/(Deficit)	(633)	821	(1,454)	(177.1)%	(8,587)	(2,301)	(6,285)	273.2%	(1,660)	(426)	1,234	(289.4)%

Operating results

This report provides a summary of the financial position for the Yarra Ranges Council for the month ended 31 March 24. The Council finished the month with an underlying operating deficit of \$0.6 million. Revenue for the month was \$2.5 million higher than budget, primarily due to higher general rates at \$1.0 million, higher operating grants recognized at \$0.9 million and higher interest revenue from rates at \$0.3 million. Expenses for the month ended \$2.4 million higher than budget, largely attributable to waste disposal accrual \$0.9 million and higher external contract \$1.0 million related to storm which is claimable under DRFA.

For the nine months ended 31 Mar 24, the Council has recorded an operating surplus of \$10.4 million, which is unfavourable compared to the YTD budget by \$3.5 million. After eliminating capital items, the adjusted underlying deficit is \$8.6 million. YTD revenue is unfavourable by \$1.2 million, and YTD expenditure is unfavourable by \$1.4 million. The main contributors to the unfavourable revenue variance are due to over budgeted \$8.1 million in operating grants as a result of grants received in advance \$16m. Higher YTD expenditure is mainly due to \$3.2 million depreciation and amortisation expenses result from high value WIP capitalisation in quarter three.

Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement

Cash and investment holdings ended March at \$69.3 million. Council cash and cash equivalents are subject to external restrictions that limit amounts available for discretionary use, after eliminating restricted cash including trust funds and reserves, left with \$31.8 million for free

allocations. The Balance Sheet presents a working capital of \$16.4 million (total current assets of \$118.1million less total current liabilities of \$101.7million). This reflects Council’s ability to meet its obligations as and when they fall due.

Capital Program

Capital expenditure finished the month at \$5.4 million against the budget of \$4.6 million for March.

YTD capital expenditure totalled \$45.2 million, which is \$3.9m or 9.5% above the YTD Adopted Budget of \$41.3 million.

VAGO Performance Indicators

VAGO Performance Indicators as at Mar 2024							
Indicator	Measure					YTD Actual	Full year Budget
Net result	Net surplus (deficit) / Total revenue	Less than (1.0%)	(10%) to 0%	More than 0%	%	5.7%	7.6%
Adjusted underlying result	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	Less than 0%	0% to 5%	More than 5%	%	(5.2%)	(1.4%)
Liquidity	Current Assets / Current Liabilities	Less than 0.75	75% to 100%	More than 1.0	x	0.85	1.13
Internal financing	Net operating cashflow / Net capital expenditure	Less than 75%	75% to 100%	More than 100%	%	49.3%	97.8%
Indebtedness	Non current liabilities / Own sourced revenue	More than 60%	40% to 60%	40% or Less	%	17.8%	7.2%

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- **Net result – is revenue/income from transactions minus expenses from transactions, as a percentage of total revenue.**
YTD actual result remains positive even the total revenue is \$1.2 million under budget and YTD expenditure is \$1.4 million higher than budget.
- **Adjusted underlying result – is the net result exclusive of capital grants and contributions. It is an indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives.**
YTD actual is unfavourable to budget is mainly due to \$8.1 million over budget in operating grants.
- **Unrestricted Liquidity - The ability to pay liabilities due within the next 12 months. A ratio of one or more means that an entity has more cash and liquid assets than short-term liabilities.**
YRC is comfortable to meet short-term financial obligations after deducting restricted cash.
- **Internal financing – The ability to finance capital works from net operating cashflow.**
Actual result reflects lower net cash inflows as operating expenditure are higher than rate revenue collected, and grant funding received at this time of the year. The full year budget expects net capital expenditure to exceed net cash from operating activities.
- **Indebtedness - The ability to repay debt due after the next 12 months from own-sourced revenue (Total revenue excluding grants and contributions).**
YTD and full year budget reflect Council’s low level of debt compared to own-sourced revenue generated.

Financial Performance for the period ending 31st March 2024

Comprehensive Income Statement

	March 2024				YTD March 2024				Annual Total			
	Actual	Budget	\$ variance	% variance	Actual	Budget	\$ variance	% variance	Budget	Forecast	\$ variance	% variance
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	
	24PJACT	24PJBUD			24PJACT	24PJBUD			24PJBUD	24PJFR09		
Income												
Rates - General	15,200	14,243	957	6.7%	129,701	128,184	1,517	1.2%	170,912	173,294	2,381	1.4%
Rates - Special Rates and Charges	0	142	(142)	(99.9)%	4,173	1,276	2,897	226.9%	1,702	4,173	2,471	59.2%
Statutory Fees and Fines	236	242	(7)	(2.7)%	1,643	2,149	(506)	(23.5)%	2,865	3,359	494	14.7%
User Fees	822	543	279	51.3%	4,705	4,916	(211)	(4.3)%	6,533	6,727	194	2.9%
Contributions - Cash	522	261	261	100.0%	2,712	2,410	302	12.5%	3,245	3,556	310	8.7%
Grants - Capital	1,707	1,773	(66)	(3.7)%	18,521	15,959	2,562	16.1%	21,279	33,362	12,083	36.2%
Grants - Operating	3,494	2,598	896	34.5%	17,342	24,962	(7,620)	(30.5)%	32,805	42,723	9,917	23.2%
Other Revenue	406	159	247	156.0%	2,196	1,414	782	55.3%	1,967	2,584	617	23.9%
Interest	419	112	308	275.8%	2,346	1,005	1,341	133.5%	1,339	2,647	1,308	49.4%
Contributions - Non Monetary Assets	0	250	(250)	(100.0)%	0	2,250	(2,250)	(100.0)%	3,000	3,000	0	0.0%
Total Income	22,806	20,322	2,484	12.2%	183,339	184,525	(1,187)	(0.6)%	245,647	275,424	29,776	10.8%
Expenses												
Employee Benefits	7,029	6,660	(369)	(5.5)%	59,499	61,914	2,414	3.9%	82,981	79,992	2,989	3.7%
Materials and Services	9,802	7,805	(1,997)	(25.6)%	76,852	76,534	(318)	(0.4)%	99,882	108,705	(8,823)	(8.1)%
Bad and Doubtful Debts	0	5	5	100.0%	108	49	(60)	(122.8)%	65	167	(102)	(61.2)%
Depreciation and Amortisation	3,169	2,785	(384)	(13.8)%	28,265	25,069	(3,196)	(12.7)%	33,426	38,513	(5,088)	(13.2)%
Other Expenses	61	323	263	81.2%	6,746	5,969	(777)	(13.0)%	7,898	9,117	(1,219)	(13.4)%
Finance Costs (Interest)	77	121	44	36.3%	597	1,093	496	45.4%	1,457	892	565	63.4%
Total Expenses	20,139	17,701	(2,438)	(13.8)%	172,067	170,627	(1,440)	(0.8)%	225,708	237,386	(11,678)	(4.9)%
Net Gain/(Loss) on Disposal	(1,592)	0	(1,592)	0.0%	(895)	0	(895)	0.0%	0	(4,395)	(4,395)	100.0%
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	1,075	2,621	(1,546)	59.0%	10,377	13,898	(3,521)	(25.3)%	19,939	33,643	13,704	40.7%
Operating (Underlying) Surplus/(Deficit)	(633)	821	(1,454)	(177.1)%	(8,587)	(2,301)	(6,285)	273.2%	(1,660)	(426)	1,234	(289.4)%

The operating (underlying) result is calculated by removing capital related income (grants and contributions) from the comprehensive result to determine the true operating result of Council's operations

Variations and Insights

Year to date forecast performance against budget (>\$0.5m or 10%)

Variance type - Revenue	Variance Commentary	\$ Full Year impact	Comment
Rates - General	The favourable variance relates to interest on rates \$0.8m (permanent) and additional rates revenue \$0.7m (awaiting valuer analysis).	\$2.4m favourable rates to budget (Interest).	Permanent
Rates – Special Rates & Charges	The favourable variance relates to funding for the Roads for Community Initiative recognised in October. The timing of the road sealing has varied to the budget, some SCS's have been struck this year when they were budgeted for 24/25 and some were delayed from 22/23.	\$2.5m favourable to budget	Permanent
Statutory Fees and Fines	The favourable variance mainly relates to animal fines/legal recoveries	\$0.5m favourable to budget	Permanent
Grants - Operating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase due to Grant Commission Funding increased forecast to \$17m (Budget \$8.3m, 22/23 year actual \$15m) anticipated Jun-24 	\$9.9m favourable to budget if \$17m Grant Commission Funding received in Jun-24 as forecasted	Permanent
Other Revenue	The favourable variance is revenue from storm insurance claims which have been paid this financial year.	\$0.6m favourable to budget	Permanent
Interest Income	Higher opening cash balance than anticipated and increase in interest rates	\$1.3m favourable to budget	Permanent
Contributions – Non-Monetary Assets	Variance to Budget due to phasing, with gifted assets to be recognised May/June 2024.		

Year to date forecast performance against Budget (>\$0.5m or 10%) – Expenses

Variance type - Expenses	Variance Commentary	\$ Full Year Impact	Comment
Employee Benefits	Underspend in employee costs is due to vacancies across the organisation.	\$3.0m favourable to budget	Permanent
Materials and Services	<p>Favourable variance is largely influenced by lower year-to-date costs due to timing of expenditure and budget phasing in various areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storms (\$3.1m), Significant expenditure variance is due to the estimate of total works following this storm being over-stated at the time the Budget was prepared. Landfill provision (\$1.9m) Cost of leasing (\$1.1m), but offset by increased amortisation costs of right of use assets. <p>This is partially offset by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste management (\$2.0m), mainly due increased FOGO volumes and additional rate increase to budget \$1.8m. Other increase in green & hard waste \$0.5m due in part to budget phasing, offset by recycling return deposits \$0.2m information services (\$2.0m), mainly for \$1.2m network maintenance due to an increase in online support services. \$0.3m Consultants from Systems & Reporting program which is fully funded by New Grant Funding received. \$0.5m Telecommunications with costs now included in IT and not allocated to rest of business (will be offset by savings in other areas) Financial services (\$1.0m), due to increases in insurances \$0.5m, temporary staff and consultants \$0.4m (offset by staff savings) climate & nature & Bushlands (\$0.6m), primarily due to streetlighting \$0.9m fleet operation (\$0.3m mainly for equipment & plant hire/lease) infrastructure services (\$1.0m) due to temporary staff \$0.3m and additional works required \$0.7m (but partly phasing issue due to dust suppressant timing over summer months) Parks, Trees & Trails (\$0.8m) due to sportsfields increased usage \$0.5m, Trees \$0.3m 	<p>\$1.4m favourable to budget</p> <p>\$2.5m favourable to budget</p> <p>\$1.5m favourable to budget</p> <p>\$2.1m unfavourable to budget</p> <p>\$3.5m unfavourable to budget</p> <p>\$1.5m unfavourable to budget</p> <p>\$1.7m unfavourable to budget</p> <p>\$0.8m unfavourable to budget</p> <p>\$0.8m unfavourable to budget</p> <p>\$1.0m unfavourable to budget</p>	<p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Permanent</p>

Variance type - Expenses	Variance Commentary	\$ Full Year Impact	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities – no variance YTD but increases forecasted to year end in school crossings \$0.3m, community support, creative communities, economic development 	\$1.0m unfavourable to budget	Permanent
Depreciation and Amortisation	\$3.2m over budget is due to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1.7m due to revaluation conducted in 2022/23 with \$14m increment in property and \$29m increment in infrastructure, and WIP capitalisations \$1.5m amortisation for right of use assets increase (partly offset by cost of leasing saving) 	\$5.1m unfavourable to budget	Permanent
Other Expenses	Libraries timing variance to Budget \$0.3m, and other community program contribution timing variances \$0.5m. Biodiversity offset program costs to be higher full year (offset by income)	\$1.2m unfavourable to budget	Timing / Permanent

Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet - as at Mar 2024				
\$'000	Actuals YTD (Mar 2024)	Actuals YTD (Mar 2023)	Adopted Budget (to Jun 2024)	Adopted Budget Prior Year (to Jun 2023)
Current Assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	69,286	96,650	75,886	66,330
Trade and other receivables	32,214	45,219	21,070	21,560
Other assets	16,568	9,404	10,000	5,418
Total current assets	118,067	151,274	106,956	93,308
Non-current assets				
Trade and other receivables	6,205	3,678	1,427	1,406
Investments in associates and joint ventures	2,550	2,550	3,561	5,400
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	1,371,855	1,355,159	1,284,842	1,259,485
Right-of-use assets	18,089	1,894	16,697	1,303
Intangible asset	6,167	5,814	447	819
Total non-current assets	1,404,866	1,369,095	1,306,974	1,268,413
Total assets	1,522,933	1,520,369	1,413,930	1,361,721
Current liabilities				
Trade and other payables	54,967	90,359	16,469	15,349
Unearned Income/Revenue			43,919	
Trust funds and deposits	26,082	13,569	12,000	43,270
Provisions	17,737	17,489	19,457	19,252
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	629	2,472	640	5,856
Lease liabilities	2,273	991	1,815	427
Total current liabilities	101,687	124,880	94,300	84,154
Non-current liabilities				
Provisions	9,436	8,574	5,843	5,843
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	640	640	18,912	31,165
Lease liabilities	16,124	1,137	15,536	867
Total non-current liabilities	26,199	10,350	40,291	37,874
Total liabilities	127,886	135,230	134,591	122,029
Net assets	1,395,047	1,385,139	1,279,339	1,239,692
Equity				
Accumulated surplus	638,882	638,882	666,871	599,089
Reserves	746,256	746,256	592,345	600,928
Current Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	9,908	0	20,123	39,676
Total equity	1,395,047	1,385,139	1,279,339	1,239,693

Statement of Cash Flows

Statement of Cash Flows - as at Mar 2024			
\$'000	Actuals YTD (Mar 2024)	Annual Budget (to June 2024)	Prior year (to June 2023)
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Rates and charges	140,492	174,402	155,969
Statutory fees and fines	9,242	3,181	2,604
User fees (inclusive of GST)	4,948	7,253	(298)
Grants - operating (inclusive of GST)	12,885	33,112	29,890
Grants - capital (inclusive of GST)	298	21,478	65,759
Contributions (inclusive of GST)	2,769	3,245	4,114
Interest received	2,216	1,339	3,737
Trust funds and deposits	3,698	0	2,172
Other receipts (inclusive of GST)	2,283	2,542	1,946
Net GST refund	12,303	13,440	15,984
Materials and Services (inclusive of GST)	(103,744)	(82,772)	(112,754)
Employee costs	(58,369)	(109,314)	(73,967)
Other payments	(7,347)	(8,639)	(10,626)
Net cash provided by operating activities	21,674	59,267	84,530
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(43,984)	(60,595)	(69,078)
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(895)	0	595
Investments in associates		1,839	1,011
Net cash used in investing activities	(44,879)	(58,756)	(67,472)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Finance costs	(81)	(1,010)	(231)
Proceeds from interest bearing loans and borrowings		18,912	0
Repayment of borrowings	(1,843)	(640)	(3,184)
Interest paid - lease liability	(516)	(447)	(157)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(1,719)	(1,967)	(1,510)
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities	(4,159)	14,848	(5,082)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(27,364)	15,359	11,976
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the financial year	96,650	60,527	84,674
Cash and cash equivalents	69,286	75,886	96,650

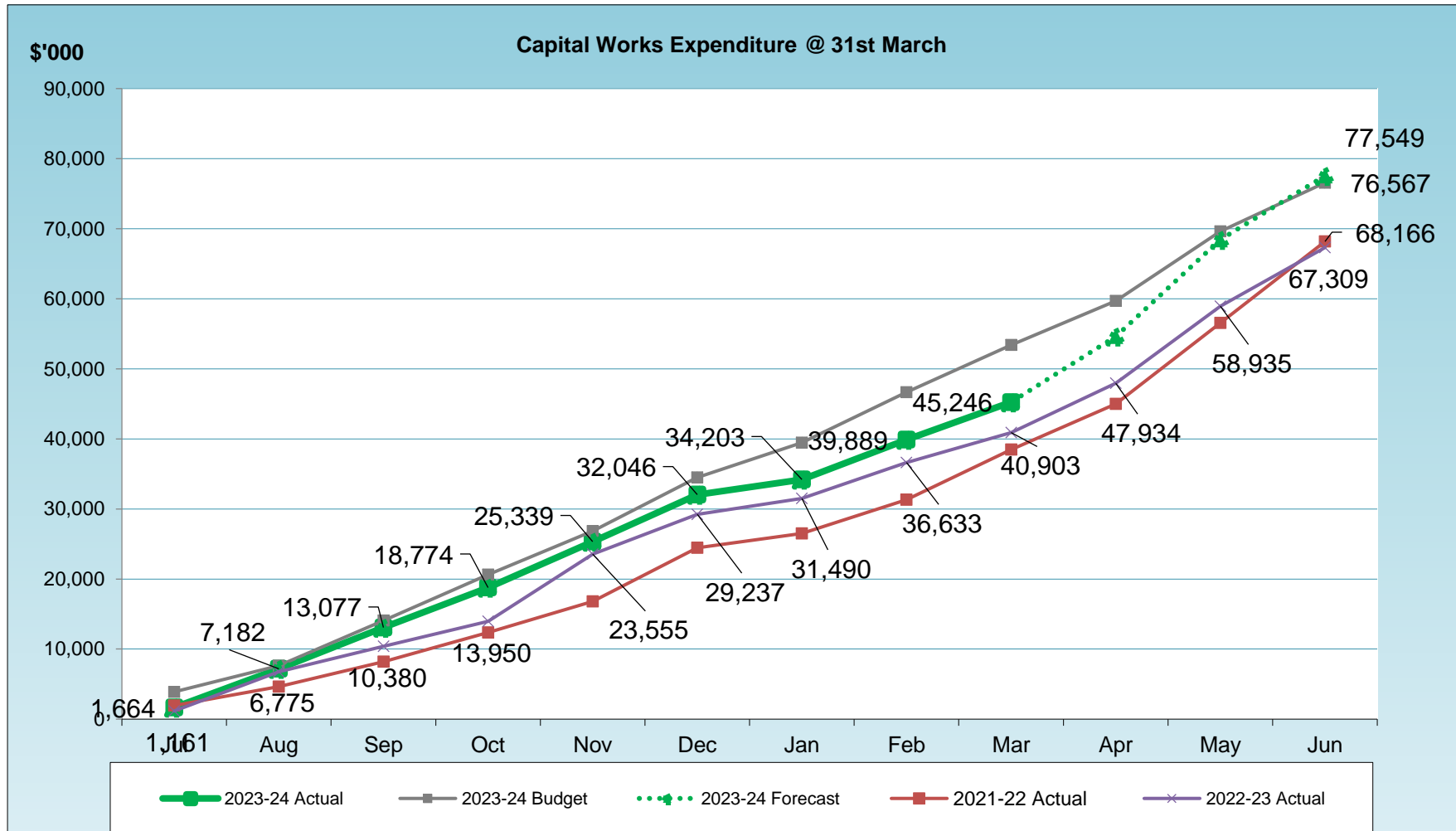
Statement of Capital Works

Capital Works Statement

	March 2024				YTD March 2024				Annual Total			
	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance	Budget \$'000	Forecast \$'000	\$ variance \$'000	% variance
Expenditure												
Infrastructure - Asset Management	23	433	409	94.6%	66	3,896	3,830	98.3%	5,220	5,168	(52)	(1.0)%
Infrastructure - Bridges	124	21	(103)	(478.6)%	1,398	193	(1,205)	(625.3)%	2,244	1,985	(259)	(13.0)%
Infrastructure - Community & Recreation	716	510	(206)	(40.5)%	4,397	4,588	191	4.2%	8,373	8,225	(148)	(1.8)%
Infrastructure - Drainage	148	141	(7)	(4.9)%	1,000	1,267	266	21.0%	2,339	1,695	(644)	(38.0)%
Infrastructure - Footpaths & Cycleways	20	101	81	79.8%	949	909	(40)	(4.4)%	1,312	1,133	(179)	(15.8)%
Infrastructure - Off-street Carparks	23	39	16	40.9%	233	350	117	33.4%	467	487	20	4.1%
Infrastructure - Open Space	522	379	(143)	(37.8)%	5,255	3,413	(1,842)	(54.0)%	9,467	11,244	1,777	15.8%
Infrastructure - Roads	1,830	1,599	(231)	(14.4)%	15,097	14,390	(707)	(4.9)%	26,490	24,345	(2,145)	(8.8)%
P&E - Computers & Comms	259	103	(156)	(151.8)%	983	927	(56)	(6.1)%	2,095	2,129	34	1.6%
P&E - Fixtures, Fittings & Furniture	0	2	2	100.0%	0	14	14	100.0%	18	18	0	0.0%
P&E - Plant, Machinery & Equipment	584	171	(414)	(242.4)%	2,607	1,536	(1,071)	(69.7)%	2,743	3,705	962	26.0%
Property - Buildings	1,107	1,091	(16)	(1.5)%	12,565	9,817	(2,748)	(28.0)%	15,779	16,720	941	5.6%
Property - Land	0	2	2	100.0%	695	15	(680)	(4,534.3)%	20	695	675	97.1%
TOTAL	5,357	4,590	(767)	(16.7)%	45,246	41,314	(3,932)	(9.5)%	76,567	77,549	982	71.8%

Further detail on the performance of the Capital Program is provided in the separate quarterly capital works program report.

The graph below shows the adopted budget and actual Capital Works expenditure for 2023-24 in comparison to previous years.



Investments

Account Name	Balance \$'000	Applicable interest rate
Operating Cash Accounts		
Cash Management (Westpac Operating Account)	938.8	4.70%
Cash Management (Westpac Investment Account)	60,780.4	4.80%
Cash Management (Commonwealth)	476.8	0.01%
Term Deposits		
BOQ Term Deposit (matures 08/05/2024)	2,000.0	5.20%
MyState Term Deposit (matures 29/11/2024)	3,500.0	5.45%
BOQ Curve Term Deposit (matures 05/06/2024)	2,000.0	5.10%
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents	69,696.0	

Restricted cash	37,429.8
Reserve - Public Open Space	10,894.1
Reserve - Waste	102.2
Reserve - Biodiversity Offset Program	604.7
Reserve - Pandemic Recovery Reserve	800.0
Reserve - Disaster Response	300.0
Reserve - Digital Transformation	300.0
Trust Funds - Deposits, Planning, Builder etc	8,442.0
FSPL collected to pay SRO	15,986.8
Unrestricted cash	31,855.9

Borrowings

Account Name \$'000	Original Loan Amount	Applicable interest rate	Current Liability	Non Current Liability	Total
Loan					
NAB (end 04/08/2024)	21,000	4.65%	628.5	639.6	1,268.1
Loan Balance			628.5	639.6	1,268.1

Debtor Management

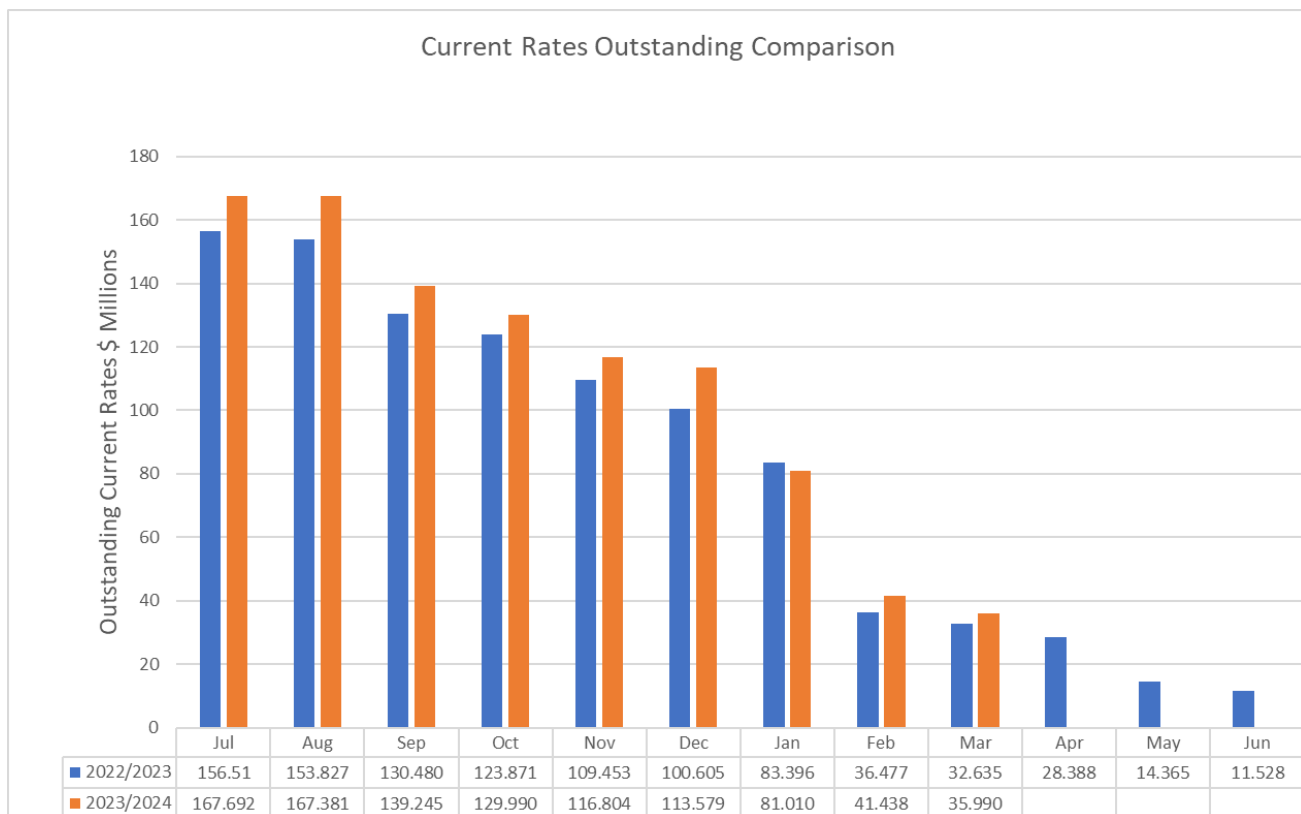
The Balance Sheet shows an amount of \$57.5 million for Receivables – Property.

The following table details the total rates outstanding on 31st March 24:

Rates Debts Outstanding ('000)		
Current Rates 23/24	35,781.3	
Current Interest	191.1	
Legal Costs on Current	17.7	35,990.1
Arrears (prior to 23/24)	18,515.1	
Interest on Arrears	2,624.4	
Legal costs on Arrears	400.0	21,539.5
Total rates & charges Outstanding		57,529.6

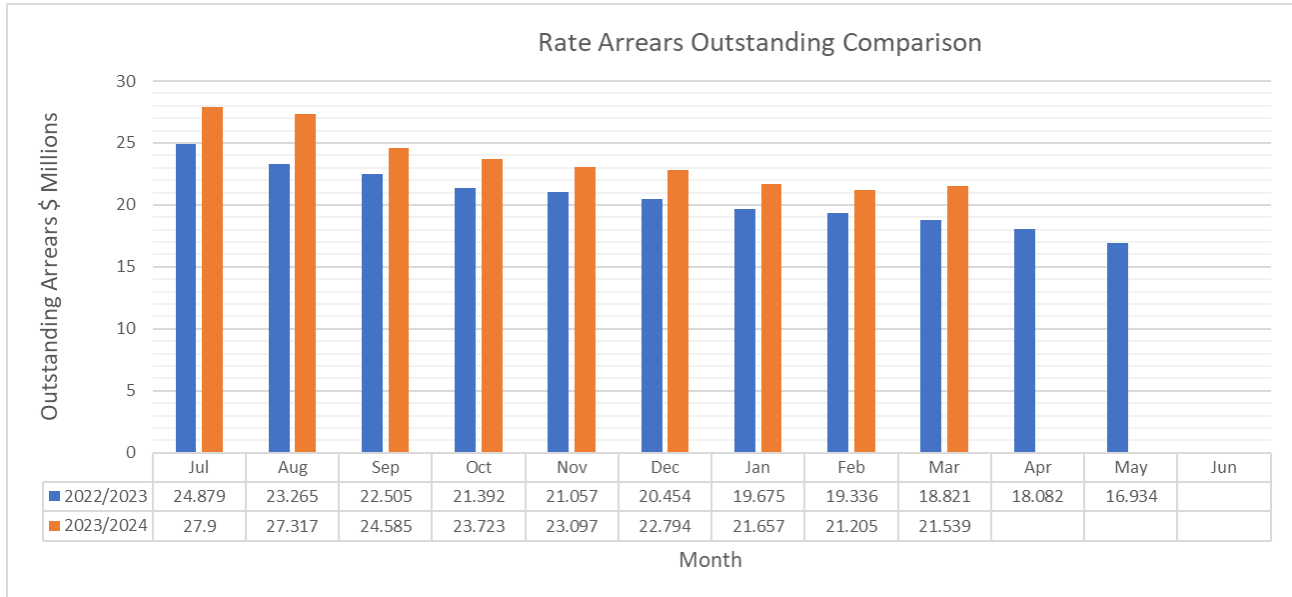
Current Rates Outstanding Comparison

The level of outstanding rate arrears measured in real terms (3.50% Rates Cap Increase) compared to the same period last year has increased by 6.15%.



Rate Arrears

The level of outstanding rate arrears measured in real terms (3.50% Rates Cap Increase) compared to the same period last year has increased by 9.48%.



The following table details the status of the arrears and rate recovery methods.

Rate Recovery Activity							
Rate Recovery Category	Activity	Arrears	Interest on Arrears	Legal Costs	Total O/S	Number of Assessments	Current Including Assessment
Financial Hardship	Deferment in place	5,095.2	244.8	48.0	5,387.9	807	1,702.7
	Recurring Deferment	3,039.3	160.6	4.8	3,204.7	14	23.3
	Deferment recently cancelled	1,444.0	151.5	15.1	1,610.7	119	231.9
	Defaulted conditions	1,593.7	504.4	182.5	2,280.6	58	125.3
Hardship Being Reviewed	Standard deferment being reviewed	417.3	45.4	5.7	468.4	1	-
	Recurring Deferment being reviewed	369.7	231.0	27.3	628.0	-	-
Payment Plans	Payment Plan in place	311.9	112.9	23.4	448.2	2,044	3,723.9
	Payment Plan in place with Credit Solutions	281.6	35.9	7.6	325.0	333	790.1
Receivership		118.9	54.7	4.9	178.5	16	21.2
Auction (s181)		91.5	29.7	0.8	122.0	4	4.3
Sale Pending		79.2	1.4	-	80.6	278	99.3
Probate Pending		-	-	-	-	7	8.0
Legal Action Avenues Exhausted		61.7	78.3	3.0	142.9	22	43.9
Legal Action Continuing		43.0	23.1	5.2	71.3	4	5.6
Legal Action Pending		-	-	-	-	27	67.5
Complaints filed		-	-	-	-	156	380.5
Sub Standard Vacant		-	-	-	-	-	-
Due date extended - Supps		-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals		12,947	1,674	328	14,949	3,890	7,228

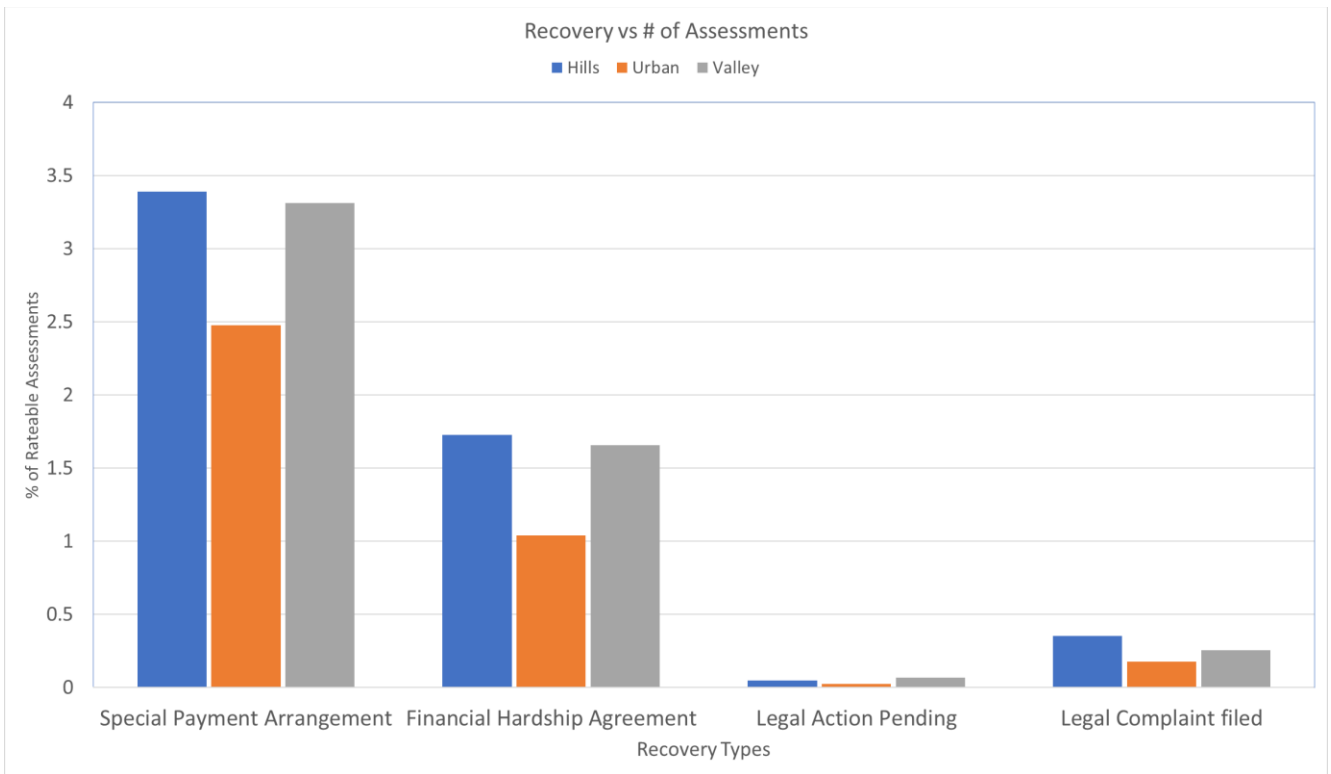
Payment plans (up from 1,968 in February 2024) & Hardship Agreements (up from 981 in February 2024) are expected to continue to increase as Late Payment Notices (YRC) & Final Notices (ARMA/Credit Solutions) are issued to customers with overdue rates.

Please refer to the below graphs for information regarding Location categories (Hills, Urban,Valley) and the amount of assessments on the following recovery methods:

- Special Payment Arrangement
- Financial Hardship Agreement
- Legal Action Pending (For 2021/2022 outstanding rates)
- Legal Complaint Filed – With the Magistrates Court for Outstanding amounts.



The following graph considers % of assessments on rate recovery methods vs the number of rateable assessments in the location category. **Urban** has a higher number of assessments in all methods of rate recovery, but when compared to the number of rateable assessments in the Urban area it is relatively lower than **Hills** and **Valley** areas.

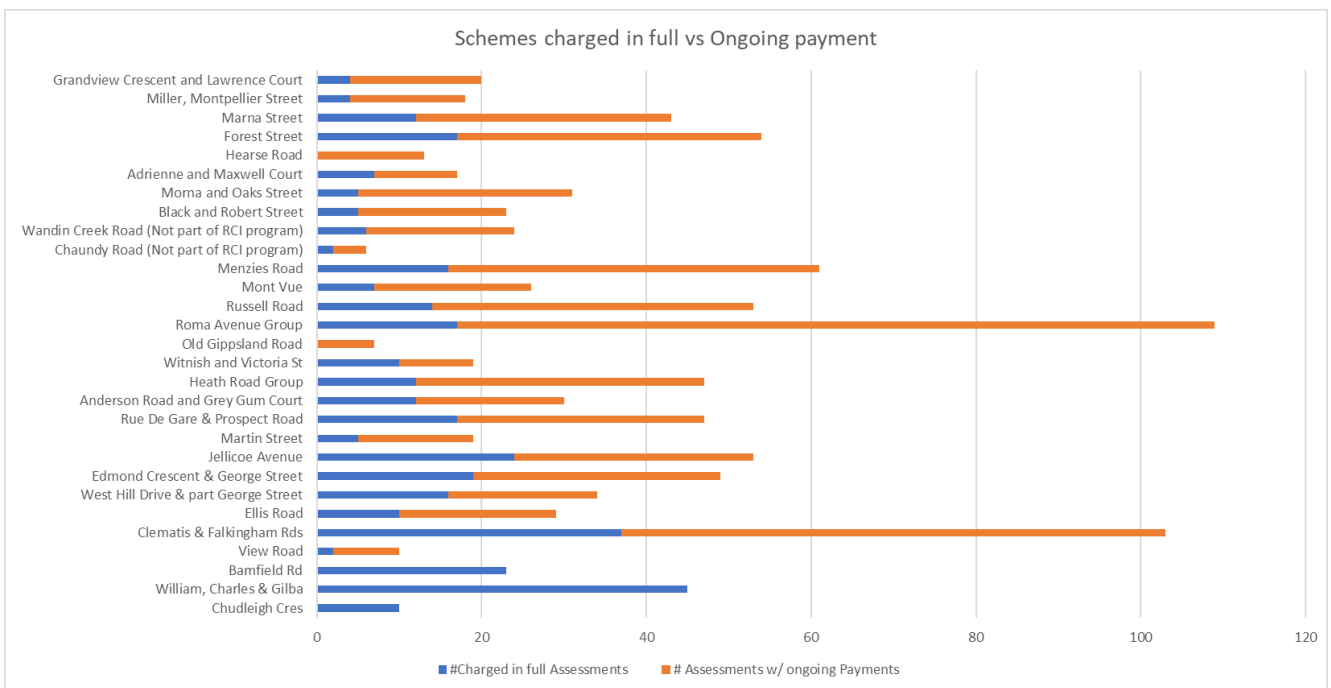


Special Charge Schemes

Due to the increase in Special Charge Schemes associated with Roads for the Community initiative funding received from the Federal Government, Monthly reports will now break down the amounts currently owing and future liabilities of all Special Charge Schemes.

The following table shows all currently levied Special Charge Schemes, illustrating;

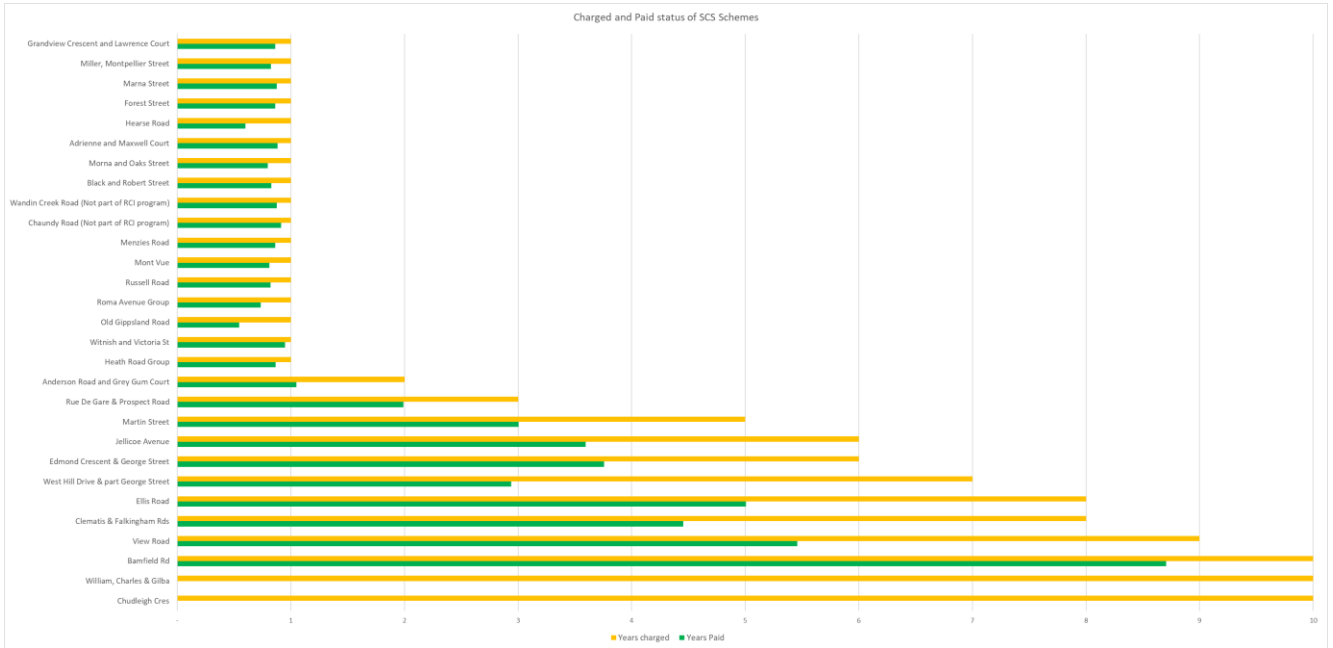
- How many assessments / owners have elected to pay the scheme in full (blue), and;
- How many assessments / owners continue to pay in instalments charged over the 10 year life of the scheme (orange)



Special Charge Schemes (cont)

% Charged and % paid of SCS schemes.

The following graph shows the **Number of years** that the SCS has been charged for and the **the amounts charged (so far) that have been paid.**



Supplementary Valuations

At 31 March 2024, CIV valuations across all properties has increased by \$359.2 million since 1 July 2023.

The rates charge prediction for 2024/2025 based on an increase of 0% in revaluations and 2.75% in the rates cap is \$146.0 million.

Rate Type	Start of Year			31-Mar-24			Movement (Supps)		2024/2025 Prediction**
	Assessments	CIV '\$000	Rate Value '\$000	Assessments	Value '\$000	Rate Value '\$000	Assessments	Value '\$000	Rate Value
Residential	62,059	49,032,700.0	122,920.1	62,375	49,328,514.5	123,832.4	316.0	295,814.5	127,237.8
Vacant Sub Standard	329	13,427.0	33.7	328	1,340.0	33.5	- 1.0	- 12,087.0	34.4
Farmland	1,599	3,054,752.5	5,360.5	1,578	3,071,242.1	5,327.2	- 21.0	16,489.6	5,473.7
Commercial	2,334	2,245,992.5	8,445.8	2,340	2,258,116.4	8,470.8	6.0	12,123.9	8,703.7
Industrial	1,074	1,154,490.0	4,341.3	1,085	1,160,722.0	4,370.1	11.0	6,232.0	4,490.3
Rec & Culture	13	52,500.0	79.0	13	52,783.4	79.0	-	283.4	81.2
	67,408	55,553,862.0	141,180.4	67,719	55,872,718.4	142,113.0	311.0	318,856.4	146,021.1

*Rate Values for March 2024 is used to indicate base rates in 2024/2025 year, it is not an indication of rates charged during 2023/2024.

**2024/2025 estimates include a general increase of 0% for properties and 2.75% for the rates cap

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
Capital Expenditure Program Monthly Report

For the period 1 July 2023 to 31 March 2024

1. Executive Summary

1.1. Financial Summary

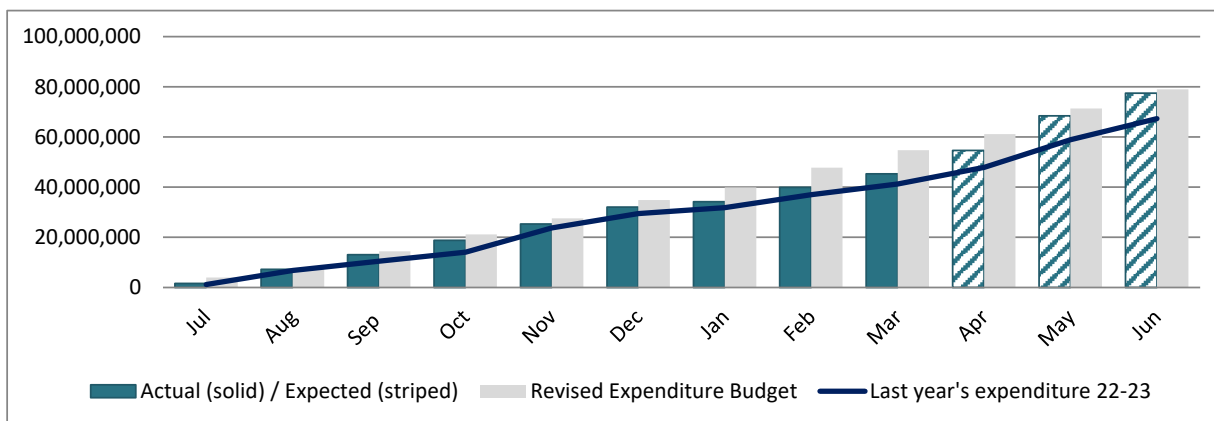
This report provides a brief overview of the published 2023-24 Capital Expenditure Program (CEP) and funds carried forward from 2022-23. Throughout the financial year, occasional approved changes to the CEP Budget are made, moving funds between projects or adding funds from various funding sources. In particular, this can occur when external funding is announced during the current year.

Approved 2023-24 Capital Expenditure Program (CEP) Budget		\$'000
Published Capital Budget Allocation: Council contribution		31,785
Published Capital Budget Allocation: external income		23,301
Carried forward from 2022-23 to 2023-24		20,943
Adopted Capital Expenditure Program Budget		76,029
Additional carried forward from 2022-23 to 2023-24		1,041
Capital Expenditure Program budget at 1 July 2023		77,070
Mid-year adjustments, including additional income <i>expected</i>		1,941
Capital Expenditure Program Budget (Revised Budget)		79,011
Expenditure Target		77,098
Expected to be spent by the end of the financial year		77,549
YTD Actual Spend to 31 March 2024		45,246
Percentage of the Revised Budget Expected to be Spent¹	✔	98%

- ¹ Status:
- ✔ 90% or more of the revised budget is expected to be spent
 - ⚠ Between 80% and 90% of the revised budget is expected to be spent
 - ✘ Less than 80% of the revised budget is expected to be spent

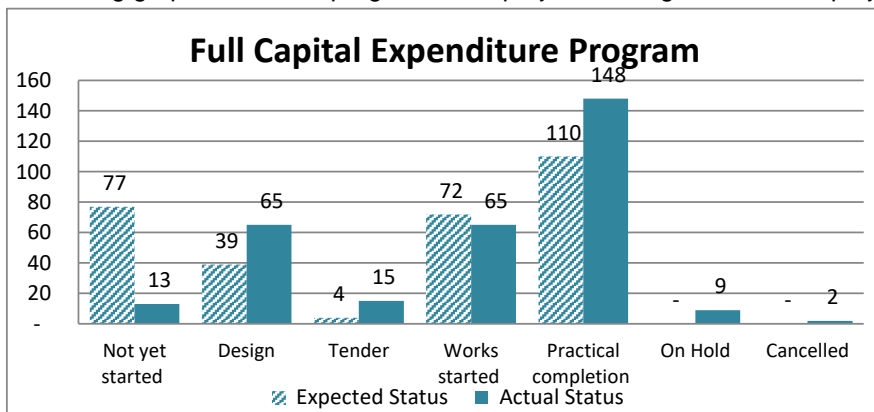
The following graphs show the *YTD Actual Spend*, *Expected Spend* and last year's expenditure. As with previous years, the expenditure is anticipated to increase as the year progresses. Further detail provided in the sections below.

Full Capital Works Program - Actual Spend and Expected Spend -vs- Last Year's Spend



1.2. Program Status Summary

The following graph shows the progression of projects through the various project phases.



Full program - phases	
Not yet started	13
On Hold	9
Consultation / design	65
Tendering	15
Works started	65
Practical completion	148
Cancelled	2
Total	317
Ahead of schedule	102
On schedule	174
Behind schedule	41
Total	317

- ¹ Status:
- ✔ 90% or more of all projects in this program are expected to their planned milestone dates* (planned in August 2023)
 - ⚠ Between 80% and 90% of projects in this program are expected to meet their planned milestone dates* (planned in August 2023)
 - ✘ Less than 80% of projects in this program are expected to meet their planned milestone dates* (planned in August 2023)
- * as per information given by Project Managers.

2. Project Financial Summary

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

	Adopted Annual Budget excl. carry forward	Revised Budget	Expected spend	YTD Actual spend	Anticipated carry f'ward to next year	Expected Saving/ (Overspend)	Status ¹
PROPERTY	13,109	17,647	17,415	13,260	(94)	350	
Land	0	677	677	677	0	0	
Land New / Improvements	0	677	677	677	0	0	✓
Buildings	13,109	16,970	16,738	12,583	(94)	350	
Buildings Rehab / Renewal	3,248	4,045	3,409	1,402	642	(6)	⚠
Buildings New / Improvements	9,861	12,925	13,330	11,182	(735)	356	✓
PLANT & EQUIPMENT	3,302	5,782	5,852	3,590	(111)	42	
Plant, Machinery & Equipment	2,048	3,461	3,705	2,607	(243)	0	
Plant & Equipment Renewal	2,048	2,048	2,680	2,044	(632)	0	✓
Plant & Equipment New / Improvements	0	1,413	1,025	563	388	0	✗
Fixtures, Fittings & Furniture	18	18	18	0	0	0	
FFF Rehab / Renewal	18	18	18	0	0	0	✓
Computers & Telecommunications	1,236	2,303	2,129	983	132	42	
ICT New / Improvements	1,236	2,303	2,129	983	132	42	✓
INFRASTRUCTURE	38,675	55,599	54,282	28,396	2,344	(175)	
Roads	19,187	25,587	24,345	15,097	2,371	(230)	
Roads Rehab / Renewal	10,159	9,583	10,369	6,582	(823)	33	✓
Roads New / Improvements	917	2,592	2,456	1,483	350	(263)	✓
Roads Traffic Management & Other Works	215	342	232	133	110	0	✗
Roads for the Community Initiative	7,896	13,069	11,288	6,899	2,735	0	⚠
Bridges	257	2,036	1,985	1,398	0	49	
Bridges Rehab / Renewal	257	1,288	1,236	942	0	49	✓
Bridges New / Improvements	0	749	749	456	0	0	✓
Footpaths & Cycleways	1,212	1,288	1,133	949	70	85	
Footpaths Rehab / Renewal	601	601	649	649	0	(48)	✓
Footpaths New / Improvements	611	687	484	300	70	133	✗
Drainage	1,689	2,001	1,695	1,000	304	2	
Drainage Rehab / Renewal	255	255	255	209	0	0	✓
Drainage New / Improvements	1,434	1,746	1,440	792	304	2	⚠
Recreational, Leisure & Community Facilities	6,617	7,117	8,225	4,397	(954)	(130)	
Playspace Rehab / Renewal	800	1,227	1,001	504	213	13	⚠
Playspace New / Improvements	2,453	2,599	4,288	2,074	(1,689)	0	✓
Sports Reserves Rehab / Renewal	2,202	2,084	2,124	1,583	0	(26)	✓
Sports Reserves New / Improvements	1,162	1,207	812	235	522	(118)	✗
Parks, Open Space & Streetscapes	4,051	11,812	11,244	5,255	430	49	
Open Space Rehab / Renewal	576	576	567	321	0	9	✓
Open Space New / Improvements	100	1,319	1,248	1,187	41	7	✓
Townships New / Improvements	837	2,101	1,252	783	744	39	✗
Trails Rehab / Renewal	1,016	1,016	1,016	431	0	0	✓
Trails New / Improvements	1,522	6,799	7,160	2,533	(355)	(6)	✓
Off-street Carparks	467	467	487	233	0	0	
Off-street Carparks Rehab / Renewal	367	367	367	210	0	0	✓
Off-street Carparks New / Improvements	100	100	120	23	0	0	✓
Other Infrastructure	5,195	5,291	5,168	66	123	0	
Infrastructure - Project Management	5,042	5,042	5,042	0	0	0	✓
Infrastructure - Asset New / Improve Reserve	153	249	126	66	123	0	✗
Projects total:	55,086	79,028	77,549	45,246	2,140	217	

¹ Status:

- ✓ 90% or more of the revised budget is expected to be spent
- ⚠ Between 80% and 90% of the revised budget is expected to be spent
- ✗ Less than 80% of the revised budget is expected to be spent

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
3. Items for Consideration

3.1. Significant Capital Expenditure Transfers

No Capital Expenditure Transfer approvals are sought for this report.

3.2. Capital Expenditure Transfers - for information only

		Previous budget	Transfer amount	New budget
From:	WP Sports Court Rehabilitation Program	\$266,000	-\$120,000	\$146,000
To:	Belgrave South Community Youth Space	\$289,358	\$120,000	\$409,358

Budget transfer from rehabilitation/renewal project to new/improvement project to support cost escalations in pump track construction currently underway.

		Previous budget	Transfer amount	New budget
From:	Biochar - Stage 2	\$155,185	-\$115,185	\$40,000
To:	Lysterfield Transfer Station Fire Service	\$746,625	\$115,185	\$861,810

Budget transfer to support cost escalations from poor soil conditions under tank slab requiring complex engineered solution. Biochar - Stage 2 is on hold due to cost of proposed electrical upgrade works. Budget will be sought in future years to fund these works.

		Previous budget	Transfer amount	New budget
From:	WP Public Toilet Upgrades Strategic Works	\$350,000	-\$320,000	\$30,000
To:	Kalorama Park - public toilet upgrade	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000
To:	Upwey South Recreation Reserve - public toilet upgrade	\$0	\$170,000	\$170,000

Reallocation of funds into individual projects for transparency and project management/reporting.

		Previous budget	Transfer amount	New budget
From:	WP Council Buildings - Statutory Compliance	\$92,000	-\$92,000	\$0
To:	Kalorama Park - public toilet upgrade	\$150,000	\$42,000	\$192,000
To:	Upwey South Recreation Reserve - public toilet upgrade	\$170,000	\$50,000	\$220,000

Budget transfers to support accessibility and DDA compliant requirements of Public Toilets renewals at Kalorama and Upwey South Recreation Reserve.

		Previous budget	Transfer amount	New budget
From:	2024-25 allocation 207790 - Community Sports Pavilion, Pinks Reserve, Kilsyth	\$1,035,000	-\$1,035,000	\$0
To:	2023-24 allocation 207790 - Community Sports Pavilion, Pinks Reserve, Kilsyth	\$636,887	\$1,035,000	\$1,671,887

Budget adjustment to bring future year budget allocation into alignment with current year accelerated expenditure. Works on the Gary Tait Pavilion are now in Practical Completion.

		Previous budget	Transfer amount	New budget
From:	208054 - Warburton UDF	\$85,000	-\$85,000	\$0

Project outcomes reclassified. Budget and expenditure to date moved to operational budget.

		Previous budget	Transfer amount	New budget
From:	208318 - Lilydale Heritage Station Building Works - LXP	\$149,000	-\$149,000	\$0

Project outcomes reclassified. Budget and expenditure to date moved to operational budget.

		Previous budget	Transfer amount	New budget
From:	208294 - Heritage Lilydale Rail Station Precinct	\$200,000	-\$200,000	\$0

Project outcomes reclassified. Budget and expenditure to date moved to operational budget.

4. Carry Forwards & Forward Spends

Projects that have been delayed and are impacting on anticipated expenditure will request funds to be carried forward for use in the next financial year. Early identification of *carry forward* funds ensures the optimum utilisation of cash resources.

Forward spends occur when capacity becomes available to make an early start on a future year's project.

	Carry Forward	Forward Spend	Total Carry Forward to next year
	Budgets to be carried forward to 2024-25	Future year budgets to be brought forward from 2024-25 for spending in 2023-24	
<i>Figures in \$'000</i>			
Buildings Rehab / Renewal	642	0	642
Buildings New / Improvements	814	-1,550	-735
Plant & Equipment Rehab / Renew	0	-632	-632
Plant & Equipment New / Improvements	388	0	388
ICT New / Improvements	132	0	132
Roads Rehab / Renewal	0	-823	-823
Roads New / Improvements	350	0	350
Roads Traffic Management & Other	110	0	110
Roads for the Community Initiative	2,735	0	2735
Footpaths New / Improvements	70	0	70
Drainage New / Improvements	304	0	304
Playspace Rehab / Renew	213	0	213
Playspace New / Improvements	237	-1,926	-1689
Sports Reserves New / Improvements	522	0	522
Open Space New / Improvements	77	-36	41
Townships New / Improvements	744	0	744
Trails New / Improvements	292	-647	-355
Infrastructure - Asset New / Improve	123	0	123
	7,753	-5,613	2,140

Projects with expenditure carry forward amounts in excess of \$100k

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Project Number	Project	Carry Forward to next year
		<i>Figures in \$'000</i>
207825	Nation Road, Selby - RFCI	876
207837	Bell Street Group, Seville - RFCI	680
208472	GSF Climate Resilient Buildings for our Community	500
208147	Cedar Court Road Group, Monbulk - RFCI	432
207795	Pinks Reserve Park Improvements	422
206840	Township Improvements, Belgrave	370
208353	Arthurs Road, Chum Creek - Roads New SCS	350
207835	Alpine Street Group, Warburton - RFCI	341
208309	Lysterfield Transfer Station Fire Service	265
208318	Morrison Recreation Reserve District Playspace, Mt Evelyn	237
208489	Wandin North Township Improvements	224
208475	Yarra Valley Trail - Stage 2A	212
208467	PAC Climate Resilient Buildings for our Community	202
290103	YRConnect	132
208509	Station Street, Coldstream - Drainage	131
208099	Advanced Design Program	123
208572	WP CBMW - Charles Street Preschool, Mooroolbark	119
208102	Alfred St and John St, Wandin North - RFCI	113
208560	Anderson St, Lilydale-Pedestrian/Cyclist Safety	110
208570	WP CBMW - Lilydale Tennis Club	106

Projects with expenditure forward spend amounts in excess of \$100k

Project Number	Project	Forward Spend
		<i>Figures in \$'000</i>
207566	Chirnside Urban Park Playspace New	- 1,926
207797	Pinks Reserve Stadium Improvements	- 1,498
206982	Mountain Bike Destination, Warburton	- 633
290102	WP Plant & Equip - Plant Replacement	- 632
208088	Maddens Lane, Gruyere (M'dah Hwy-Medhurst Rd) - Roads Rehab	- 405
208086	R2R - Gruyere Road, Gruyere (Harvey CI - Darling Rd)	- 281
208091	Swales Road, Macclesfield - Roads Rehab	- 127

Glossary PUBLICATION

Annual Budget: The annual published budget of capital projects for delivery each year. It complies with the State Government reporting guidelines and so, excludes the non-capital components of projects. The carry forward amounts captured are estimates only as they were formed at the time the budget was set, not the end of the financial year.

Approved Changes: Throughout the year, formally approved changes to the Capital Works Program budget can include budget transfers from one project to another, funds from a future year's Capital Works Program brought forward for expenditure this year, or additional external funds identified for inclusion in the budget.

Capital Expenditure Program (CEP): Allocated funding for renewal, improvement or new project works.

Capital Expenditure Program (CEP) Budget: This comprises of the Capital Expenditure Program adopted by Council, any funds carried forward from the previous financial year, and any approved changes made to the Budget during the financial year.

Carry Forward: A component of the CEP Budget brought to the next financial year. This becomes part of the next financial year's CEP

Current Year Projects: Typically projects delivering rehabilitation and renewal works on existing assets, which can be achieved in a single year. These projects may or may not include a community consultation and / or a design phase.

Expected Saving/(Overspend): The expected final financial position of a project, which equals Budget less Forecast less Carry Forward.

Expenditure Target: Set before the start of the financial year, this represents the agreed upon Capital Works expenditure for the year. The target equals the CEP Budget less funds held over for works during future years.

Forward Spending: This is when capacity becomes available to make an early start on a future year's project. Early spending requires the Capital Works Management Steering Committee approval.

Income Recognition: Income will be recognised in line with project expenditure. Income cannot be carried forward to a future year, it will remain on the balance sheet until project expenditure occurs. For this reason, a project that has external funding which is not delivered in a current year may not show as having carry forward even though the project is delayed to a future year.

Held Over: Any project specific funds not expected to be spent until a following financial year, do not form part of the Expenditure Target.

Major Projects: These run over multiple years and may involve detailed community consultation and design phases. These early phases may take place in the year before construction.

Milestone Dates: Set prior to the start of the financial year, these represent the start of key phases during the life of a project. (Also see

Multi-year Projects: These projects deliver improvements, upgrades or expansions on existing assets or build new assets. They typically include a design phase, which may occur in the year before construction. Construction works may run over more than one financial year.

Phases: Throughout the life of a project, there may be various phases, as explained below.

Consultation/Design: formal investigation, design or consultation is underway

Tender Phase: tender/quote is currently being sought or evaluated

Works/Construction Started: work has begun on site

Practical Completion: all works except minor defects or final seals are complete and the deliverable is ready for use

Finalisation: the project is complete, all monies owing have been paid and the defect liability period has passed

Program Status Overview: Successful delivery of a project to schedule involves meeting *milestone dates* set prior to the commencement of the financial year. Project *milestone dates* represent the start of four project *phases*: *consultation/design*; *tender phase*; *works started*; and *practical completion*. Project complexity is taken into consideration when establishing *milestone dates*. A project which falls behind in an earlier milestone may still meet a later *milestone date* and then be on schedule again.

Revised Budget: The Revised Budget is the current total expenditure budget for works to be completed in the current financial year. It includes the adopted budget, final carry forward from the previous financial year, external grants made within the year and any budget adjustments or transfers approved within the financial year.

Work Program: A lump sum budget for a group of projects of the same type, such as minor drainage works. Projects undertaken from Work Programs are generally single year projects. Very minor projects may be funded directly from the block fund, or part of the budget may be transferred out from the block fund to a programmed project during the financial year.

YTD Actual Spend: The amount of funds expended year to date.

CT7428: WORKS & SERVICE PANEL (WASP)

Report Author: Manager Infrastructure Services
 Responsible Officer: Director Built Environment & Infrastructure
 Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

Confidential information is contained in Attachment 1. This information relates to contractual matters and contains commercially sensitive information including, but not limited to, the name of tendering parties, the evaluation panel members, the tendered prices, and the evaluation of the tenders received against the published evaluation criteria.

Any disclosure of the information included within the confidential attachment to this report could be prejudicial to the interests of the Council or other parties. If discussion of this information is required, the Council is recommended to resolve that the item be deferred to the confidential section of the agenda when the meeting is closed to members of the public in accordance with Section 3(1)(g)(i)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020.

SUMMARY

Yarra Ranges Council is actively pursuing a Contract Panel that provides a standing offer with contractors for a range of projects dedicated to the maintenance and management of its assets, infrastructure, and facilities.

This report proposes the formation of the CT7428 Works and Services Panel (WASP) to optimise and simplify procurement procedures through a consolidated tender across all works categories outlined:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Plant and Equipment | 11. Pest Control Services |
| 2. Concrete Works | 12. Safety Barriers |
| 3. Supply of Asphalt Products | 13. Bridge Works Maintenance |
| 4. Asphalt Works | 14. Bin Services |
| 5. Carpentry Services | 15. Sportsground Drainage & Irrigation |
| 6. Electrical Services | 16. Turf Services |
| 7. Plumbing Services | 17. Mowing, Tractor Slashing & Brushcutting |
| 8. Drainage Works | 18. Specialist Tree Works |
| 9. Supply of Pit Lids, Frames, Pipes | 19. Emergency Tree Works |
| 10. Supply of Quarry Products | 20. Landscape Services. |

The report seeks Council's endorsement to form the Works and Services Panel, consisting of pre-selected contractors that meet the Council's strict standards and demonstrate a dedication to providing outstanding value. The initiative facilitates the following:

- A range of projects dedicated to the maintenance and management of its assets, infrastructure, and facilities across 20 categories.
- A selection of contractors based on their ability to meet Council's requirements offering competitive rates and overall value.
- Upholding high standards, valuing stakeholder feedback, and ensuring community satisfaction through key partnerships.

Overall, Council's decision to tender this panel serves to streamline contractor engagement, ensuring swift service delivery while demonstrating value for money and maintaining transparency throughout the procurement process.

RECOMMENDATION

That

- 1) ***Council recommends the following tenderers to be accepted onto a panel of providers for CT7428 Works and Services Panel for an initial period of two years with two extension options of a further two years each.***

Category 1 Plant and Equipment:

- (a) ***JTX Civil Contracting Pty Ltd (ABN: 72 161 928 436)***
- (b) ***Anterior Engineering and Construction Pty Ltd (ABN: 41 078 779 469)***
- (c) ***Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 62 169 307 939)***
- (d) ***Foley Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 96 102 222 579)***
- (e) ***State Plant Hire Pty Ltd (ABN: 48 071 212 292)***
- (f) ***EJ's Plumbing Pty Ltd (ABN: 83088398770)***
- (g) ***Etheredge Mintern Pty Ltd (ABN: 36 006 521 151)***
- (h) ***Fern Earthmoving Pty Ltd (ABN: 28 081 358 796)***
- (i) ***Prestige Paving (ABN: 84 140 970 912)***
- (j) ***TDM Earthworks Pty Ltd (ABN: 80 606 123 924)***
- (k) ***B.L Beard & B.L Carr (ABN: 54 725 195 735)***
- (l) ***Justin Cameron (ABN: 99783874799)***
- (m) ***Yarra Ranges Fire Management Pty Ltd (ABN: 97 140 738 996)***
- (n) ***RK & JA Kent & Co Pty Ltd (ABN: 30006592490)***

- (o) Ashley Amber Pty Ltd (ABN: 85 364 980 639)**
- (p) D & L Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 83 093 289 528)**
- (q) Maca Civil Pty Ltd (ABN: 20 146 021 347)**
- (r) CopeAg Pty Ltd (ABN: 97 139 749 198)**
- (s) Knox Maintenance Pty Ltd (ABN: 64107063838)**
- (t) VIS Group Pty Ltd (ABN: 34618155927)**
- (u) 1831 Pty Ltd (ABN: 74 119 252 710)**
- (v) J&R Rainford Nominees Pty Ltd (ABN: 48546127377)**
- (w) Bitu-Mill Pty Ltd (ABN:280 972 829 81)**
- (x) Ace Tree Management Pty Ltd (ABN: 58 804 786 029)**
- (y) Accomplished Plumbing Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 33 151 075 875)**
- (z) Brennan Contracting (ABN: 38 672829897)**
- (aa) Total Drain Cleaning Services Pty (ABN: 17 130 467 346)**
- (bb) Hartrax Civil Pty Ltd (ABN: 645 861 829)**
- (cc) Yarra Ranges Contracting Pty Ltd (ABN: 73 075 330 077)**
- (dd) Woods Earthmoving & Plant Hire Pty Ltd (ABN: 67 062 230 719)**
- (ee) Habitat Civil Pty Ltd (ABN: 186 524 710 04)**
- (ff) City Asphalt Pty Ltd (ABN: 74 630 114 466)**

Category 2 Concrete Works:

- (a) Foley Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 96 102 222 579)**
- (b) G & E & M D'alessandro (ABN: 12093355581)**
- (c) Ultimate Civil Solutions Pty Ltd (ABN: 481 381 394 38)**
- (d) Etheredge Mintern Pty Ltd (ABN: 36 006 521 151)**
- (e) Prestige Paving (ABN: 84 140 970 912)**
- (f) JTX Civil Contracting Pty Ltd (ABN: 72 161 928 436)**
- (g) Germano Construction Pty Ltd (ABN: 66093180842)**
- (h) A&V Creative Concrete Pty (ABN: 98 947 414 573)**
- (i) JN Tait Pty Ltd (ABN: 66 653 738 188)**
- (j) Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 62 169 307 939)**
- (k) TDM Earthworks Pty Ltd (ABN: 80 606 123 924)**

Category 3 Supply of Asphalt Products:

- (a) May Asphalt Group Pty Ltd (ABN: 72 450 624 025)**
- (b) Boral Resources (Vic) Pty Ltd (ABN: 87004620731)**

(c) Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd (ABN: 66 008 709 608)

(d) Prestige Paving Pty Ltd (ABN: 84 140 970 912)

(e) City Asphalt Pty Ltd (ABN: 74 630 114 466)

Category 4 Asphalt Works:

(a) Prestige Paving (ABN: 84 140 970 912)

(b) Etheredge Mintern Pty Ltd (ABN: 36 006 521 151)

(c) Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 62 169 307 939)

(d) May Asphalt Group Pty Ltd (ABN: 72 450 624 025)

(e) Pro Pave Asphalt (ABN: 17 276 185 439)

(f) City Asphalt Pty Ltd (ABN: 74 630 114 466)

(g) MACA Civil Pty Ltd (ABN: 20 146 021 347)

(h) Bitu-mill Pty Ltd (ABN:280 972 829 81)

(i) Bild Infrastructure Pty Ltd (ABN: 78 099 996 344)

(j) Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd (ABN: 66 008 709 608)

(k) The Trustee for SuperSealing (ABN: 228 687 812 89)

Category 5 Carpentry Services:

(a) T2 construction group Pty Ltd (ABN: 86400742964)

(b) A & C Patterson Family Trust (ABN: 71713914051)

(c) Programmed Facility Management Pty Ltd (ABN: 23 001 382 010)

(d) Yarra Ranges Fire Management Pty Ltd (ABN: 97 140 738 996)

Category 6 Electrical Services:

(a) Talk Electrical Pty Ltd (ABN: 57 101 046 673)

(b) The Trustee for Eco Electrical Services Trust (ABN: 93 101 239 118)

(c) Lighton Electrics Pty Ltd (ABN: 59 007 281 914)

(d) Adapt Essential Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 94 489 751 476)

(e) Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 62 169 307 939)

(f) Programmed Facility Management Pty Ltd (ABN: 23 001 382 010)

(g) High Access Cabling Pty Ltd ATF (ABN: 51 260 874 027)

(h) Westwoods Electrical and Property Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 69 007 211 403)

Category 7 Plumbing Services:

- (a) EJ's Plumbing Pty Ltd (ABN: 83088398770)**
- (b) Plumbtrax Pty Ltd (ABN: 11142872491)**
- (c) Programmed Facility Management Pty Ltd (ABN: 23 001 382 010)**
- (d) Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 62 169 307 939)**

Category 8 Drainage Works:

- (a) Foley Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 96 102 222 579)**
- (b) EJ's Plumbing Pty Ltd (ABN: 83088398770)**
- (c) M. Tucker & Sons Pty Ltd (ABN: 14 007 193 811)**
- (d) TDM Earthworks Pty Ltd (ABN: 80 606 123 924)**
- (e) JTX Civil Contracting Pty Ltd (ABN: 72 161 928 436)**
- (f) Ultimate Civil Solutions Pty Ltd (ABN: 481 381 394 38)**
- (g) Ashley Amber Pty Ltd (ABN: 85 364 980 639)**
- (h) Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 62 169 307 939)**
- (i) J&R Rainford Nominees Pty Ltd (ABN: 48546127377)**
- (j) Prestige Paving (ABN: 84 140 970 912)**
- (k) Hartrax Civil Pty Ltd (ABN: 645 861 829)**
- (l) Etheredge Mintern Pty Ltd (ABN: 36 006 521 151)**
- (m) Interflow Pty Limited (ABN: 34 000 563 208)**
- (n) Justin Cameron (ABN: 99783874799)**
- (o) Abergeldie Rehabilitation Pty Ltd (ABN: 90 601 658 066)**
- (p) Veolia Environmental Services (ABN: 20 051 316 584)**
- (q) TDM Pipeline Solutions Pty Ltd (ABN: 80 654 325 863)**
- (r) Total Drain Cleaning Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 17 130 467 346)**

Category 9 Supply of Pit Lids, Frames, Pipes:

- (a) Road Safety Grating (ABN: 54 326 673 505)**
- (b) Prestige Paving (ABN: 84 140 970 912)**
- (c) Accomplished Plumbing Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 33 151 075 875)**
- (d) MACA Civil Pty Ltd (ABN: 20 146 021 347)**
- (e) SVC Products Pty Ltd (ABN: 96 004 279 458)**

Category 10 Supply of Quarry Products:

- (a) Prestige Paving (ABN: 84 140 970 912)**

- (b) The Trustee for Castella Quarries Unit Trust (ABN: 97 138 449 316)**
- (c) MACA Civil Pty Ltd (ABN: 20 146 021 347)**

Category 11 Pest Control Services:

- (a) Propest Pest Control (ABN: 67 096 465 413)**
- (b) Safe Spray Pty Limited (ABN: 31 155 391 941)**

Category 12 Safety Barriers:

- (a) Frazer Safety Installations (ABN: 12069589457)**
- (b) The trustee for JEC Family Trust (ABN: 29474983540)**

Category 13 Bridge Works Maintenance:

- (a) Yarra Ranges Fire Management Pty Ltd (ABN: 97 140 738 996)**
- (b) CopeAg Pty Ltd (ABN: 97 139 749 198)**
- (c) Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 62 169 307 939)**
- (d) RK & JA Kent & Co Pty Ltd (ABN: 30006592490)**

Category 14 Bin Services:

- (a) WM Waste Management Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 69 897 425 789)**
- (b) M. Tucker & Sons Pty Ltd (ABN: 14 007 193 811)**

Category 15 Sportsground Drainage & Irrigation:

- (a) EJ's Plumbing Pty Ltd (ABN: 83088398770)**
- (b) ETNW Pty Ltd (ABN: 97 638 760 111)**
- (c) L.D Irrigation Design Pty Ltd (ABN: 88 632 537 261)**
- (d) Chapman and Rivett (Vic) Pty Ltd (ABN: 95 008 083 592)**

Category 16 Turf Services:

- (a) Evergreen Turf Group (ABN: 17 007 427 536)**
- (b) Australian Agribusiness (Holdings) Pty Ltd (ABN: 61 135 355 958)**
- (c) AJ & RM Uhr-Henry Turf Maintenance Consultancy (ABN: 73 389 665 389)**

Category 17 Mowing, Tractor Slashing & Brushcutting:

- (a) Yarra Ranges Contracting Pty Ltd (ABN: 73 075 330 077)**
- (b) Yarra Ranges Fire Management Pty Ltd (ABN: 97 140 738 996)**
- (c) Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 62 169 307 939)**
- (d) Fern Earthmoving Pty Ltd (ABN: 28 081 358 796)**

(e) Land Management Systems Pty Ltd (ABN: 33082231481)

Category 18 Specialist Tree Works:

- (a) Ace Tree Management Pty Ltd (ABN: 58 804 786 029)**
- (b) ETS Infrastructure Management (ABN: 38 070 013 884)**
- (c) C&R Ryder Consulting Pty Ltd (ABN: 47376684521)**
- (d) Austree Pty Ltd (ABN: 56 656 065 646)**
- (e) The Trustee for Ben & Rachael (ABN: 39 531 880 706)**
- (f) Active Green Services Pty Ltd (ABN: 88 079 090 181)**
- (g) Hallyburton Engineering Pty Ltd (ABN: 71 007 160 009)**
- (h) Brennan Contracting (ABN: 38 672829897)**
- (i) Tree Dimensions Pty Ltd (ABN: 45 139 982 639)**
- (j) Woods Earthmoving & Plant Hire (ABN: 67 062 230 719)**
- (k) Cmore Pty Ltd (ABN: 58 096 262 494)**
- (l) Sevron Pty Ltd (ABN: 41 165 444 011)**
- (m) ENSPEC Pty Ltd (ABN: 92062909255)**
- (n) Leaf and Limb Tree Services Pty (ABN: 31 164 508 043)**
- (o) Ironbark Environmental Arboriculture Pty Ltd (ABN: 13 601 242 568)**
- (p) Lucas and Co Pty Ltd (ABN: 50 611 315 452)**
- (q) The Trustee for the Meyer (ABN: 43 741 345 801)**
- (r) McLeod Trees (ABN: 13 108 979 308)**
- (s) The Tree Company (ABN: 97120997239)**
- (t) Arborspray P/L (ABN: 66076529747)**
- (u) Heritage Tree Professionals (ABN: 11318125425)**
- (v) Landlinks Environmental (ABN: 53078936151)**
- (w) Environmental Tree (ABN: 13 130 335 287)**

Category 19 Emergency Tree Works:

- (a) Ace Tree Management Pty Ltd (ABN: 58 804 786 029)**
- (b) ETS Infrastructure Management (ABN: 38 070 013 884)**
- (c) Austree Pty Ltd (ABN: 56 656 065 646)**
- (d) Hallyburton Engineering Pty Ltd (ABN: 71 007 160 009)**
- (e) Brennan Contracting (ABN: 38 672829897)**
- (f) Leaf and Limb Tree Services Pty (ABN: 31 164 508 043)**

- (g) Lucas and Co Pty Ltd (ABN: 50 611 315 452)**
- (h) Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 62 169 307 939)**
- (i) The Tree Company (ABN: 97120997239)**
- (j) McLeod Trees (ABN: 13 108 979 308)**
- (k) Zentia Integrated Services Unit (ABN: 54 452 075 070)**
- (l) Fern Earthmoving Pty Ltd (ABN: 28 081 358 796)**

Category 20 Landscape Services:

- (a) 1831 Pty Ltd (ABN: 74 119 252 710)**
 - (b) Knox Maintenance Pty Ltd (ABN: 64107063838)**
 - (c) Bells Civil Excavations Pty Ltd (ABN: 62 169 307 939)**
 - (d) Sevron Pty Ltd (ABN: 41 165 444 011)**
 - (e) The Trustee for Ecodynamics (ABN: 14 772 744 278)**
 - (f) Australian Synthetic Turf Enterprises (ABN: 98 105 615 263)**
- 2) Council approves the Director of Built Environment & Infrastructure be delegated authority to extend the Deed term by two periods of two years each.**
 - 3) Council approves the contract documents to be signed by the Director of Built Environment & Infrastructure.**
 - 4) The confidential attachment to this report remains confidential indefinitely as it relates to matters specified under Section 3(1) (g)(i), (g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020.**

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

There are no related Council decisions relevant to this item.

DISCUSSION

Purpose

The purpose of this deed arrangement is to establish a panel of contractors to undertake municipal works that includes but limited to civil infrastructure, landscaping, tree services and associated works.

Background

The municipality of Yarra Ranges is a unique environment that presents many wide and varied maintenance requirements. The terrain varies greatly from an urban setting to semi-rural to a rural environment. The environment is also heavily treed and has extremely steep and both urban and rural terrains.

Yarra Ranges Council is actively pursuing a Contract Panel that provides a standing offer with contractors for a range of projects dedicated to the maintenance and management of its assets, infrastructure, and facilities. These initiatives encompass various areas which have been classified into the below categories.

Ongoing Need for Works and Services and Establishment of a Panel

Council recognises a consistent requirement for various works and services across 20 categories, necessitating a reliable and efficient procurement process.

The Works and Services Panel to be established, is the retender of the existing key contracts which was made up of approximately 80 service providers:

- CT5515 Annual Supply of Works, Services & Products (18 Categories)
- CT5391 Annual Supply - Mowing, Tractor Slashing & Brush Cutting
- CT2912 Landscape Services

This panel will consist of pre-qualified contractors who must meet Council's standards and demonstrate high value across multiple criteria.

Panel arrangements provide an ability to have a closer relationship with the panel of providers and are expected to lead to improvements in product quality, delivery reliability, lead times, product development and design and provide opportunities for cost reductions. Key benefits of a panel contract include:

- A consistent approach to service engagements,
- Pre-negotiated terms and conditions,
- Cost reductions,
- Simplified purchase order process to engage suppliers,
- Access to a mix of suppliers including small to medium enterprises and larger operations.

Criteria for Panel Selection

Contractors are assessed based on their ability to fulfil requirements, including rates, capability and capacity, and overall value they bring to Council across various criteria such as environmental, local and social sustainability.

Alignment with Council's Procurement Policy

The methodology and operation of the panel align with Council's policies for spending and procurement, ensuring transparency and fairness.

Options considered

The selection process for contractors awarded to the panel for each service category was developed to prioritise the quality and comprehensiveness of the submissions received. This strategic approach aimed to cultivate a panel characterised by its diversity and expertise, ensuring not only a broad representation of services but also the capacity to meet and exceed the Council's service level expectations.

In determining the optimal number of contractors for each category, the evaluation panel carefully assessed several critical factors, including the scope of services proposed, the geographical spread of tenderers to ensure local and broader community benefits, and the possession of specialised skills vital for addressing the unique challenges presented by different projects.

This nuanced evaluation process guaranteed a panel structure that is both dynamic and adept, capable of responding flexibly to varying project demands across tender cycles. More importantly, by integrating a rigorous assessment of each contractor's ability to deliver high service levels into the selection criteria, the panel would not only be diverse and skilled but also committed to delivering exceptional quality and value.

The emphasis on balancing submission quality with the ability to meet specified service levels ensures that the panel remains aligned with the Council's strategic goals, providing dependable, high-quality services across the community. This framework supports the Council's overarching objective to establish and maintain infrastructure and services that meet the current and future needs of its community, fostering a safe, vibrant, and sustainable environment.

Opportunities for resource sharing or jointly tendering some service elements with other councils were also considered as part of the pre-tender process.

Evaluation Approach

Option 1 - Pre-Qualification Based on Compliance

Contractors are pre-qualified based on their ability to meet all compliance criteria. If they meet these criteria, they are likely to be awarded a place on the panel.

Advantages

- **Simplicity and Efficiency** – easier and quicker to evaluate, as it involves confirming whether submissions meet set standards rather than scoring them on various criteria.
- **Broad Inclusion** – encourages a wider pool of contractors, potentially increasing diversity and options for Council.
- **Reduced Subjectivity** – minimises the subjective nature of scoring, leading to a more straightforward decision-making process.

Option 2 - Competitive Process with Scoring and Ranking

Tenderers are evaluated based on a set of criteria and then scored and ranked accordingly. This ranking is to form the shortlist for recommendations.

Advantages:

- **Quality and Value Focus** – encourages contractors to submit high-quality, competitive proposals, potentially leading to better outcomes.
- **Selective Inclusion** – limits the number of contractors on the panel, potentially leading to simpler management, coordination and relationship building.

- Incentivises Excellence – promotes a higher standard as contractors know they are competing.

Council's procurement strategy for the establishment of the WASP has been developed to align with the overarching goals outlined in the Council Plan 2021-2025.

This plan emphasises the:

- Creation of Connected and Healthy Communities,
- Development of Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places,
- Protection and enhancement of the Natural Environment,
- Promotion of a Vibrant Economy
- Along with robust Agriculture and Tourism sectors, and the ambition to become a High Performing Organisation.

To ensure these strategic objectives are met through procurement activities, Council has opted for a competitive scored approach over a conformance-based method for tender evaluations.

This decision is rooted in the desire to incentivise excellence, innovation, and sustainability among contractors, encouraging them to contribute meaningfully to Council's vision for its community and environment.

The competitive scored approach differentiates itself by not just evaluating tenders on the basis of meeting minimum requirements but on how well they align with and contribute to Council's strategic priorities.

By doing so, it ensures that the panel of contractors selected is not only capable of delivering high-quality services but also shares the Council's commitment to making a positive impact across various sectors. Furthermore, this approach facilitates a dynamic and flexible procurement process, adaptable to the evolving needs and goals of Council and community.

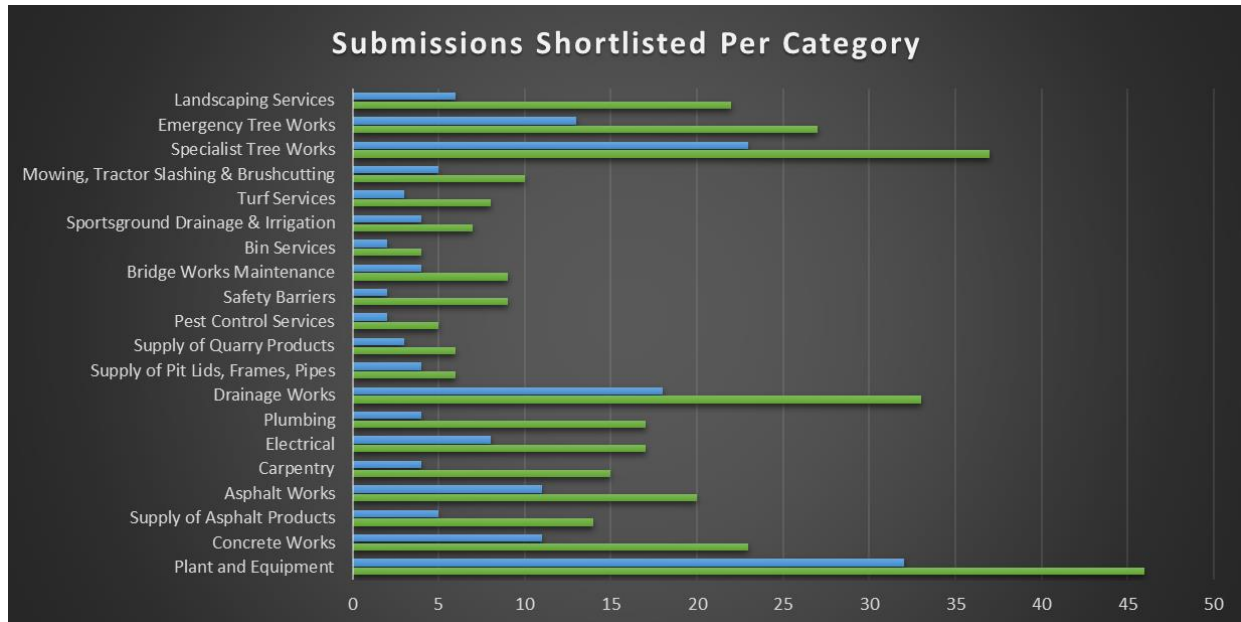
Importantly, the competitive process acknowledges that not all valuable contractors will be selected for the panel. However, this does not preclude their future engagement with the Council.

Unsuccessful tenderers for the WASP may still be considered for specific projects outside the panel framework through open market requests, leveraging their unique skills and offerings. This flexibility underscores the Council's commitment to fostering a diverse and vibrant local economy and ensuring the best outcomes for its community.

By maintaining the possibility of engagement outside the WASP, Council retains the agility to respond to unique challenges and opportunities, reinforcing its role as a high-performing organisation dedicated to excellence, inclusivity, and sustainable development.

Tender Assessment

Tenders closed 14 February 2024, Council received 141 Tenders with 98 companies were short listed to provide services, with the majority providing service across multiple categories.



The tender evaluation panel considered the importance of the provision of services from local suppliers, and over 46 local suppliers have been recommended. Furthermore, following evaluation of submissions, the proportion of Local Suppliers recommended for the various categories is over 65%, with Council receiving a strong response from the wider regions and interstate.

The Tender response for Category 10 Supply of Quarry Products had limited market response from existing service providers. To increase availability and ensure continuity of services it is proposed that a separate procurement process be undertaken.

The recommended service providers from this evaluation process are still to be awarded the Works and Services contract with the understanding that the Quarry Products service provision is to be expanded for the best interest of Yarra Ranges Council via a future process.

The Tender Evaluation Panel(s) conducted extensive due diligence checks and are satisfied that the recommended tenderers are suitable for appointment.

Recommended option and justification

The recommended option is to award the 98 tenderers outlined in the Recommendation and detailed within the separate Evaluation Recommendation Report - CT7428 Works and Services Panel under their respective categories. These tenderers have been evaluated and considered through a thorough and competitive tender process to offer value for money to Council.

The Evaluation Recommendation Report - CT7428 Works and Services Panel is to be provided as a Confidential Attachment to the Forum / Council Report to support the recommended option.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The budget allocation for the various contracted panel services CT7428 within the 2024/2025 Operations and Capital Budget is approximately \$36 M per annum, (excluding GST).

Cat #	Cat Title	Annual Expenditure (approx.)	Cat #	Cat Title	Annual Expenditure (approx.)
1	Plant and Equipment	\$5M	11	Pest Control Services	\$25k
2	Concrete Works	\$3M	12	Safety Barriers	\$50k
3	Supply of Asphalt Products	\$3M	13	Bridge Works Maintenance	\$750k
4	Asphalt Works	\$3.5M	14	Bin Services	\$100k
5	Carpentry	\$250k	15	Sportsground Drainage & Irrigation	\$600k
6	Electrical	\$600k	16	Turf Services	\$900k
7	Plumbing	\$1.2M	17	Mowing, Tractor Slashing & Brushcutting	\$800k
8	Drainage Works	\$3.5M	18	Specialist Tree Works	\$8M
9	Supply of Pit Lids, Frames, Pipes	\$200k	19	Emergency Tree Works	\$1M
10	Supply of Quarry Products	\$200k	20	Landscaping Services	\$3.5M

Over the past 18 – 24 months significant increases in expenditure have been experienced in Specialist Tree and Emergency related services. Plant and equipment hire, and Asphalt/Concrete related activities have also experienced

increased expenditure for the reinstatement / renewal of roads and footpaths, supported by external grant funding.

The arrangement is based on a Schedule of Rates with no guarantee of any specific quantity of works or exclusivity of works. The Schedule of Rates Items are subject to annual CPI adjustments for any subsequent extensions and consideration made to current direct cost pressures associated with fuel material supply, disposal fees, material costs and lease arranges for property plant and equipment.

Based on the recommendations made by the Tender Evaluation Panel for awarding these contracts, the total cost of these contracts is in within budget estimations.

Council's contract managers will assess the service level requirements and benchmarking of services via the contract management plan that will be in use for the duration of the arrangement.

The total net expected expenditure for the six-year term (includes the extension options) of the Contract, in current dollars, is \$230 million and this is consistent with budget forecasting.

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

CT7428 Works and Services Panel is a key component of enabling Council to meet its obligations outlined in the endorsed Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Plans. It is envisaged that the proposed Contracts will facilitate Council's assets continuing to be maintained to a standard that has had stakeholder input and provides an acceptable level of service for the community.

A new arrangement with contractors will provide Council with flexibility in delivery of maintenance services and potentially improved value for money through strategic planning of programmed maintenance and reduce the amount of reactive unplanned maintenance.

This report contributes to the following strategic objective(s):

- Council Plan 2021- 2025
 - Connected and Healthy Communities
 - Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places
 - Protected & Enhanced Natural Environment
 - Vibrant Economy, Agriculture and Tourism
 - High Performing Organisation
- Yarra Ranges Council Liveable Climate Plan 2020-2030.

RELEVANT LAW

This report seeks Council approval to award a Deed of Arrangement that complies with Section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Deed is based on a specification for the service together with terms and conditions that ensure the Deed is enforceable and provides protocols for managing the Contract.

The Tender Evaluation Panel acknowledged the support of existing in-house contract management resources for systematically reviewing the effectiveness of the procurement activities associated with this tender process.

Functions of the contracted services will be delivered in accordance with Council's Road Management Plan, which is implemented in accordance with requirements of the *Road Management Act 2004* and associated Regulations.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Yarra Ranges Council places a high importance on sustainability and resilience and expects the same from its vendors. The scored qualitative criterion utilised for the WASP is reflective of these objectives emphasising the importance of economic, social, and environmental outcomes for the community. The following are a portion of the qualitative criterion used to evaluate tenderers:

Local Content / Community Benefit

- Considers the tenderer's contribution to local economy and community development.

Social Sustainability

- Reviews commitment to social inclusion, equity, and community welfare.

Environmental Management

- Focuses on the tenderer's practices for environmental protection and sustainability.

Economic Implications

The outlay for the WASP is a significant component of Council's annual expenditure and decisions on how the Annual Supply contracts are awarded will have multiple-year budget impacts. The recommendations made in this report are designed to optimise the balance between financial cost and appropriate levels and quality of service, whilst minimising economic, reputational, and other risks across the components of the services.

Social Implications

A principal consideration in selecting staff for the outsourced services under the WASP includes policies that promote local employment and traineeship

opportunities. While contractors assert their commitment to hiring the most qualified candidates for each role, the objective is to enhance consciousness and foster a collaborative partnership with the Contractor. This collaboration aims to bolster social procurement initiatives, integrating them more deeply into the fabric of our community engagement and service delivery strategies.

The contractors are required to comply and work with Council's Social Procurement Initiatives. It is proposed that Councils in-house teams continue to provide services in accordance with the organisations Reconciliation Action Plan. This can include undertaking cultural heritage assessments to determine the nature of compliance, obligations and other options under the Cultural Heritage Act. Council's in-house teams are also able to provide cultural safety and awareness training.

Environmental Implications

All works and services through WASP must be provided safely and in accordance with the relevant environmental protection regulations, Council policies and industrial best practice. Waste management plays a significant part of sustainable delivery of Council Services. WASP Contractors are required to operate with an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) based on a hierarchy of avoid, reduce, reuse and recycle which is a critical part of its service delivery ethos.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An online tender briefing session was held on 18 January 2024 to inform the open market of CT7428 Works and Services Panel tender. The briefing session was conducted via a digital platform to maximise accessibility and participation. Registration was open to all interested parties, encouraging a diverse range of participants.

The session provided comprehensive insights into the tender's scope, the submission process, evaluation criteria, and the strategic importance of the Works and Services Panel to the local community's development. It facilitated an open dialogue between the Council and potential tenderers, allowing for the clarification of queries, enhancement of transparency, and fostering of a competitive tendering environment.

Feedback collected during and after the briefing session highlighted a positive reception to the Council's efforts towards transparency and inclusivity. Specific suggestions from the community included requests for further clarity on specifications and speciality services. These inputs were invaluable in refining the tender documentation.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

In the initiation of the WASP project, collaboration with external Councils, Governments, or statutory bodies was considered but not actively pursued. This approach allows our Council to fully manage the WASP, tailoring it to our specific needs, including contractor selection and contract specifics. Nonetheless, the project

is designed to accommodate future opportunities for collaboration, aiming to leverage collective insights while upholding our governance standards.

A key innovation within the WASP project is the strategic contract structure, which is set for an initial two-year period, complemented by two extension options, each for an additional two years. This flexible framework ensures long-term service provision while allowing for periodic assessment and adjustment to meet evolving community needs.

Further enhancing the project's innovative approach are the integrated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and reporting requirements within the Deed of Arrangement. These elements facilitate rigorous performance monitoring and evaluation, underpinning our commitment to data-driven decision-making and high accountability standards. This structure not only measures contractor performance effectively but also aligns with continuous improvement principles, ensuring the delivery of superior value and service quality.

Continuous improvement is a cornerstone of the WASP project, underscored by a commitment to adopting feedback for ongoing process optimisation. The dynamic nature of the contract, with its initial term and extension options, allows for iterative reviews and enhancements. KPIs and structured reports will provide critical insights into performance trends, highlighting areas for improvement and innovation.

While the report's immediate focus may not pinpoint specific technological or methodological breakthroughs, the introduction of a structured performance evaluation system, coupled with a flexible contract duration, significantly contributes to operational efficiency and community service excellence. These measures, poised for future collaborative expansion, reinforce our Council's strategic vision for continuous enhancement and innovation.

RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment has been developed for this tender process and risk has been considered in development of the tender documents, Deed of Arrangement, and specification. Risk will be continued to be assessed over the duration of the arrangement for individual engagements.

Tenderers are required to submit several plans which will be evaluated during the tender process and updated as reasonably requested.

A Project Steering Committee maintained oversight of the tender process to ensure risks were appropriately managed.

Council utilises Rapid Global Compliance system to manage contractors for works and services delivered to Council. Rapid Global is a tool to effectively manage and assess risk levels to Council, tenderers were required to state compliance with Rapid Global will be completed prior to being engaged for works or services by Council.

In the evaluation, each qualitative criterion is aligned with the Council's strategic plan and assessed on a scored basis. The Risk Management criteria assesses the

tenderer's strategies for identifying, managing, and mitigating risks in delivering the works and/or services.

The proposed service model is a panel of providers to ensure coverage 24/7 and risk mitigation in the case of service interruption; this allows Yarra Ranges Council flexibility and surge capacity. As the preferred tenderers are a good mix of incumbents and new service providers there is no risk in transitioning to the new contracts.

NON-CONFORMING SUBMISSIONS

In order to submit a conforming submission, tenderers were required to meet the below Mandatory Criteria.

- Tender Submitted with all Required Schedules in electronic format by Tender Close Time.
- Recognition as an Acceptable Legal Entity capable of entering into a contractual agreement with Council.
- Valid and current Certificates of Currency for Insurance or a declaration to obtain the required insurances prior to the contract award, with coverage levels appropriate to the category being tendered for.
- Commitment to comply with Rapid Global requirements before the contract award for alignment with Council's contractor management systems.
- Appropriate Licenses and Certifications relevant to the category being tendered for, such as trade licenses for plumbing and electrical work, or confined space certifications for stormwater drainage work.

During the evaluation process, it was noted that several submissions did not comply with one or more of the mandatory criteria. These instances of non-conformance were recorded and brought before the evaluation panel for consideration. The panel undertook a thorough review of the non-conformances, this is detailed in the Confidential Attachment.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Due to the large volume of submissions, diverse range of categories and number of stakeholders involved in the process, there were conflicts of interest identified and raised. These were managed in accordance with Council's policies and are detailed within the Confidential attachment.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. Council Evaluation Report (Confidential Attachment)

Confidential Item

TREE CANOPY STRATEGY

Report Author: Trees Coordinator
 Responsible Officer: Director Built Environment & Infrastructure
 Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

A Tree Canopy Strategy and Implementation Plan have been prepared and taken to the community for consultation.

The strategy is the first of its kind for Yarra Ranges and sets out the vision, objectives and targets for the long-term protection, management and planting of trees in Yarra Ranges. It will provide the foundation for the development and implementation of best practice tree management to maximise the benefits of our tree canopy and to minimise risk.

Our Vision is that Yarra Ranges Council will conserve and enhance our leafy character, culturally significant landscapes and unique biodiversity through the protection, management and planting of trees. Our tree canopy will improve liveability, support community health and wellbeing, maintain ecosystems and enhance local tourism.

The strategy sets out six objectives to be delivered through the implementation plan.

1. Value, protect and manage trees.
2. Grow a healthy tree canopy.
3. Conserve culturally significant trees and enhance local tourism.
4. Improve tree canopy resilience to climate change.
5. Support and enhance community health and wellbeing.
6. Apply best practice tree management.

A strategy is needed to respond to key challenges and opportunities shaping the future of our tree canopy. Council must adopt a more proactive stance to tree management. The strategy establishes a clear vision, defines objectives, and sets measurable targets. Such an approach will offer the direction necessary to effectively plan, allocate resources and act to maximise the benefits of our tree canopy and to minimise risk.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the Tree Canopy Strategy and associated Implementation Plan.

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council Forum 3 May 2016 – Report considered by Councillors on the review of Council's Tree Management Plan 2009 and the development of a Tree Policy. Councillors were supportive of the proposed Tree Policy and supported this progressing to a Council meeting for adoption. Councillors requested that the updated Tree Policy be developed internally and referred to a future Council Forum.

Council Meeting 4 May 2016 – Council endorsed the Tree Policy 2016.

Council Forum 20 February 2018 – Report presented to Council on the decision-making process for review of requests from the community to remove trees. Councillors supported retaining the current process.

Council Forum 20 February 2018 – Report considered by Councillors on the engagement process to review the Tree Strategy. Councillors requested that the process be undertaken internally and referred to a future Council Forum.

Council Forum 4 August 2020 – Report considered by councillors on the current draft of the Tree Canopy Strategy. Feedback was provided by councillors on the draft strategy, with this to be brought back to a future Council Forum.

Council Forum 20 April 2021 – Report considered by councillors on the current draft of the Tree Canopy Strategy. Feedback was provided by councillors on the draft strategy, with this to be brought back to a future Council Forum.

Council Forum 19 July 2022 – Report considered by councillors on the current draft of the draft Tree Canopy Strategy. Councillors approved the draft Tree Canopy Strategy going to a Council meeting for consideration of its endorsement and for going out to public consultation.

Council Meeting 23 August 2022 – Council endorsed the draft Tree Canopy Strategy going out for public consultation.

Council Forum 2 April 2024 - Report considered by councillors on the current draft of the draft Tree Canopy Strategy. Councillors made suggestions for changes (now included) and approved the draft Tree Canopy Strategy going to a Council meeting for consideration of its endorsement.

DISCUSSION

Purpose and Background

Trees are fundamental to the story of Yarra Ranges, shaping our cultures, values and communities. They are a prominent feature in our landscape, providing benefits to our health and wellbeing, community and culture, the environment, ecology and economy.

'Tree canopy' is our way of referring to Yarra Ranges' diverse tree population and is a way to consider the collective benefits of our trees. As the climate changes, and our cities and communities evolve, our tree canopy is in decline. This means less trees, but also unhealthier trees and increasing challenges for tree management. Issues contributing to this trend include the urban heat island effect, extreme weather, climate change, poor tree diversity and performance, inadequate tree planting, urban development, and competing infrastructure. Understanding these issues provides us with an opportunity to take action to reverse tree canopy decline.

This Strategy sets our vision, objectives and targets for the long-term protection, management and planting of trees in Yarra Ranges. Our tree planting will prioritise the urban parts of Yarra Ranges, in built up areas where canopy cover is low or declining. By taking a strategic approach to protecting, managing and planting trees, we will maximise the benefits of our tree canopy and minimise tree risks, particularly tree risks associated with bushfires and storms, which are significant factors in Yarra Ranges.

In 2019, Yarra Ranges Council was among 32 metropolitan councils, state government agencies, non-government and community organisations that endorsed the Living Melbourne: Our Metropolitan Urban Forest, a strategy for a greener, more liveable Melbourne. Among its six recommended actions, the strategy includes regional targets for increasing tree canopy cover.

Subsequently in 2020, Council endorsed the Liveable Climate Plan that includes an action to develop a Tree Canopy Strategy, with the strategy document to be endorsed by 2022. Significant storm events over the last two years requiring Tree Management team focus resulted in a delay to the strategy being finalised and brought to Council for endorsement.

Options considered

The preparation of a draft Tree Canopy Strategy followed Council's 2019 endorsement of Living Melbourne: Our Metropolitan Urban Forest, a strategy for a greener, more liveable Melbourne. Consultation occurred with Councillors as to how this should best occur.

Recommended option and justification

Following Council's 2019 endorsement of Living Melbourne: Our Metropolitan Urban Forest, a strategy for a greener, more liveable Melbourne, Council in 2020 endorsed the Liveable Climate Plan that includes an action to develop a Tree Canopy Strategy, with the strategy document to be endorsed by 2022.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The development of the Tree Canopy Strategy has been funded within the Council's Recreation, Parks and Facilities Department's operating budget. The funding model for delivery of the Implementation Plan is based on existing operating budgets.

Costings are set out in the attached Tree Canopy Strategy 2024 – 2044 Implementation Plan. There are a range of foundational, ongoing, and annual costs. Nearly all actions will be funded within existing budgets, including the largest amount, \$450,000 annually for tree planting. Business cases will be developed where extra funding is required and funding will be sought through the annual Council budget process.

As well as planting costs, there are maintenance expenses to ensure the target of 95% is achieved with successful establishment rates. This is covered by existing budgets. Any requirement for extra planting will require the maintenance budget to be increased accordingly.

Data collection will be shared across Council departments and is expected to cost \$200,000 to \$480,000 over twenty years depending on the frequency and scope of the data collection.

Business cases will be developed for additional staff resources (EFT) as identified in the implementation plan and referred to the annual Council budget process for consideration.

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

This report contributes to the following strategic objective(s) in the Council Plan:

Connected and Healthy Communities

The Tree Canopy Strategy will directly address the concerns that climate change will bring by providing direction for the management of our trees to maximise their cooling benefit and planting new trees in locations with low or declining canopy cover, particularly those vulnerable to heat.

Protected & Enhanced Natural Environment

The Tree Canopy Strategy will give high level guidance for protection and enhancement of our trees across Yarra Ranges.

Vibrant Economy, Agriculture and Tourism

The Tree Canopy Strategy will act to conserve and manage culturally significant trees and enhance culture and tourism with new tree plantings.

Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places

The Tree Canopy Strategy will take measures to strategically manage public trees as important community assets and demonstrate best practice in delivering tree programs and projects that enhance the liveability of our urban areas and towns.

RELEVANT LAW

Not applicable

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic Implications

Trees are a major part of the identity of Yarra Ranges and are a drawcard for tourism and its vitally important associated local job creation. Research also shows that there is more economic activity when shopping areas have high tree canopy cover.

It is generally accepted that well treed streets can lead to an increase in property values. As well, in well treed areas, energy costs are reduced, especially in summer.

Social Implications

It is generally accepted that well treed landscapes improve the amenity and liveability of the neighbourhood and lead to an increase in walking and other forms of activity. The Tree Canopy Strategy will prioritise areas with low or declining canopy cover.

Environmental Implications

Trees are a significant part of the rich biodiversity values of Yarra Ranges. They form an essential part of precious vegetation communities and provide habitat for numerous indigenous fauna species, including two Victorian faunal state emblems - the Leadbeater's Possum and Helmeted Honeyeater.

Trees will play an increasingly important role as the community seeks to adapt to the effects of climate change. From the Tree Canopy Strategy, it is proposed to grow a more diverse and resilient tree canopy, which is better suited to a future climate, and staff will investigate ways to improve landscape resilience.

The strategy sets out targets that will see an increase in tree canopy cover on public land, while specifically increasing cover in built up areas. It is aimed to have 35% canopy cover and provide a minimum of 25% canopy cover for all suburbs and towns in built up areas.

The Tree Canopy Strategy recognises the impact of climate change and extreme weather events including heat waves, bushfires, storms, flooding and drought. Trees are inextricably linked to the impacts of extreme weather, in particular for Yarra Ranges, where bushfires and storms are a significant risk. These events often result in tree failures, hazardous trees, property damage and sometimes the loss of life. Extreme weather cannot be controlled, but the risks posed to communities can be managed to lessen the impact of these events.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A draft Tree Canopy Strategy was developed by Council staff and released to the community for consultation and feedback.

In summary, eight themes were identified through the consultation phase:

- Bushfire risk
- Tree Protection
- Incentives

- Statistics
- Targets
- Governance
- Heritage
- Biodiversity.

The Tree Management Team has addressed the issues raised in all eight themes and updated the *Implementation Plan – Tree Canopy Strategy*.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Along with community consultation, internal Council teams including Environment, Bushlands, Design & Place, Parks and Risk teams were consulted with during the development of the strategy.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Without the Tree Canopy Strategy, Council risks not having direction in protecting its tree canopy and failing to adapt to and be prepared for the effects of climate change and the associated threats to biodiversity more broadly, along with the impacts of development.

The Tree Canopy Strategy provides high level guidance to minimise tree risks, particularly tree risks associated with bushfires and storms, which are significant factors for the Yarra Ranges community. It is proposed to move from a predominantly reactive management regime to a more proactive one, which will see a reduction in risk to people and property, as well as lowering costs.

If the tree canopy is not adequately protected and maintained, it will put at risk Yarra Ranges' unique character and identity, which is essential for the way locals live, tourism and reputation.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. Tree Canopy Strategy 2024-2044

TREE CANOPY STRATEGY

2024–2044





Acknowledgements

Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways.

We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging, who have been, and always will be, integral to the story of our region.

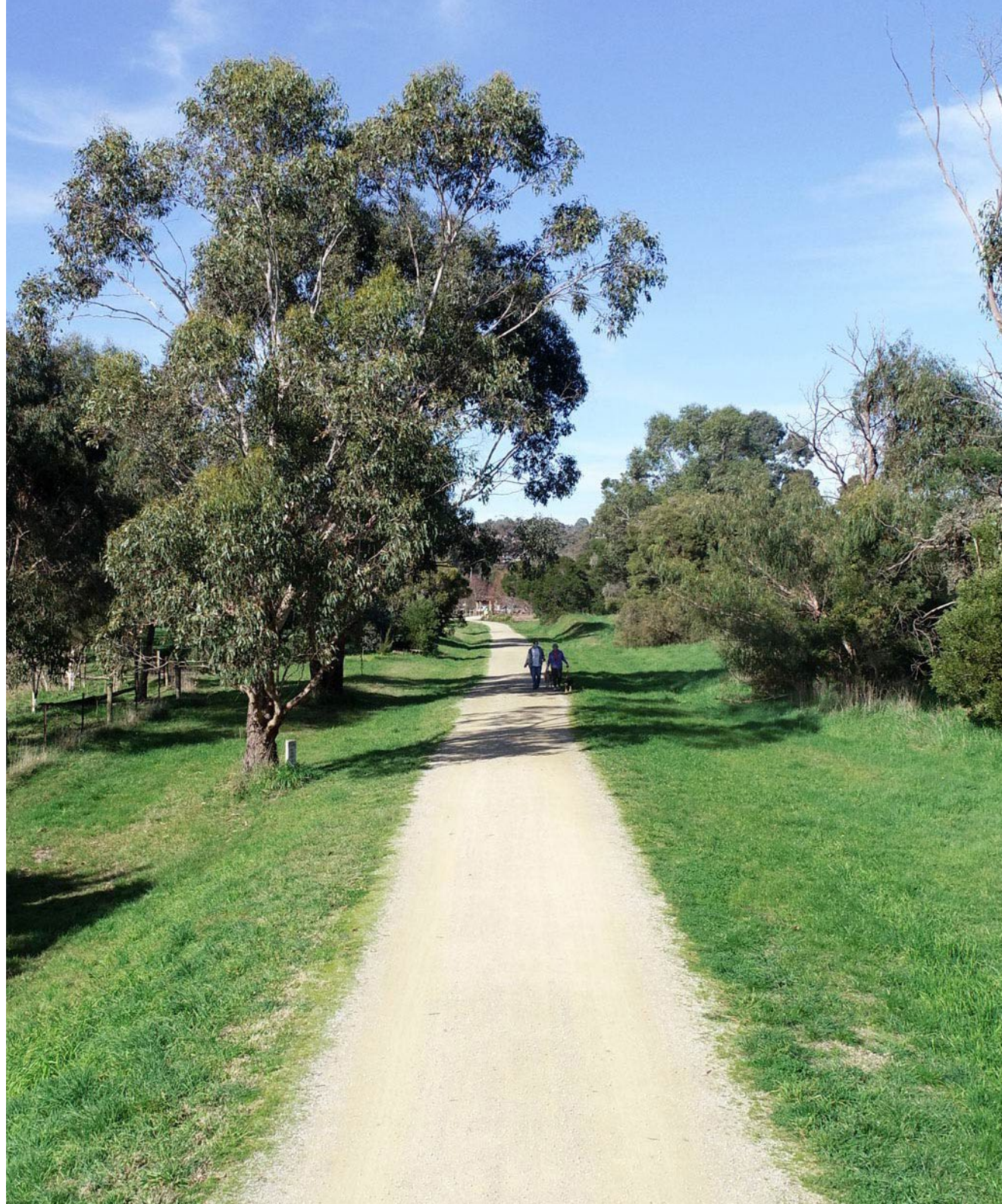
We proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.

Many people have contributed information and ideas presented within this document, including the Yarra Ranges Sustainable Environment Advisory Committee (SEAC), the Yarra Ranges Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC), Lilydale & District Historical Society (LDHS), Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), Living Melbourne, Uncle David Wandin (Wurundjeri Elder), Meg Caffin (Urban Forest Consulting) and Yarra Ranges Council staff.

Vegetation and heat data presented in this report was provided by © State of Victoria (Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action).

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FOREWORD

Trees are extremely important to our people, the Wurundjeri. Our name is derived from ‘wurun’ meaning Manna Gum, which is common along ‘Birrarrung’ (the Yarra River) and her estuaries. ‘Djeri’ is the name of the grub that lives in the Manna Gum and makes unique marks on the underside of bark. These markings are important identifying features of Wurundjeri shields and canoes. They hold great significance for our people and our identity.

Trees play an important part in our cultural life. The leaves of Manna Gum are used in smoking ceremonies to welcome people to Country. Trees direct our people to, and indicate, significant places. We consider the tree canopy to be sacred and protected—it is within the canopy that many of our ancestors and spirits live.

Trees help us to understand and read Country. They tell us about the soil, and in doing so what plants, food, medicine, insects, and animals should reside in that Country. Trees tell us what land management practices to undertake, such as the correct time to burn or when not to burn. They are a source of food, fibre and medicine, and are important for making tools such as spears, canoes, and shields. While we carve and harvest parts of trees, we do this respectfully to protect them from getting sick.

Parent tree is a term used for trees that have grown large and old. They are an important part of our Country, too often missing from today’s landscape. Parent trees should shade and connect our Country, helping to keep it cool. Too much hot fire has killed our parent trees, allowing the sun to penetrate and dry out the soil. Too much hot fire has turned our Country upside down and made it very sick. Without parent trees, healing Country is difficult. We need to look after our trees and help them grow old, so we can have a healthy Country again.

Uncle David Wandin

Wurundjeri Elder

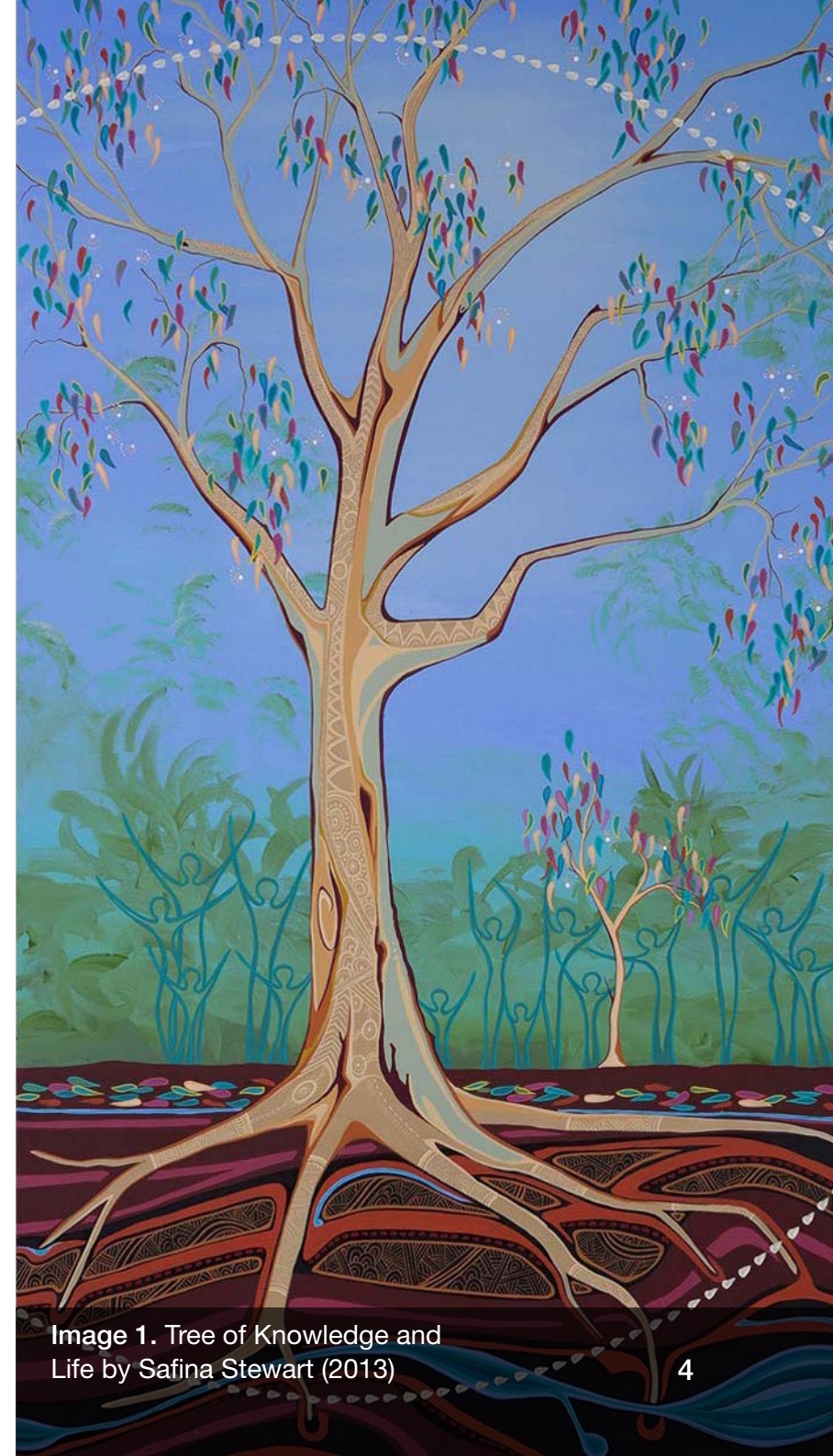


Image 1. Tree of Knowledge and Life by Safina Stewart (2013)



Image 2. Firestick burning undertaken as part of the National Indigenous Firestick Workshop in Barmah, Victoria (2019).

Credit: Timothy Neale

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Trees are fundamental to the story of Yarra Ranges, shaping our cultures, values and communities. They are a prominent feature in our landscape, providing benefits to our health and wellbeing, community and culture, the environment, ecology and economy.

‘Tree canopy’ is our way of referring to Yarra Ranges’ diverse tree population and is a way to consider the collective benefits of our trees. As the climate changes, and our cities and communities evolve, our tree canopy is in decline. This means less trees, but also unhealthier trees and increasing challenges for tree management. Issues contributing to this trend include the urban heat island effect, extreme weather, climate change, poor tree diversity and performance, inadequate tree planting, urban development, and competing infrastructure. Understanding these issues provides us with an opportunity to take action to reverse tree canopy decline.

This Strategy sets our vision, objectives and targets for the long-term protection, management and planting of trees in Yarra Ranges. Our tree planting will prioritise the urban parts of Yarra Ranges in built up areas where canopy cover is low or declining. By taking a strategic approach to protecting, managing and planting trees, we will maximise the benefits of our tree canopy and minimise tree risks, particularly tree risks associated with bushfires and storms, which are significant factors in Yarra Ranges.

VISION

Yarra Ranges Council will conserve and enhance our leafy character, culturally significant landscapes and unique biodiversity through the protection, management and planting of trees. Our tree canopy will improve liveability, support community health and wellbeing, maintain ecosystems and enhance local tourism.

OBJECTIVES

This Strategy sets a foundation to:



1. Value, protect and manage trees



2. Grow a healthy tree canopy



3. Conserve culturally significant trees and enhance local tourism



4. Improve tree canopy resilience to climate change



5. Support and enhance community health and wellbeing



6. Apply best practice tree management

TARGETS

Yarra Ranges Council will aim to achieve the following by 2044:



Our community will...

- ✓ Have a greater understanding of the role, function and importance of trees
- ✓ Have greater knowledge and appreciation of our culturally significant trees
- ✓ Increase their participation in greening and biodiversity programs.



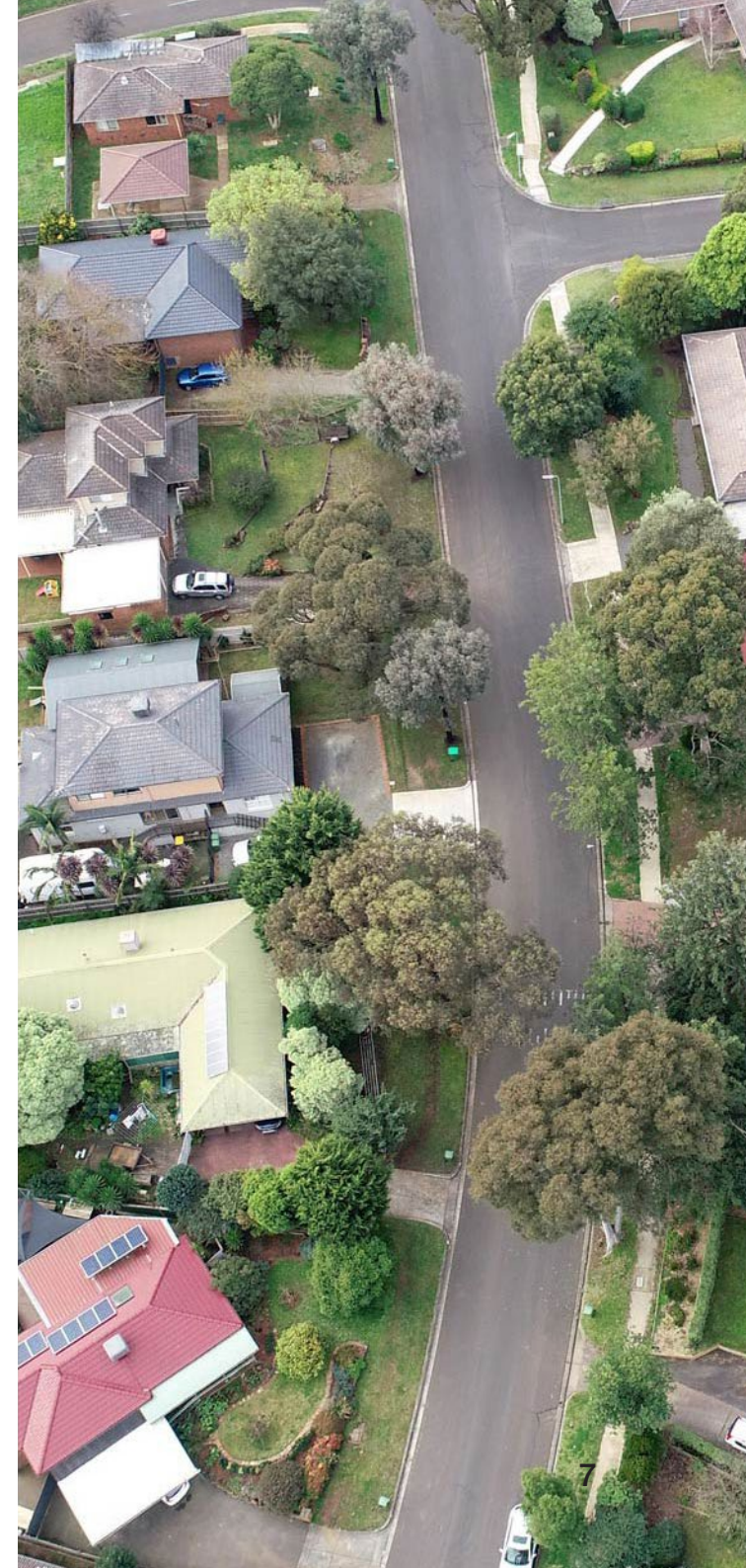
Our tree planting will...

- ✓ Increase tree canopy cover from 31.68% to 35% on public land in built up areas
- ✓ Be fairly distributed, providing a minimum of 25% tree canopy cover on public land across all suburbs and towns
- ✓ Increase tree canopy cover for all activity centres, key pedestrian routes, playspaces and biolinks between areas with recognised biodiversity value
- ✓ Increase the diversity and resilience of Council managed trees.



Our tree management will...

- ✓ Reduce hazardous trees along roadsides for bushfire preparedness
- ✓ Successfully establish 95% of new street tree plantings, inclusive of formative pruning
- ✓ Improve the condition of large habitat trees and culturally significant trees on public land
- ✓ Incorporate policies, plans, programs and tools informed by industry best practices.



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Council's Key Strategic Objectives

Connected and
Healthy Communities

Protected and Enhanced
Natural Environment

Vibrant Economy,
Agriculture and Tourism

Quality Infrastructure
and Liveable Places

Health and
Wellbeing Strategy
2017–2021

Environment
Strategy
2015–2025

Economic
Development Strategy
2012–2022

Quality Community
Infrastructure Strategy
(proposed)

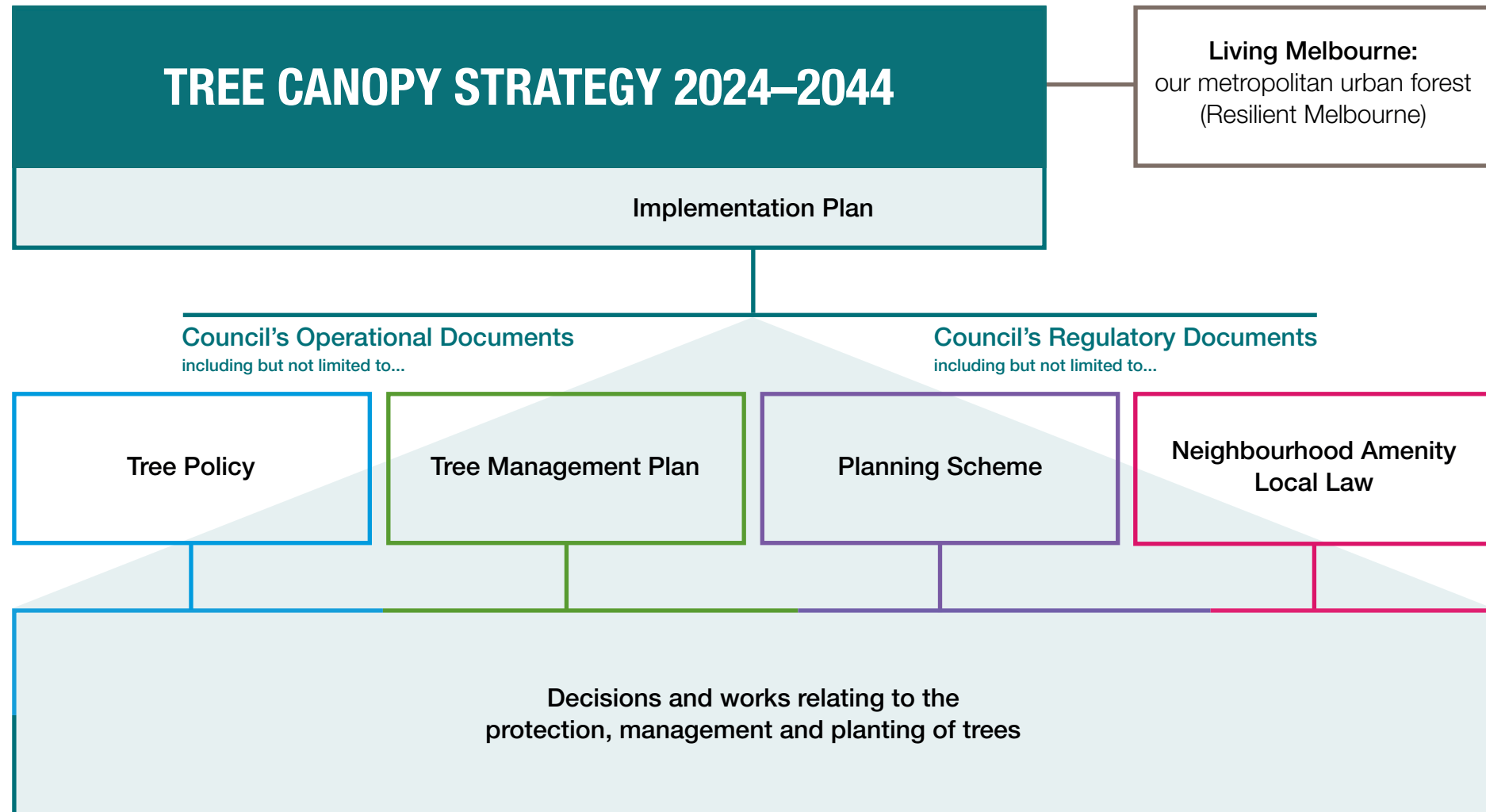
- Health and Active Aging Plan 2019–2023
- Reconciliation Framework 2013–2023
- Child and Youth Strategy 2014–2024
- Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2013–2023

- Integrated Transport Strategy 2020–2040
- Strategic Asset Management Plan 2019/20–2023/24
- Liveable Climate Plan 2020–2030
- Nature Plan 2024–2034

TREE CANOPY STRATEGY 2024–2044

Living Melbourne:
our metropolitan urban forest
(Resilient Melbourne)

STRATEGIC CONTEXT



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INTRODUCTION

The Yarra Ranges is highly valued for its leafy character and culturally significant landscapes, with over 4.5 million tourists attracted to the region each year.¹ Trees are a storied part of our landscape and have shaped the cultures, values and communities of today. They are a prominent feature of our suburbs, towns, roadsides and trails.

Trees are commonly valued for their colour, scent, texture and shade, or as habitat and food for fauna. However, researchers are beginning to understand and quantify the significant environmental, economic and social benefits of trees. Increasingly, trees are viewed as critical infrastructure that improves the *liveability* of our communities.² Healthy trees are one of the most efficient and cost-effective solutions to support communities that are safe, resilient, healthy, inclusive and socially well connected. For these reasons, trees are valuable assets to be protected, managed and enhanced.

What is tree canopy?

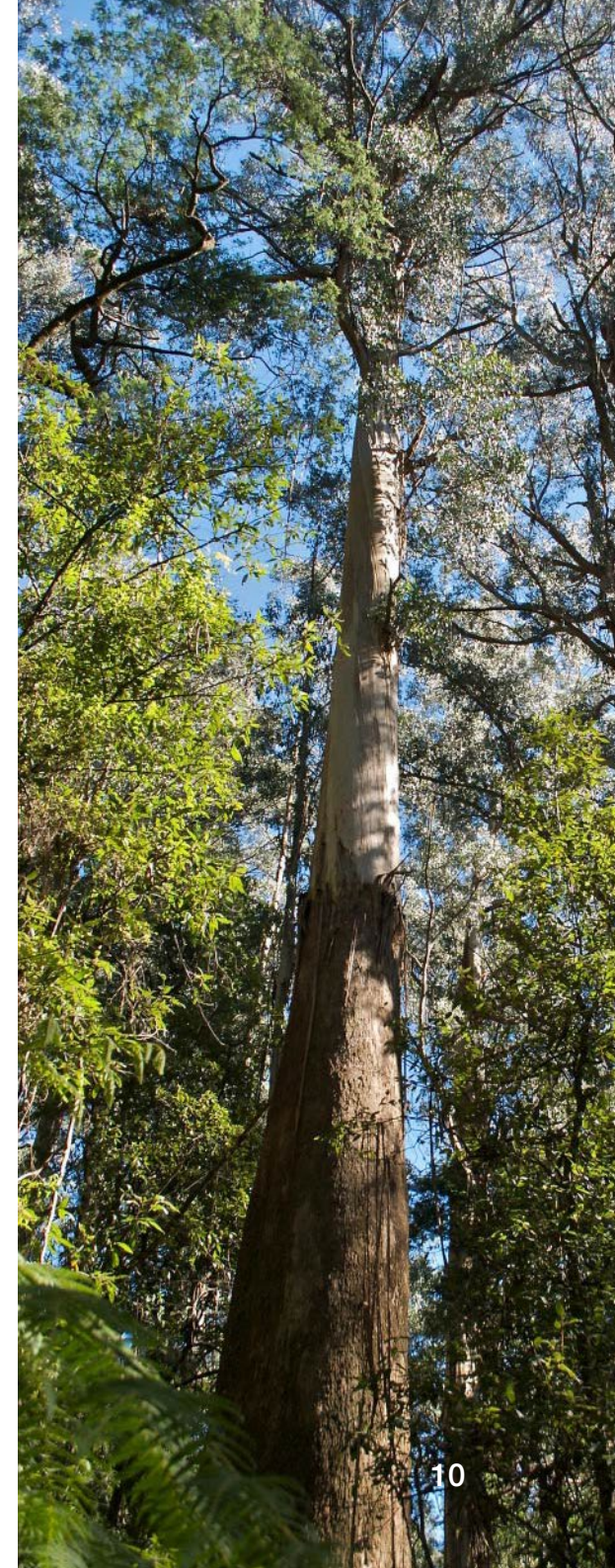
'*Tree canopy*' is our way of referring to Yarra Ranges' tree population, and includes trees of all types and sizes across public and private land. Tree canopy is a way to consider the collective benefits of our diverse tree population.

Looking holistically at our tree canopy allows for deeper consideration of local issues and opportunities related to trees, such as community perceptions, *urban heat island effect*, *extreme weather*, *climate change*, tree diversity and performance, tree planting, urban development, competing infrastructure, infrastructure projects, culture, large trees, and *best practice tree management*.

The management of the tree canopy is often considered a local government responsibility but frequently extends well beyond that. Neighbourhoods, schools, community groups, developers, business, industry and State and Federal Government all have important roles to play. Every part of the community contributes in some way to the tree canopy as a whole.

Why do we need a strategy?

To respond to key challenges and opportunities shaping the future of our tree canopy, Council must adopt a more proactive stance to tree management. A strategy is needed to establish a clear vision, define objectives, and set measurable targets. Such an approach will offer the direction necessary to effectively plan, allocate resources and act to maximise the benefits of our tree canopy and to minimise risk.



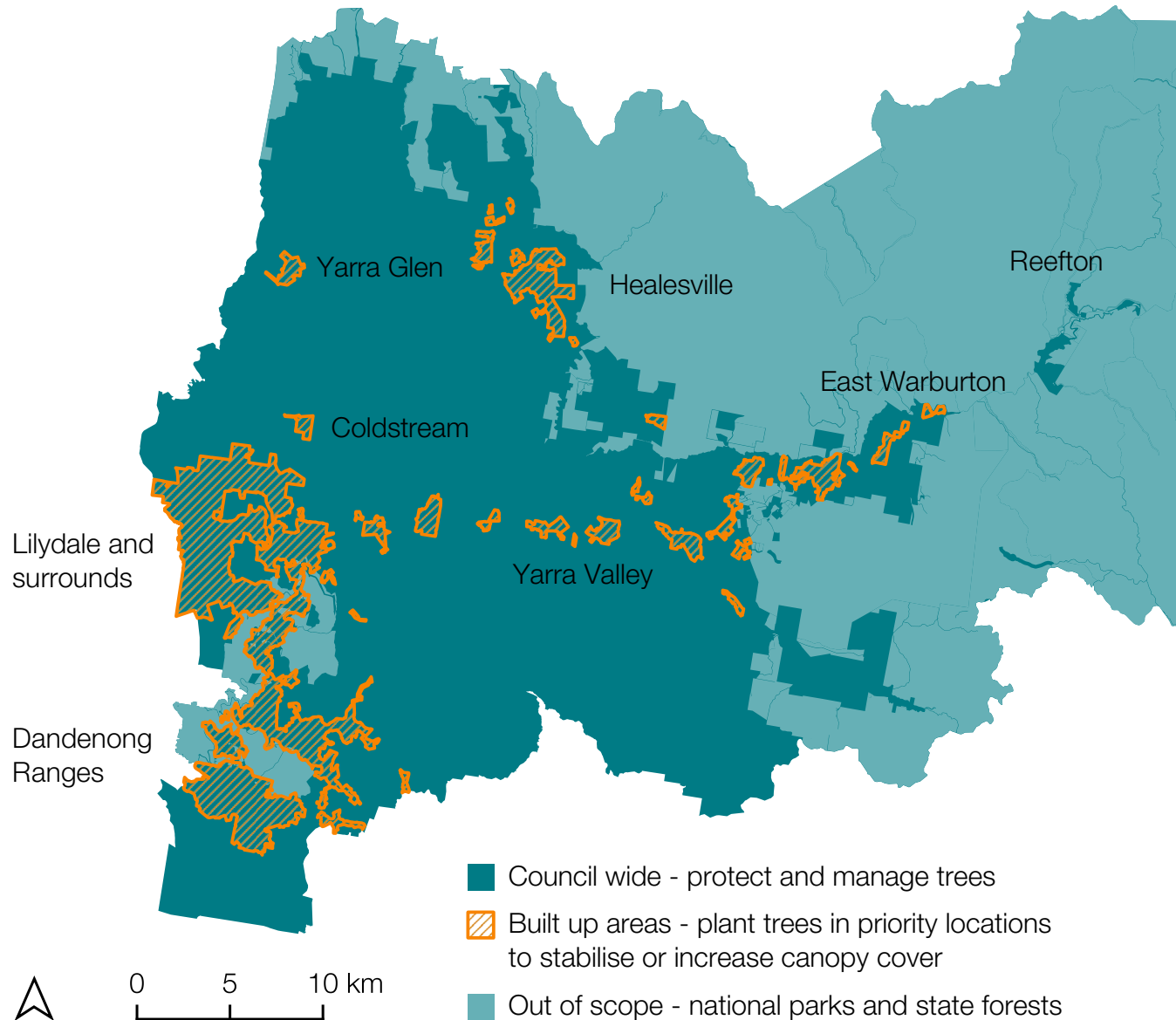
SCOPE

The Tree Canopy Strategy sets a foundation for the protection and management of trees across our municipality. This includes trees along roadsides, in parks and reserves, along trails and those on private land.

The Strategy also sets Council's direction for the planting of trees to stabilise or increase *canopy cover* on public land in *built up areas*. This includes identifying and planting priority locations where canopy cover is low or declining across Lilydale and its surrounding suburbs as well as the urban parts of Yarra Glen, Healesville and towns in the Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley.

The Strategy does not address the protection, management or planting of trees on land managed by other agencies, such as national parks and state forests.

Map 1. Areas within scope of the Tree Canopy Strategy



THE PAST

The Wurundjeri are a First Nations People, in the Kulin alliance, they are the Traditional Custodians of Yarra Ranges. Their ancestors have cared for the Yarra Valley and its waterways for millennia. Trees are central to the identity of the Wurundjeri people and their connection to Country. The term Wurundjeri is an association of place. In the Woi wurrung language the word ‘wurun’ means Manna Gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) and ‘djeri’ is the grub that lives in or is found near the tree. The ancestral lands are therefore the place where the Manna Gum and its associated grub occur.³

Trees have a profound and powerful connection to the spirituality and culture of the Wurundjeri. This connection can be partly understood in the way groups of tree species are affectionately referred to as ‘mobs’, a colloquial term for groups of people. There are mobs of Stringybark and Messmate, mobs of Gum, Ironbark mobs and sometimes mobs growing together such as Gums and Stringybark. Just like our diverse communities, different mobs of trees require different approaches to ensure their health and wellbeing. The tree canopy is sacred and protected—it is within the canopy that many Wurundjeri ancestors and spirits live.

Trees provide a wealth of resources for the Wurundjeri people’s way of life, including food, fibre, medicine and materials for making tools such as spears, canoes and shields. Tree materials are carved and harvested respectfully to protect trees from getting sick. These cultural practices are the region’s first example of sustainable timber usage.

Yarra Ranges is home to Mountain Ash (*Eucalyptus regnans*), one of the tallest flowering plants in the world. For this reason, following European arrival, the region was used as a main source of timber for Melbourne. The Victorian gold rush of the 1850s and 1860s increased the demand

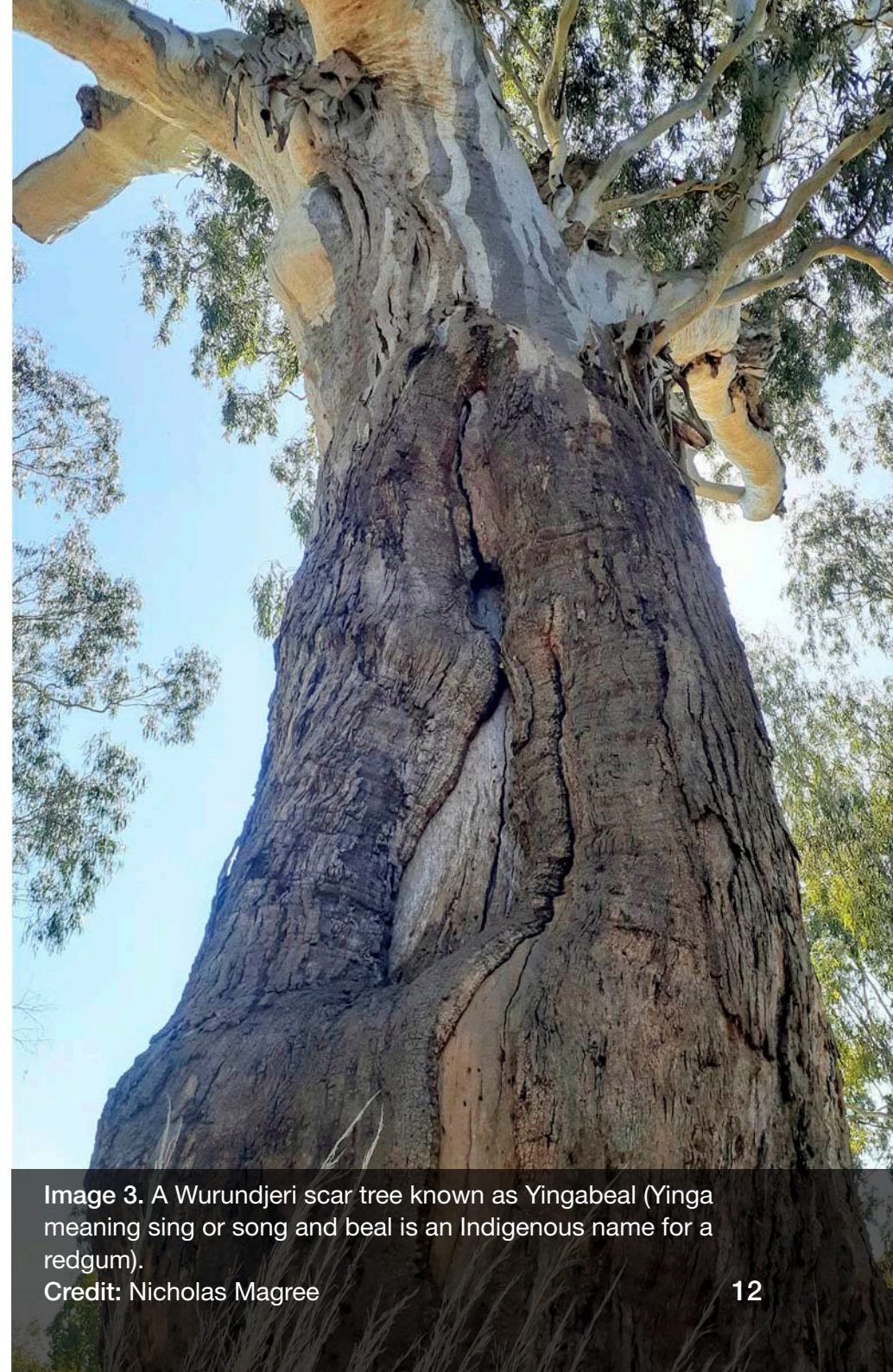


Image 3. A Wurundjeri scar tree known as Yingabeal (Yinga meaning sing or song and beal is an Indigenous name for a redgum).

Credit: Nicholas Magree

for timber, resulting in large areas of the Yarra Ranges being opened up for harvesting. In 1901 the railway line was extended to Warburton to support the growing timber industry. Sawmills and timber tramways were constructed throughout the area. Timber mills provided work for many people, and towns such as Powelltown sprang up around the mills. The timber industry has shaped towns, communities and landscapes across the Yarra Ranges and is a rich part of our story.⁴

In Australia, commemorative trees have been planted in public places since the late nineteenth century, and stand as living connections to the past. From 1892-1920 the Lilydale Arbor Day committee organised an annual date where all other work ceased and the community gathered to plant trees. Planted in 1897, the Queen Victoria Jubilee Avenue in Lilydale, was one of the first commemorative tree avenues planned by the Arbor Day committee. Many of the original trees across Lilydale remain today, lining streets including Main Street, Cave Hill Road, Anderson Street, Castella Street and Clarke Street.⁵

During and after the First World War, avenues of trees were planted along streets to commemorate fallen soldiers. The Wandin North Avenue of Honour is one example that still stands in commemoration today. Officially opened in the 1920s, it comprises a row of Red-flowering Gums along the Warburton Highway and Beenak Road.⁶

Tourism emerged as a key industry in the 1920's with Healesville and the Dandenong Ranges famed for their natural beauty and forests. This led to an increase in permanent residents, who established stylised and exotic trees and gardens. Many of these trees and gardens draw tourists to the region today.



Image 4. Castella Street, Lilydale (1908)
Credit: Lilydale & District Historical Society Inc.



Image 5. Castella Street, Lilydale (2020)

THE PRESENT

In 2019, Yarra Ranges Council endorsed the *Living Melbourne: our metropolitan urban forest*, a strategy for a greener, more liveable Melbourne. Among its six recommended actions, the strategy includes regional targets for increasing tree canopy cover.

Following this, Council endorsed the *Liveable Climate Plan 2020-2030*, it envisages our suburbs and towns as leafy, green places, providing summer shade, year round beauty and walkable neighbourhoods. A key action of the Liveable Climate Plan is to prepare a strategy for growing healthy and *resilient trees*, and increasing tree canopy cover.

Yarra Ranges houses one of the most expansive tree populations across *metropolitan Melbourne*.⁷ The majority of this tree canopy cover is provided by national parks and state forests. These are ecologically important areas that support habitat for a wide range of indigenous plants, animals and fungi, including the Victorian state emblems, the Leadbeater's Possum and Helmeted Honeyeater. In contrast, the Yarra Valley areas have the lowest tree canopy cover in the region. However, these areas are dominated by agriculture, vineyards and wineries, and are important for the local economy and tourism.



TREE CANOPY COVER DATA

A study undertaken by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in partnership with RMIT University, CSIRO, and the Clean Air and Urban Landscapes (CAUL) mapped and analysed vegetation, land use, and urban heat across Melbourne in 2014 and 2018.⁸

Following a major storm event in June 2021 that devastated communities across the Dandenong Ranges, Council mapped and analysed tree canopy cover before and after the storm.

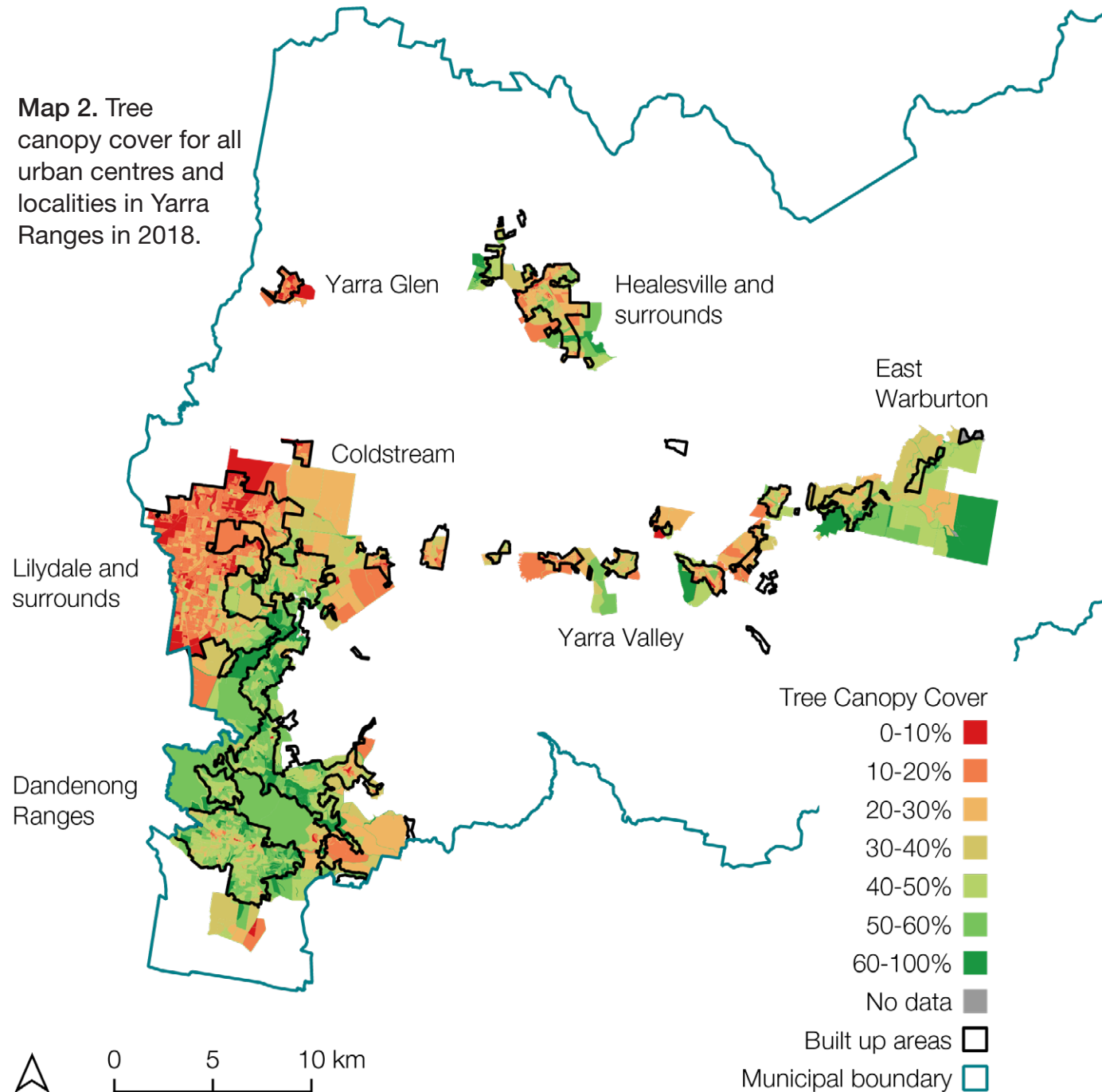
The data associated with these studies have given us a detailed understanding of our tree canopy cover, along with its distribution and change over time.

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What are built up areas?

Built up areas are places where the majority of our community reside. These include Lilydale and surrounds, Yarra Glen, Healesville and towns in the Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley. These are areas where people interact and connect with trees, and where trees make a vital contribution to the liveability of our communities. It is estimated that Council manages over 150,000 trees in streets and parks in built up areas.

Map 2. Tree canopy cover for all urban centres and localities in Yarra Ranges in 2018.



Public land

As at 2018, our tree canopy cover on public land in built up areas was 31.68% – the highest within metropolitan Melbourne. However, tree canopy cover across built up areas in suburbs and towns is not evenly distributed. A closer look at these areas reveals the suburbs of Chirnside Park (12%) and Mooroolbark (18%) have our lowest canopy cover, closely followed by Lilydale-Coldstream (20%) and Kilsyth (21%). On the other hand, towns in the Dandenong Ranges have considerable tree canopy cover (>40%).

Identifying areas of low canopy cover is an important step in understanding areas most in need of new tree plantings, in order to grow a more fairly distributed tree canopy. Conversely, areas with high canopy cover are where tree management and protection are a priority.

Private land

Trees on private land, in people’s front and backyards, comprise over three quarters (77%) of our tree canopy cover within our built up areas.

Tree canopy cover on private land tends to closely follow that of public land, with private land generally slightly higher. Recognising the significant contribution of trees on private land to our total tree canopy, highlights the importance of private trees to the broader community.

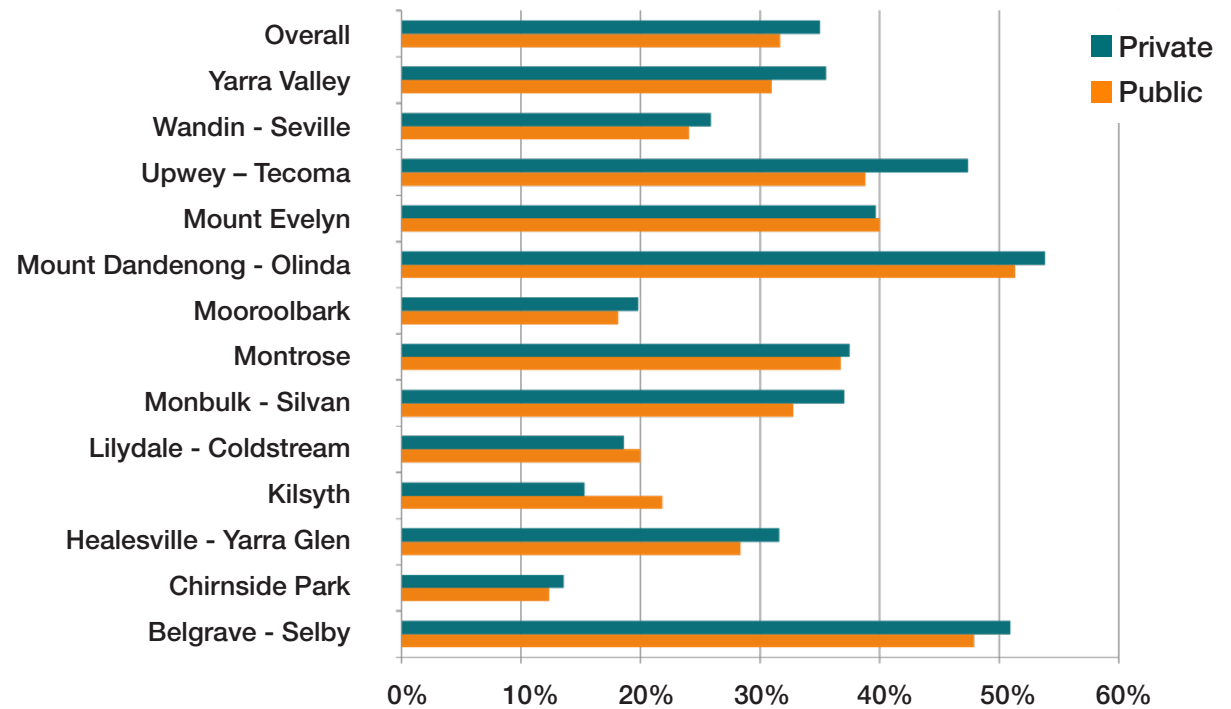


Figure 1. Tree canopy cover by locality for public and private land in 2018.

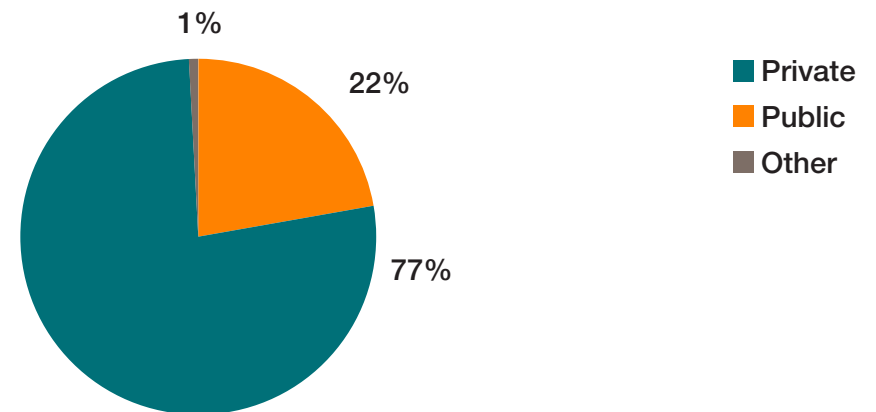


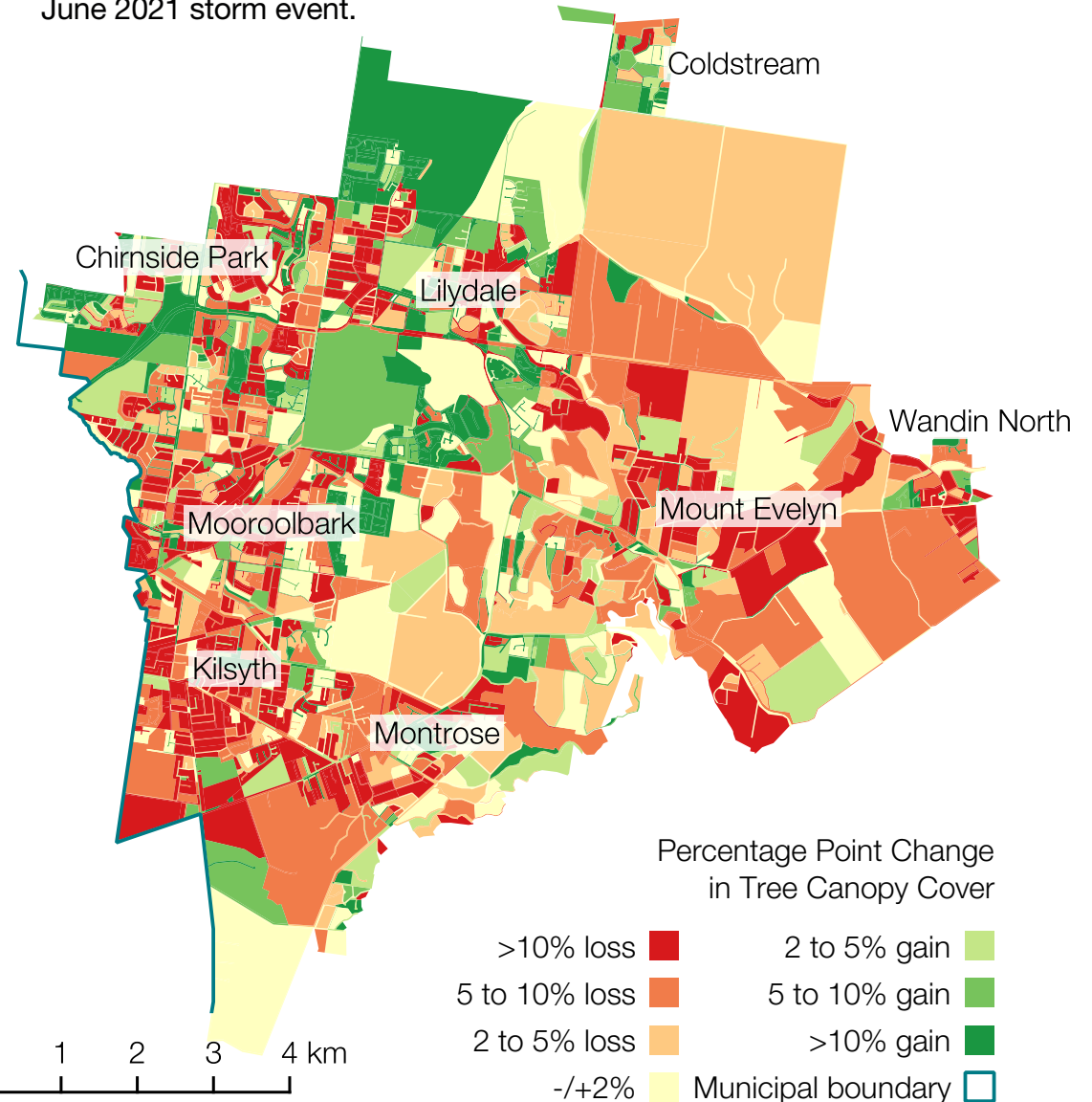
Figure 2. Tree canopy cover distribution between public and private land in 2018.

TREE CANOPY COVER CHANGE

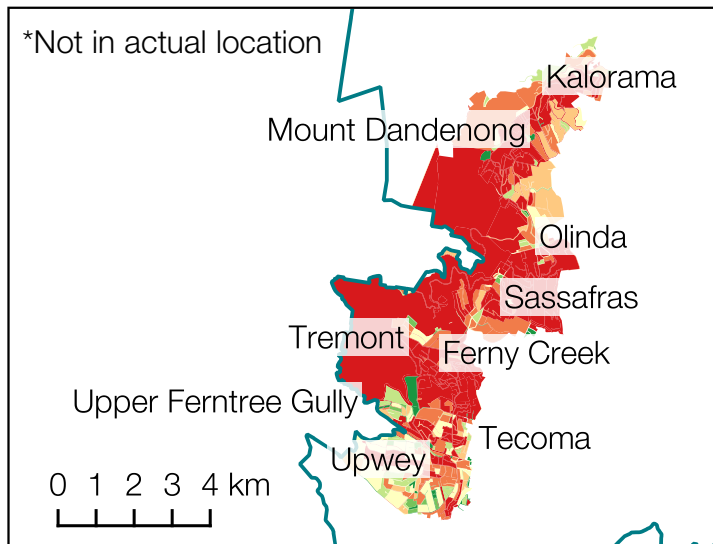
Between 2014 and 2018, our tree canopy cover in built up areas declined 2.92 *percentage points* (33.73% to 30.81%). This loss equates to 186 hectares of tree canopy cover—roughly the equivalent size of 104 Melbourne Cricket Grounds. It is important to note that the 2014 data for this study only included partial coverage of our built up areas and did not include Yarra Glen, Healesville or most of the towns in the Yarra Valley. Areas of greatest loss were seen in the Dandenong Ranges, while Mount Evelyn, Mooroolbark, Chirnside, Kilsyth and Montrose also experienced less uniform, but notable, tree canopy cover loss.

A major storm event devastated the Dandenong Ranges in June 2021. Analysis of tree canopy cover data from before and after the storm shows that 229 hectares of canopy cover were lost in the Dandenong Ranges—roughly the equivalent size of 128 Melbourne Cricket Grounds.

Maps 3 and 4. Tree canopy cover change by percentage points between 2014 and 2018. This mapping excludes data collected after the June 2021 storm event.



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Public land

Tree canopy cover change on public land between 2014 and 2018 was an overall loss of 1.96 percentage points (30.38% to 28.42%), with the Dandenongs experiencing the greatest losses, while Mount Evelyn, Monbulk-Silvan and Kilsyth experienced minor losses. In contrast, some of our more urbanised areas such as Mooroolbark, Montrose and Lilydale-Coldstream experienced minor increases in tree canopy cover.

Identifying areas of tree canopy cover loss on public land is another important step in understanding areas where trees could be protected, managed or planted to maintain and increase canopy cover.

Private land

Tree canopy cover change on private land between 2014 and 2018 was an overall loss of 3.23 percentage points (34.7% to 31.47%), with Belgrave-Selby the only area experiencing a minor increase. The significant loss of tree canopy cover on private land highlights the need to educate private landowners on the importance of trees, and to offer them incentives to protect, maintain and plant trees.

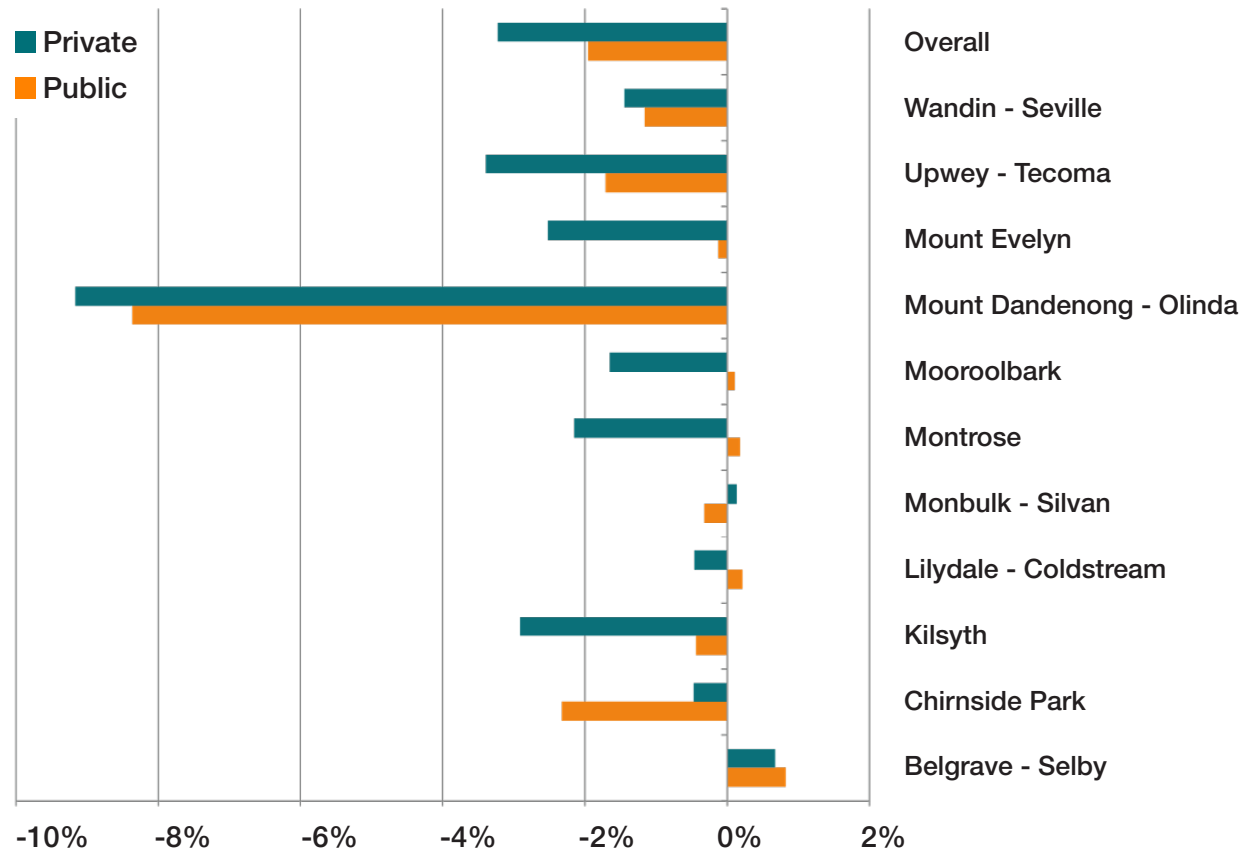


Figure 3. Tree canopy cover change (percentage points) by locality for public and private land between 2014 and 2018.

COUNCIL'S TREE MANAGEMENT

Council currently has robust tree management programs that respond to a range of guiding documents (see page 40), used to inform work practices and meet community expectations.

Current tree management programs include:

Trees on public land

Risk management

- ▶ Tree inspections and works in response to requests from customers, staff and public authorities
- ▶ Tree inspections and works to provide adequate clearance for road users
- ▶ *Proactive* tree inspections and works in and around Council parks and buildings
- ▶ Auditing trees and undertaking works to maintain clearance space around electric lines in *declared areas*
- ▶ *Fuel management* of vegetation along roadside reserves with high bushfire risk
- ▶ Coordinating with public authorities and utility service providers regarding tree inspections and works
- ▶ Biosecurity programs to reduce the threat of pests and diseases on the region's agricultural and horticultural industries.

Tree protection

- ▶ Providing advice relating to tree retention/removal for Council projects
- ▶ Providing advice for the protection of trees potentially impacted by Council projects, in accordance with the AS 4970-2009 *Protection of trees on development sites*
- ▶ Working with road authorities and utility service providers to minimise conflicts between trees and infrastructure
- ▶ Biosecurity programs to reduce the impact of pests and diseases on amenity trees.

Street tree planting

- ▶ Tree planting in response to customer requests
- ▶ Reviewing landscape plans and certifying tree installation and maintenance for new *greenfield subdivisions*.

Trees on private land

Planning applications

- ▶ Assessing trees on land subject to a planning application and providing advice relating to:
 - Tree removal/retention
 - Tree protection and management during development
- ▶ Fee-for-service tree inspections to establish permit exemption status.

Greening initiatives

- ▶ Ribbons of Green - offering free native plants for private properties (over 1 hectare), schools and community groups.



BENEFITS OF TREES



Environmental

- Clean air
- Captures air pollution
- Carbon storage
- Cooling and shading
- Wind abatement
- Reduced stormwater flows
- Improved stormwater quality
- Improved soil stability



Community & Culture

- Cultural heritage
- Connection to country
- Social connection and cohesion
- Sense of place
- Traffic calming

Ecological



- Biodiversity
- Habitat and food for fauna
- Water cycling
- Soil nutrient cycling
- Other ecosystem services

Economic



- Increased property prices
- Eco-tourism
- Energy savings
- Job creation

Health & Wellbeing



- Improved mental health
- Increased physical activity
- Shade and comfort

Trees are fundamental to the story of Yarra Ranges, shaping our cultures, values and communities. They are a prominent feature in our landscape, providing benefits to our health and wellbeing, community and culture, the environment, ecology and economy.^{9,10,11}

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In setting a future direction for our tree canopy, we first need to understand the key issues and recognise the opportunities within Yarra Ranges.

1. COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS

Our community lives, works and plays amongst trees in our streets, parks and reserves, and are often the first to notice when a tree needs attention. However, public perceptions of trees are complex, varied and not always positive.^{12,13} Building capacity and understanding of the role, function and importance of trees, is crucial for trees to become an accepted and valued part of our urban environments.

Community engagement programs involve, collaborate with, and empower the community and stakeholders in decision making. Councils throughout Australia have successfully adopted this approach for tree planting projects, partnering with the local communities to develop a shared vision for trees.

Council has the opportunity to address the community's perceptions of trees through:

- Informing the community on the role, function and importance of trees
- Engaging with the local community on tree planting projects
- Involving the community in planting days and supporting community greening initiatives such as Ribbons of Green.

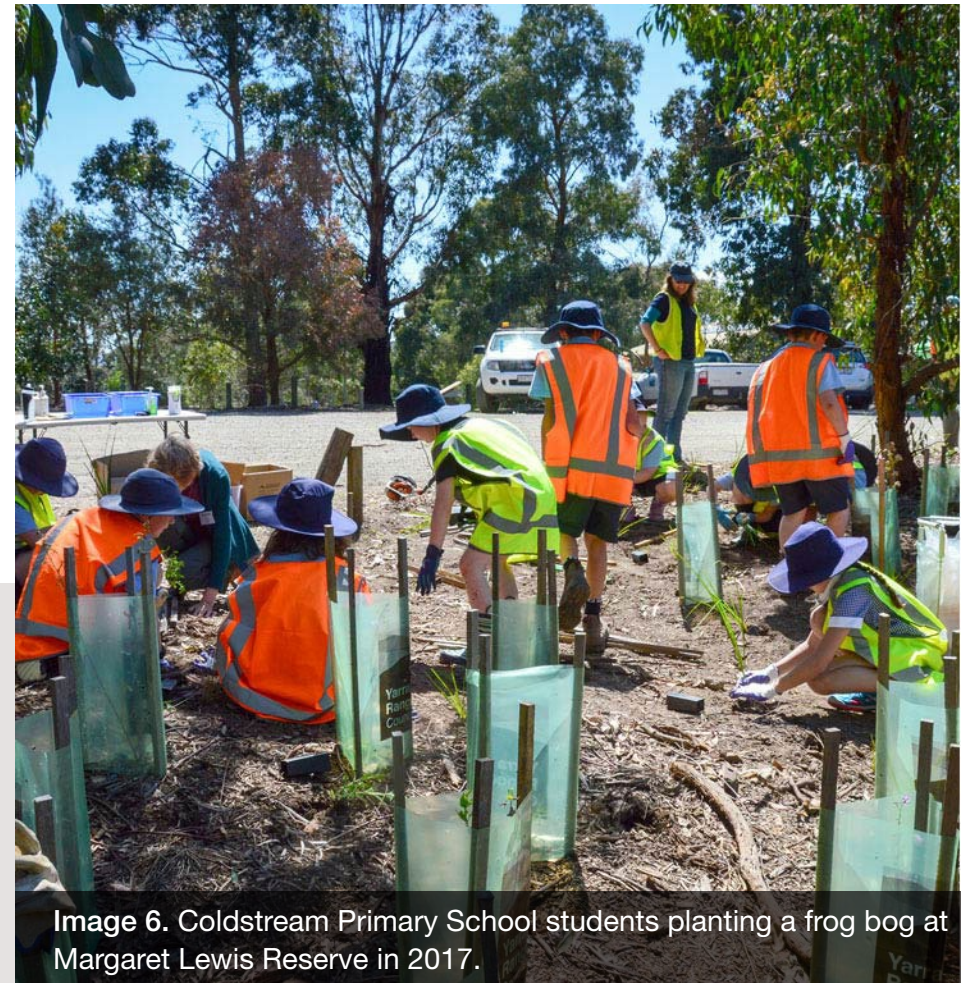


Image 6. Coldstream Primary School students planting a frog bog at Margaret Lewis Reserve in 2017.

2. URBAN HEAT

The urban heat island (UHI) effect refers to warmer temperatures experienced in urbanised areas as compared to surrounding rural areas. UHI is primarily driven by the type of materials covering land surfaces, particularly hard surfaces such as asphalt, concrete and brick. Human activities such as traffic, industry, and electricity usage also generate heat that contributes to the UHI effect.¹⁴

Urban heat can increase the duration and intensity of heat waves, as hard surfaces absorb heat during the day and release it during the night. Higher night time temperatures provide less respite and limit the recovery of those suffering from *heat stress*. This can have a significant effect on vulnerable members of our community, such as young children, the elderly, or those with medical conditions.¹⁵

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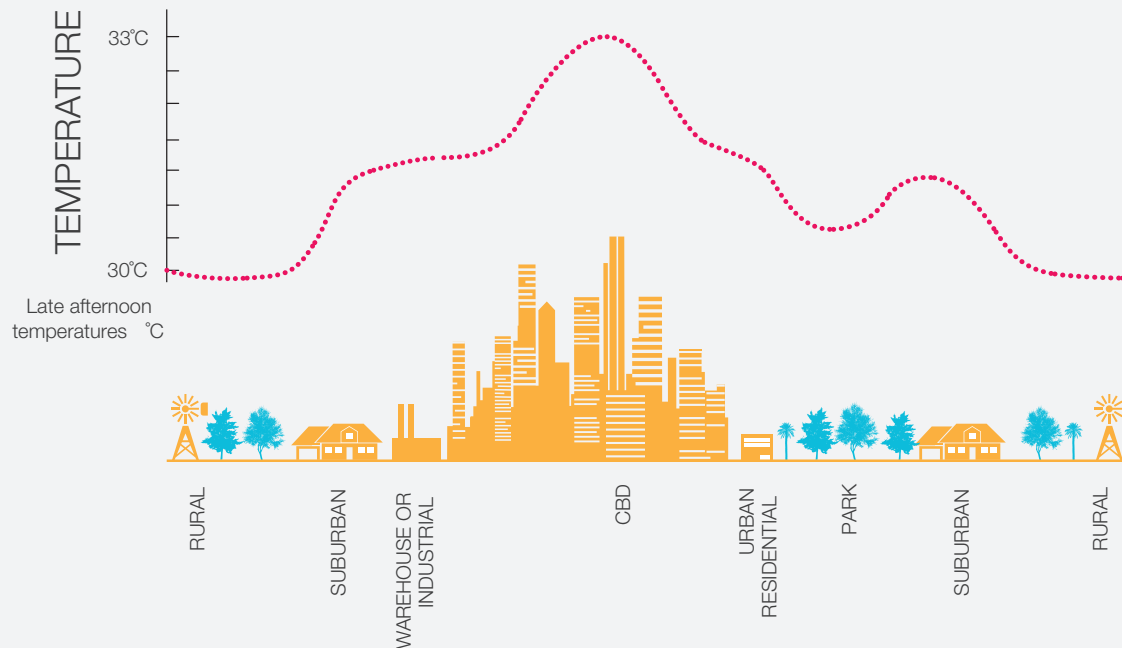


Figure 4. The urban heat island effect across different land use types.

CORE BODY TEMPERATURE

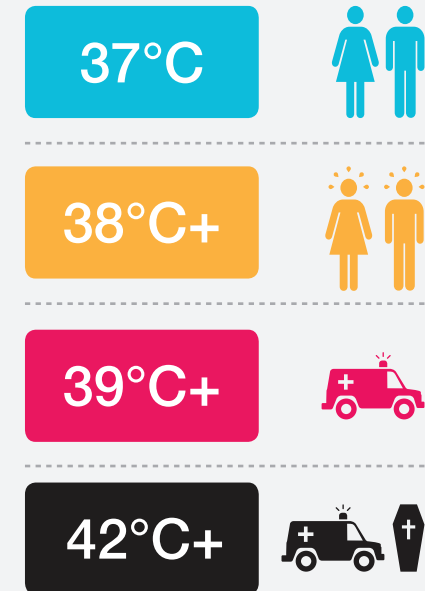


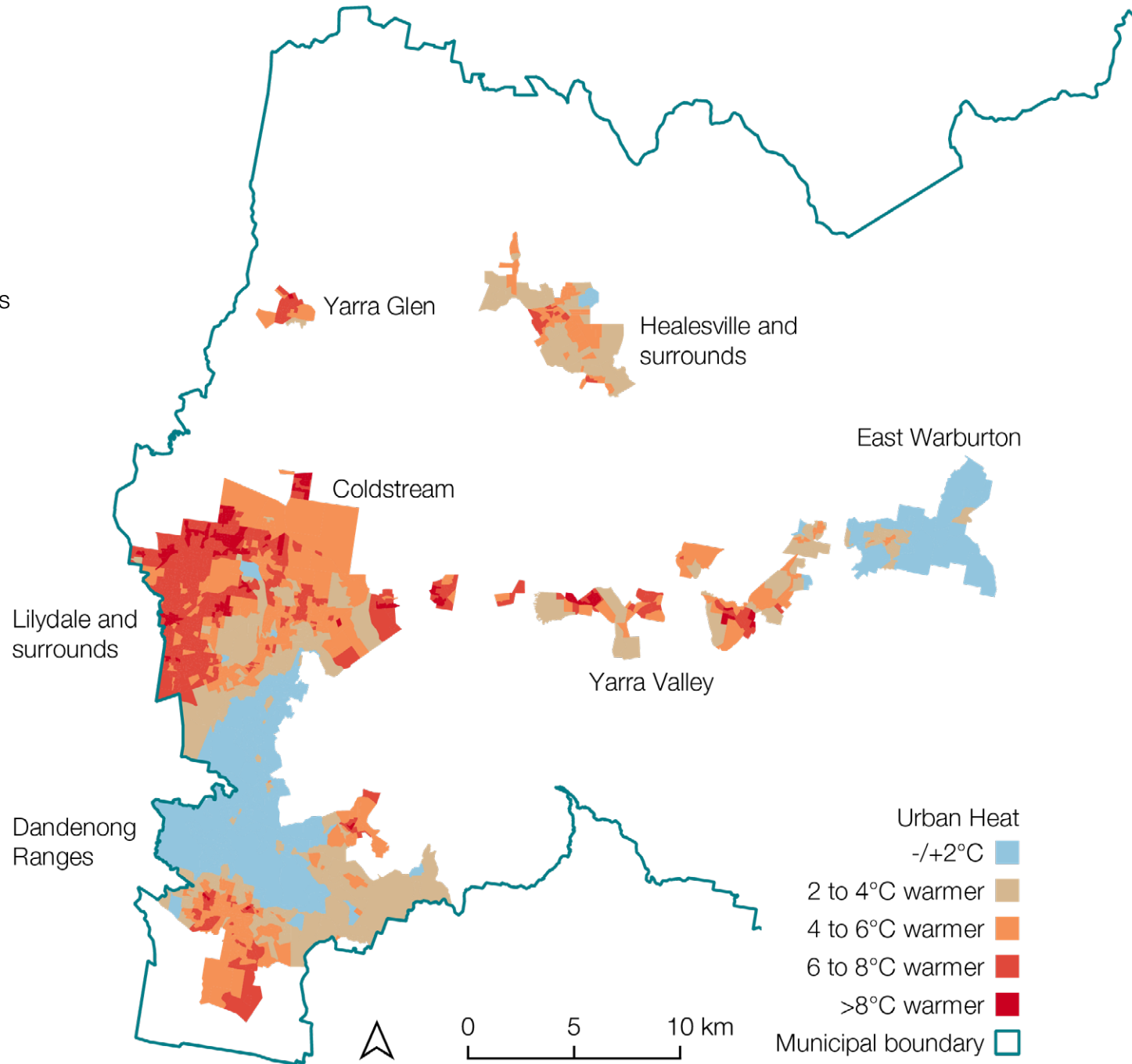
Figure 5. The impacts of heat stress on core body temperature (Hughes and McMichael 2011).

Credit: © Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency)

Urban heat data

Thermal satellite data captured by the State Government during summer 2018 shows urbanised areas of Yarra Ranges experiencing the UHI effect. Lilydale, for example, had daytime *land surface temperatures* 6.9°C above the non-urban baseline, with some areas experiencing up to 10.6°C of urban heat.

Map 5. Urban heat data (°C above the non-urban baseline) for all urban centres and localities in Yarra Ranges in 2018.

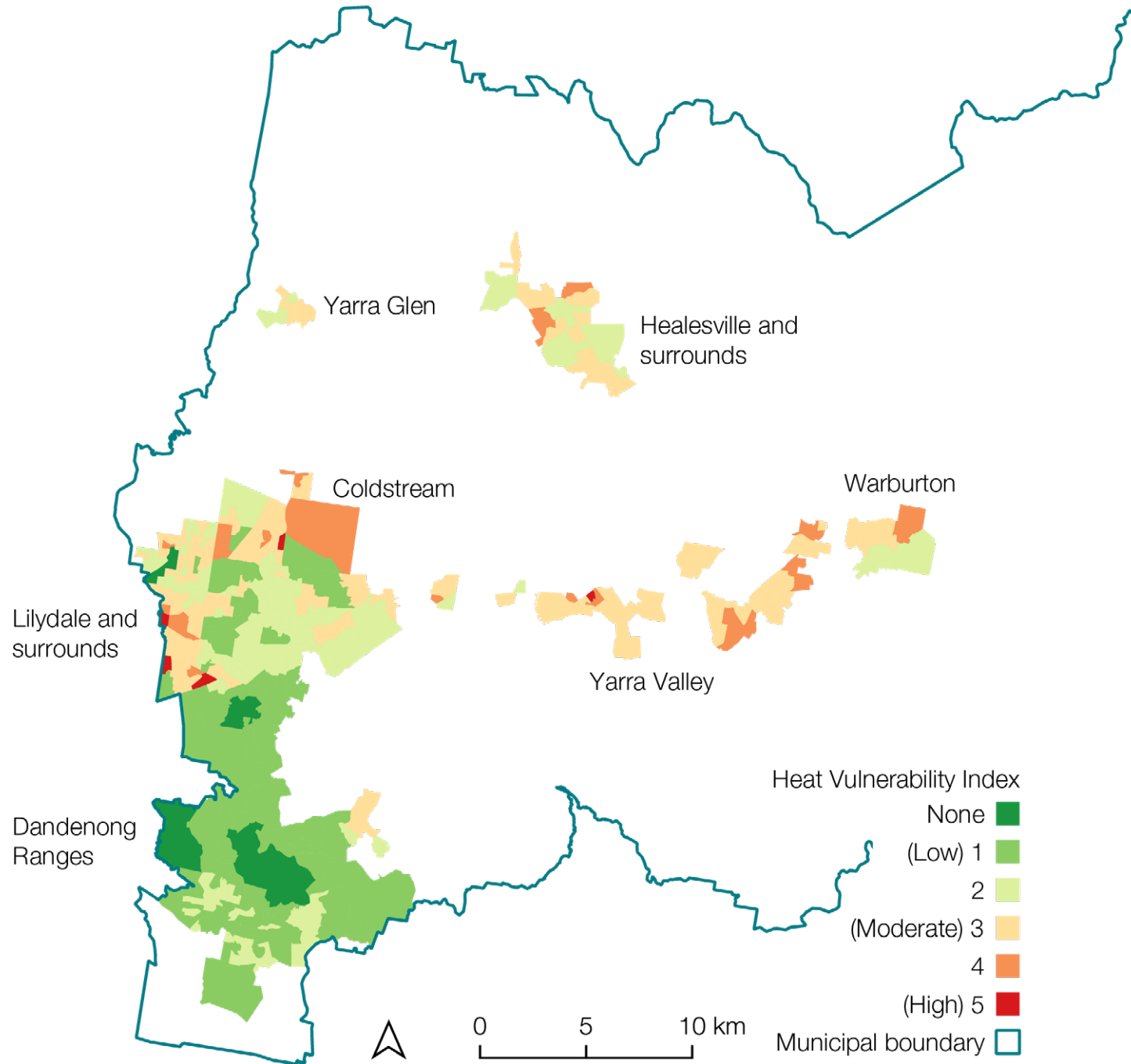


Heat vulnerability data

A heat vulnerability index (HVI) is a rating that indicates how vulnerable different parts of the community are to the effects of urban heat. HVI typically consists of three indicators: heat exposure, sensitivity to heat, and adaptive capability. A HVI developed by DELWP rated heat vulnerability on scale from 1 (low vulnerability) to 5 (high vulnerability).¹⁶ The data shows some areas of Lilydale, Mooroolbark and Kilsyth as having moderately high (4) to high (5) heat vulnerability.

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Map 6. Heat vulnerability indices for all urban centres and localities in Yarra Ranges in 2018.



Trees are cool

Vegetation can play an important role in reducing the urban heat island effect. Leafy tree canopies cool their surroundings by shading hard surfaces and *transpiring*.¹⁷ Scientific studies conducted in inner Melbourne have demonstrated that street trees can reduce daytime summer air temperatures by between 1.5°C and 4°C.^{18,19}

By planting trees to increase canopy cover to 25% on public land, suburbs and towns like Chirnside Park (currently 12%) can double the amount of tree canopy available to cool the urban heat island.



Figure 6: A representation showing the amount of new trees required to increase canopy cover to at least 25% on public land in a suburban area of Yarra Ranges.

Council can take action to reduce urban heat and improve liveability by:

- Valuing, protecting and managing existing trees to maintain healthy canopy cover
- Developing criteria to identify priority areas for *tree renewal* and planting
- Planting trees in priority areas to increase canopy cover
- Planting the *right tree in the right place* to maximise the cooling benefit.



3. EXTREME WEATHER & CLIMATE CHANGE

Extreme weather events include heat waves, bushfires, storms, flooding and drought. In Australia, heatwaves and hot weather are responsible for the greatest number of deaths from any type of *natural disaster*, and contribute significantly to morbidity, particularly among the elderly.²⁰

Trees are inextricably linked to the impacts of extreme weather, in particular in Yarra Ranges bushfires and storms are a significant risk. These events often result in *tree failures*, hazardous trees, property damage and sometimes the loss of life. Extreme weather cannot be controlled, but the risks posed to our communities can be managed to lessen the impact of these events.

Climate modelling suggests extreme weather events are likely to become more frequent and more severe, along with higher average annual temperatures and less rainfall during winter and spring.²¹ These changes in climate will place persistent and widespread strain on our communities and landscapes.

Research suggests that many native and indigenous tree species are unlikely to cope with the increase in average temperatures.^{22,23,24} With these changing conditions, there is also an increased risk of pest and pathogen incursions that will affect the health of trees in our landscapes.

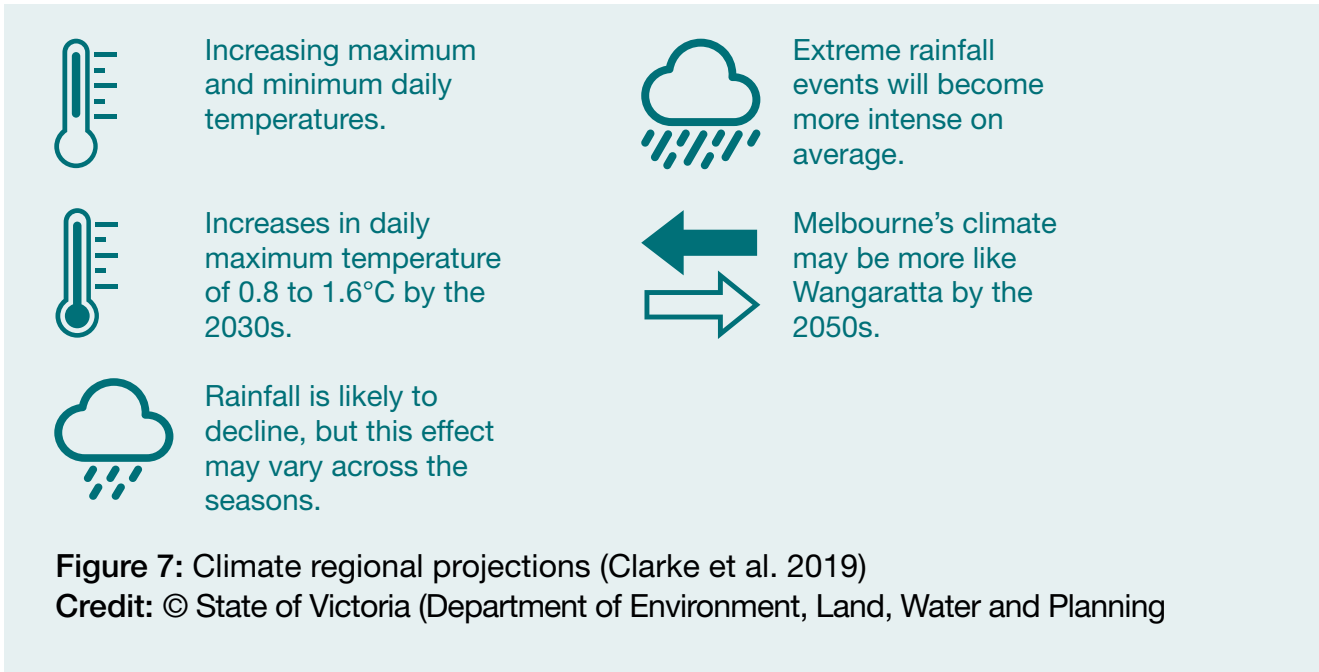


Figure 7: Climate regional projections (Clarke et al. 2019)
Credit: © State of Victoria (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning)

Council can assist the community to adapt to the impacts of extreme weather and climate change by:

- **Managing hazardous trees along roadsides for bushfire preparedness**
- **Renewing poorly performing trees**
- **Actively monitoring for outbreaks of pests and pathogens**
- **Increasing tree diversity and planting trees better suited to a future climate**
- **Taking extreme weather into account when selecting and planting trees**
- **Incorporating *water sensitive urban design (WSUD)* principles into tree planting and tree management programs.**

4. TREE DIVERSITY & PERFORMANCE

Council collected a street tree inventory in 2002, which contains the details of 29,500 trees within the suburbs of Chirnside Park, Kilsyth, Lilydale and Mooroolbark. Analysis of this dataset indicates a tree canopy with low resilience, that lacks diversity in species and age, with a high proportion of poorly performing trees. These trends will present a significant challenge in the future, leading to increasing maintenance costs and diminishing *landscape character* and *amenity*.

Council can reverse these trends and address tree canopy resilience issues by:

- **Renewing poorly performing trees**
- ***Formatively pruning trees during establishment and semi-maturity***
- **Increasing tree diversity and planting the right tree in the right place**
- **Incorporating water sensitive urban design (WSUD) principles into tree planting and tree management programs.**

Table 1: Top ten tree species in the Yarra Ranges Council street tree inventory (2002).

<i>Botanic Name (Common Name)</i>	Percentage of population
<i>Melaleuca linariifolia</i> (Snow-in-Summer)	11.7%
<i>Melaleuca styphelioides</i> (Prickly-leaved Paperbark)	8.7%
<i>Prunus cerasifera cvs.</i> (Cherry-plum)	5.2%
<i>Callistemon salignus</i> (Willow Bottlebrush)	4.4%
<i>Callistemon viminalis</i> (Weeping Bottlebrush)	3.0%
<i>Callistemon spp.</i> (Bottlebrush)	2.3%
<i>Corymbia ficifolia</i> (Red-flowering Gum)	2.0%
<i>Eucalyptus leucoxyton</i> (Yellow Gum)	1.9%
<i>Eucalyptus nicholii</i> (Willow-leaved Peppermint)	1.8%
<i>Hakea salicifolia</i> (Willow-leaved Hakea)	1.7%
Total	42.6%

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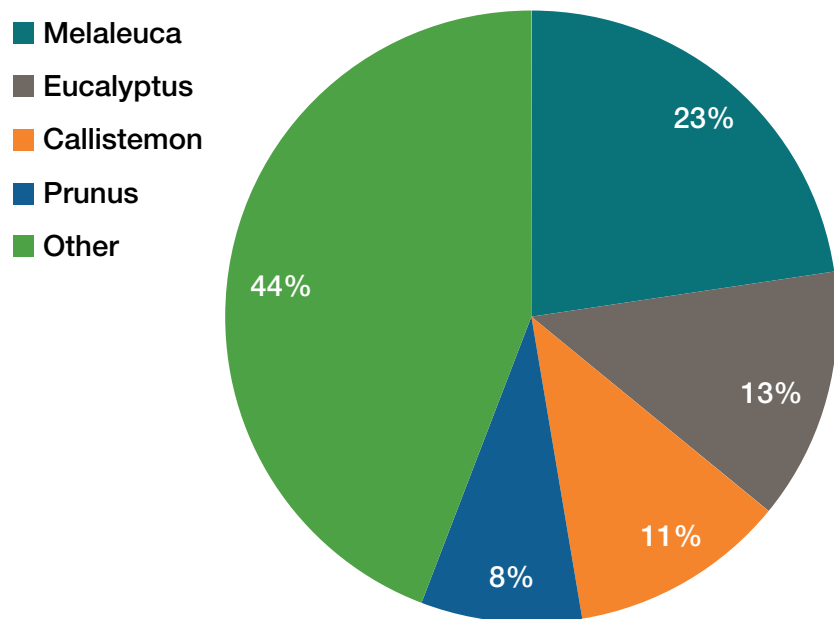


Figure 8: Tree genus diversity.

5. VACANT STREET TREE SITES

Vacant sites are places on Council land, such as nature strips and roadsides that are suitable for a mature tree. Council's mapping of vacant sites for Lilydale and surrounds show there are over 16,000 vacant sites. Planting these vacant sites with medium sized trees would equate to over 50 hectares of additional canopy cover at maturity.

Table 2: Vacant street tree sites by suburb.

Suburb	Vacant sites
Chirnside Park	2872
Kilsyth	3143
Lilydale	3344
Mooroolbark	7040
Grand Total	16399

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Council can increase tree canopy cover by:

- Planting the right tree in the right place to fill vacant sites.



6. URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The Yarra Ranges population is expected to grow by 15.23% to 185,902 by 2041.²⁵ Residential development associated with this change will put pressure on public and private trees. For example, street trees may be damaged during construction, or require removal to allow for new crossovers or car parking. In other cases, private trees may be removed and replaced with denser housing, leaving limited space for new trees. Over-time the cumulative impact of tree loss associated with development may be significant.

The Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme sets out objectives, policies and provisions that regulate the use and development of all land in the municipality. Planning zones, overlays and provisions within the Planning Scheme specify when a planning permit is required, and criteria for Council to consider before a permit is granted.

Through the Planning Scheme, Council plays a key role in protecting, managing and increasing tree canopy across public and private land. Two examples of provisions that impact our tree canopy include:

- Significant landscape overlays (SLO) that aim to conserve and enhance the character of significant landscapes
- Particular provisions, such as Clause 55, that includes landscaping standards for developments to provide for the retention or planting of trees, where these are part of the character of the neighbourhood.



Image 7. Before (2014) and after (2020) aerial photographs of residential land in Mooroolbark that has been developed for medium-density townhouses.

Council can improve the ways trees are incorporated and protected within new developments by:

- **Educating the community on the role, function and importance of trees**
- **Providing guidance on designing developments to support trees**
- **Enforcing tree protection and landscaping requirements.**

7. COMPETING INFRASTRUCTURE

Urban *streetscapes* can be crowded places. That's true both above-ground with roads, parking, footpaths, street furniture power lines and trees, and below-ground with stormwater drains, power, water, sewerage, gas and telecommunication services. Planting and managing street trees amongst this competing infrastructure is challenging.²⁶

Urban environments that are paved with hard surfaces, such as concrete and asphalt, hinder the establishment and growth of trees. Hard surfaces radiate heat, are impermeable to water, and limit *soil-atmosphere gas exchange*. The soil below is often compacted, nutrient-poor and lacks biological activity. These factors often lead to poor growth and the premature death of trees. Healthy trees with shady canopies require adequate healthy soil volume and soil moisture.

The Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020 require trees near power lines to be pruned to specific requirements for the safety and reliability of the electricity network. This pruning can render trees of poor structure and aesthetics, and is often at odds with community expectations.

Council can grow healthy trees in our urban environments through:

- **Providing adequate healthy soil volume**
- **Incorporating water sensitive urban design (WSUD) principles**
- **Planting the right tree in the right place, considering the protection of infrastructure and buildings.**
- **Advocating infrastructure solutions for the coexistence of healthy trees near utility services.**



Image 8. An example of poor practice tree pruning for power line clearance.

Credit: Judy Murphy

8. INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

As Melbourne continues to grow, new infrastructure, upgrades and maintenance projects delivered by Council and State Government authorities (such as the Department of Transport, Major Road Projects Victoria, the Level Crossing Removal Project and Melbourne Water) will be required to accommodate the movement, work requirements and social services of the population. These projects often require tree removal and result in tree canopy cover loss. However, these projects may also provide opportunities for new landscaping and tree planting.

Council can influence tree canopy outcomes for infrastructure projects through:

- Best practice tree management and protection for Council projects
- Advocating for state-based projects to avoid tree removal and minimise tree impacts
- Collaborating with authorities to deliver new landscaping and tree planting.



Image 9. Level crossing removal works in Lilydale.
Credit: © State of Victoria (Level Crossing Removal Project)

9. MANAGING CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT TREES

Trees have a profound and powerful connection to culture. For the Wurundjeri people, trees help to understand and read Country. They indicate what land management practices to undertake, are a source of food, fibre and medicine, and are important for making tools such as spears, canoes, and shields. The scarred trees along local waterways, left by Wurundjeri craftspeople, stand testament to this cultural connection.²⁷

Since European settlement, trees have been planted to commemorate significant or historical events. For example, from 1892-1920 the Lilydale Arbor Day committee planted trees to beautify the town and commemorate significant events.²⁸ Today, many of these trees are heritage listed and remain a defining feature of Lilydale's streets and parks.

As our cities and communities evolve, our most culturally significant trees and landscapes are too often forgotten or undervalued when confronted with the pressures of urbanisation. In Yarra Ranges, the loss of these trees will have long-term adverse impacts on our community and local tourism.

Council can conserve and enhance the value and benefits of culturally significant trees by:

- Defining and identifying culturally significant trees
- Capturing and maintaining an inventory of culturally significant trees
- Valuing, protecting and managing culturally significant trees, including renewing poorly performing trees
- Educating the community about the value of culturally significant trees.



Image 10. The Cork Oak (*Quercus suber*) at Lilydale Station was the only surviving plant from the original garden, established circa 1882. It was classified as a 'significant tree' by the National Trust in 2017. However, the impacts of encroaching transport infrastructure contributed to its decline, and it was removed in 2018.

10. MANAGING LARGE HABITAT TREES

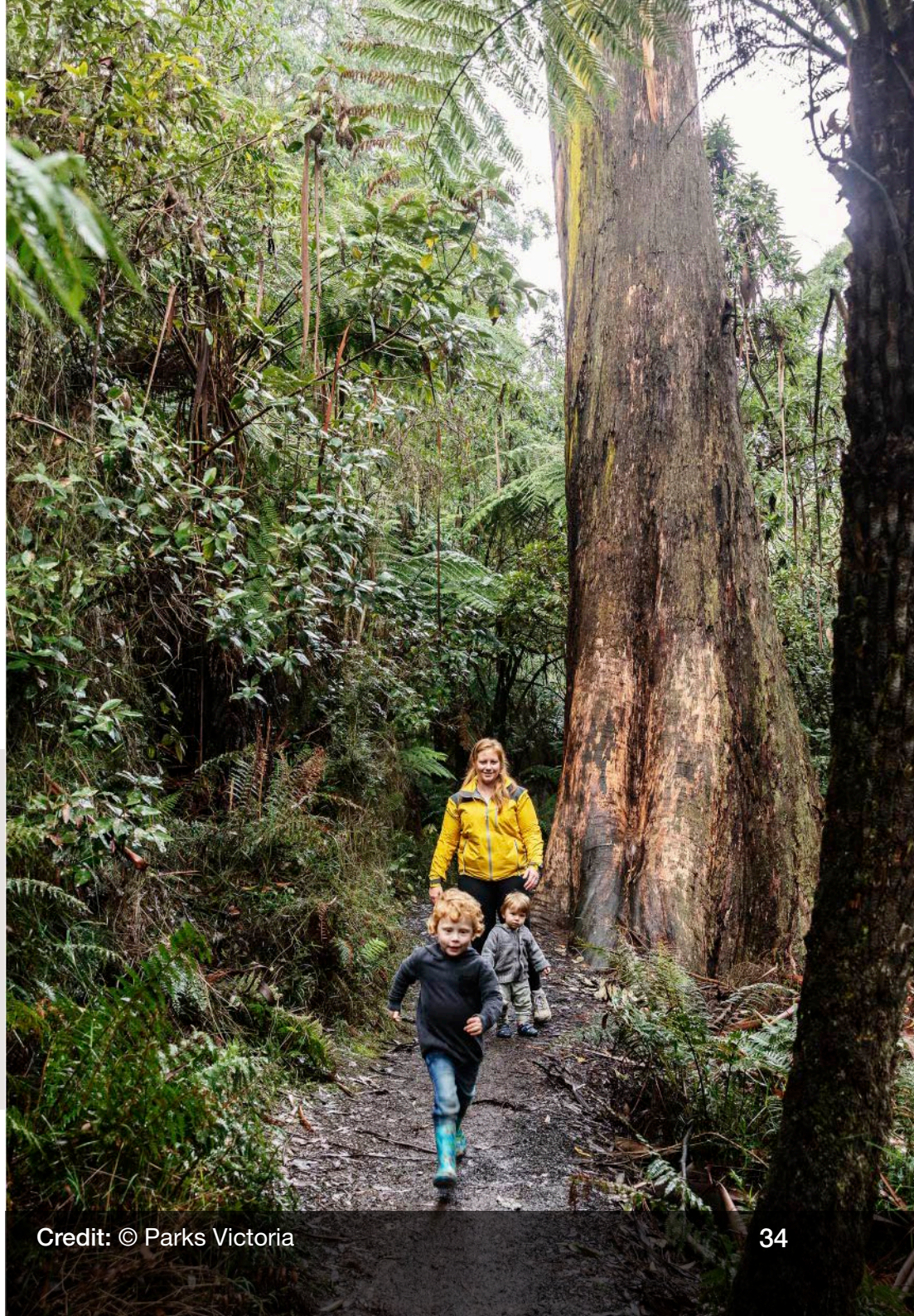
Large habitat trees occur throughout Yarra Ranges and are *keystone organisms* that support the natural systems so valued by our community and tourists. They are especially valuable because they develop hollows through a process of decay that animals can live in. Mountain Ash, such as those in the Dandenong Ranges, can take between 170-190 years to develop hollows large enough to provide habitat for animals such as possums, gliders and birds.²⁹ As large trees *senesce* and ultimately die, they continue to provide critical habitat for animals, insects and fungi. If properly managed, dead habitat trees can be retained in the landscape to provide ecosystem services for decades, or even centuries.

Due to their size, large trees have the potential to cause severe impacts to property or life when they fail or drop branches. When large trees are removed after failure, or because they pose an unacceptable risk, they are seldom replaced like for like.

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Council can address the issues facing large habitat trees by:

- Informing the community on the role, function and importance of trees
- Actively managing large habitat trees to prolong their longevity
- Managing senescing or dead habitat trees to minimise risk
- Planting large tree species for future generations.



11. BEST PRACTICE TREE MANAGEMENT

Public trees are important assets managed by Council on behalf of the community. Best practice tree management involves managing trees in a structured and coordinated way.^{30,31} Like other Council assets, such as roads and footpaths, trees can be managed to optimise their performance (benefits), risks and expenditure (costs) over their lifecycle. Tree management, such as formative pruning, can increase the life of a tree in the landscape and reduce future maintenance costs.³²

A *strategic asset management* approach to trees is necessary to ensure Council meets legislative and regulatory requirements such as the Electricity Safety Act 1998, Road Management Act 2004, Planning and Environment Act 1987, and the Local Government Act 2020.

Tree inventories are a key component of best practice tree management.³³ A tree inventory is a database that holds information on the location, species, size, age and other attributes of each tree. This data is then maintained with up-to-date information such as inspections, watering, pruning and removal.

The extensive tree population within Yarra Ranges means that collecting and maintaining a complete tree inventory would be costly and time consuming. Tree inventories can take many forms, from a complete inventory of every tree, to a partial inventory based on management criteria such as risk or significance. Tree inventory data and spatial data can also be used with tools such as iTree—a tool for quantifying the benefits and values of trees.

Council can demonstrate best practice tree management by applying strategic asset management principles through:

- **Capturing and maintaining a partial tree inventory for our built up areas**
- **Developing a tree planting and renewal program and planting the right tree in the right place**
- **Developing a formative pruning program.**



Figure 9: Street tree mapping for Council's tree planting and renewal program.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD

The draft Tree Canopy Strategy was exhibited to the community for feedback between August and September 2022. The feedback indicated broad support for the draft Strategy, and for Council to do more to protect, manage and grow the tree canopy.

Common feedback raised by the community included:

- Too many trees are being cut down for new development
- Tree canopy cover targets aren't enough
- Planting native trees versus planting exotic trees
- Emphasise and consider the biodiversity value of trees
- Incentivise tree retention and tree planting on private land
- Planting more trees could increase the risk of bushfire
- Ill-considered tree management and tree planting decisions can pose a risk to people and property
- Use up-to-date tree canopy cover data to inform tree management decisions
- Significant trees are not being adequately protected or managed
- The Strategy should be periodically reviewed to address changes and emerging trends.

The draft Tree Canopy Strategy was subsequently updated to address concerns and recommendations raised in the feedback. There were some limitations on addressing all feedback because of misalignment with established Council strategies and policy, or a lack of consensus.

By taking a considered and strategic approach to protecting, managing and planting trees, we will maximise the benefits of our tree canopy and minimise tree risks, particularly tree risks associated with bushfires and storms, which are significant factors in Yarra Ranges.



THE FUTURE

As the Traditional Custodians of these lands, the Wurundjeri people understand that we are the trees and nature and the trees and nature are us. We are altogether part of one system that creates our place. This message moves across time and illuminates the way for the future—if we care for Country, Country will care for us.

The Tree Canopy Strategy aims to set the long-term direction for the protection, management and planting of trees in Yarra Ranges. The Strategy is structured around six objectives in pursuit of the vision. Actions to achieve each objective are detailed in the Implementation Plan (Appendix 1).

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VISION

Yarra Ranges Council will conserve and enhance our leafy character, culturally significant landscapes and unique biodiversity through the protection, management and planting of trees. Our tree canopy will improve liveability, support community health and wellbeing, maintain ecosystems and enhance local tourism.



OBJECTIVES



1. Value, protect and manage trees

Healthy mature trees take decades to grow and provide great benefit to the community and the environment. We will value and protect trees to minimise canopy cover loss, and manage our trees to maximise their benefits and minimise risk. Our community will be well informed and understand the role, function and importance of trees.



2. Grow a healthy tree canopy

We will strive to grow healthy and resilient trees on public land. Our tree planting will plant the right tree in the right place, be fairly distributed, increase canopy cover, support areas of recognised biodiversity value and integrate with urban infrastructure.



3. Conserve culturally significant trees and enhance local tourism

Culturally significant trees are an important part of the landscape that shapes the identity of Yarra Ranges and makes it a tourism destination. We will aim to conserve and enhance culturally significant trees through best practice tree management, and enhance culture and tourism with new tree plantings.



4. Improve tree canopy resilience to climate change

Trees will play an increasingly important role as our community seeks to adapt to the effects of climate change. We will grow a more diverse and resilient tree canopy, better suited to a future climate, and investigate ways to improve landscape resilience.



5. Support and enhance community health and wellbeing

We will manage our trees to maximise their cooling benefit and enhance the liveability of our urban areas. Our tree planting will prioritise locations with low or declining canopy cover, particularly those vulnerable to heat. We will continue to implement and adapt our management practices to minimise the risks associated with extreme weather and bushfire.



6. Apply best practice tree management

We will strategically manage public trees as important community assets. We will be accountable and transparent in meeting our targets, and demonstrate best practice in delivering tree programs and projects that benefit our community.

TARGETS

Yarra Ranges Council will aim to achieve the following by 2044:



Our community will...

- ✓ Have a greater understanding of the role, function and importance of trees
- ✓ Have greater knowledge and appreciation of our culturally significant trees
- ✓ Increase their participation in greening and biodiversity programs.



Our tree planting will...

- ✓ Increase tree canopy cover from 31.68% to 35% on public land in built up areas
- ✓ Be fairly distributed, providing a minimum of 25% tree canopy cover on public land across all suburbs and towns
- ✓ Increase tree canopy cover for all activity centres, key pedestrian routes, playspaces and biolinks between areas with recognised biodiversity value
- ✓ Increase the diversity and resilience of Council managed trees.

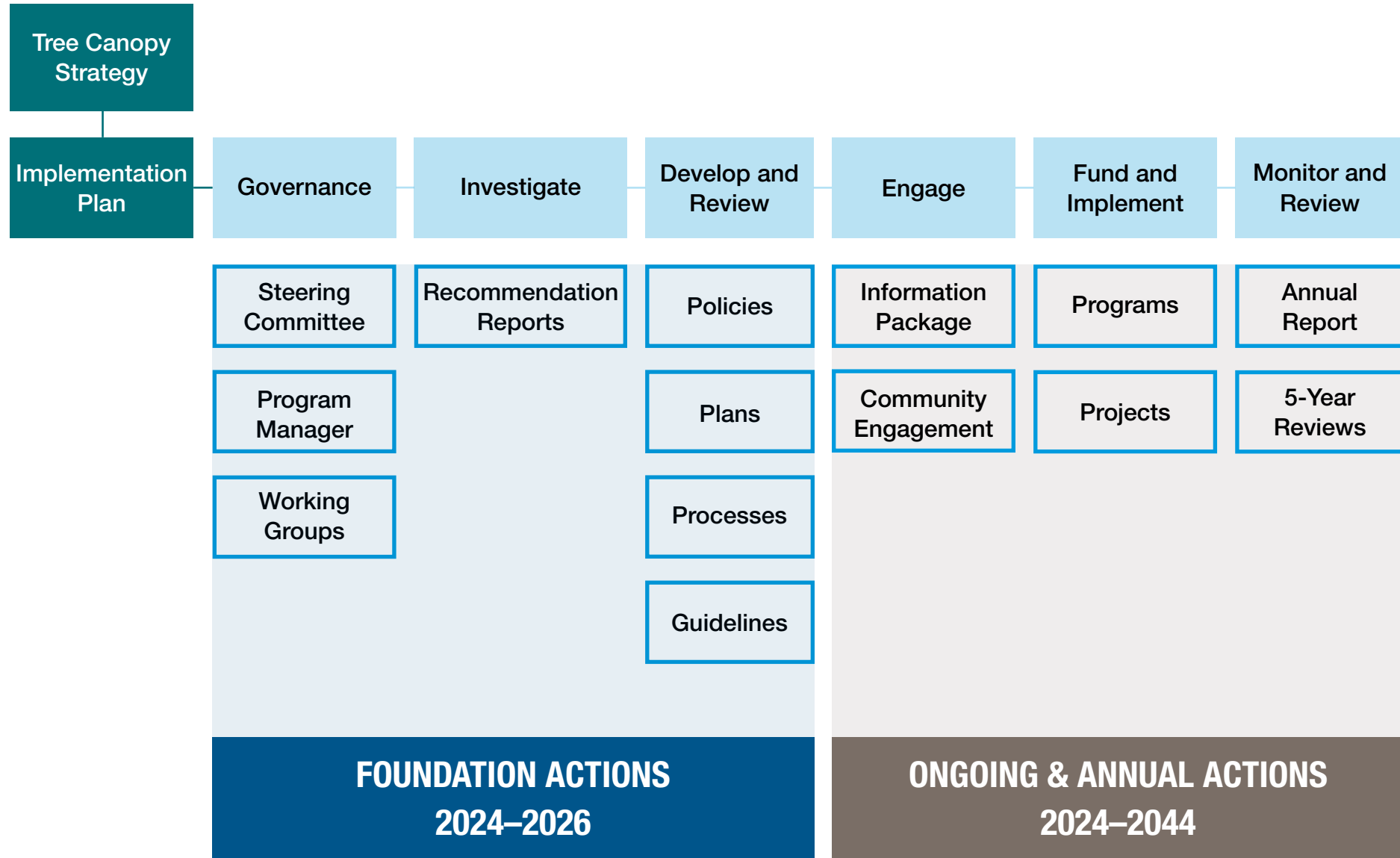


Our tree management will...

- ✓ Reduce hazardous trees along roadsides for bushfire preparedness
- ✓ Successfully establish 95% of new street tree plantings, inclusive of formative pruning
- ✓ Improve the condition of large habitat trees and culturally significant trees on public land
- ✓ Incorporate policies, plans, programs and tools informed by industry best practices.



THE NEXT STEPS



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GUIDING DOCUMENTS

Council currently has robust tree management programs that respond to a range of guiding documents, used to inform work practices and meet community expectations. These guiding documents include:

Legislation

- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
- Electrical Safety Act 1998
- Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2020
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme
- Local Government Act 2020
- Neighbourhood Amenity Local Law 2020
- Road Management Act 2004
- Water Act 1989
- Wildlife Act 1975
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
- Heritage Act 1995.

Australian standards

- AS 4970-2009 *Protection of trees on development sites*
- AS 4373-2007 *Pruning of amenity trees*
- AS ISO 31000:2018 *Risk management - Guidelines.*

Council policies and plans

- Tree Policy 2016
- Tree Management Plan 2009
- Code of Environmental Practice 2016
- Community Engagement Policy 2021
- Managing fruit fly in Victoria Action Plan 2015-2020.

GLOSSARY

Amenity: The pleasantness or attractiveness of a place.

Best practice tree management: Structured and coordinated tree management using up-to-date industry accepted methods, tools and resources.

Built up areas: An area of dense/moderately dense housing and buildings with definite boundaries. Built up areas referred to in this Strategy were derived from spatial data maintained by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

Canopy cover: The proportion of an area covered by the vertical projection of tree crowns, typically expressed as percentage.

Climate change: A long-term change in the average weather patterns that have come to define Earth's local, regional and global climates.

Community engagement: A purposeful, planned process of working with identified groups of people, whether connected by geography, demography or interests, to inform decision making, build relationships and strengthen community.

Declared area: Urban areas declared under the Electricity Safety Act 1998, typically having a 'low' fire hazard rating as determined by the Country Fire Authority.

Extreme weather: Unexpected, unusual, severe, or unseasonal weather at the extremes of the historical distribution.

Formative pruning: The process of pruning a young tree to achieve a desired shape as it grows and matures.

Fuel management: Activities undertaken to reduce bushfire risk, such as planned burning (lighting and managing fires) and mechanical treatment (mowing, slashing, mulching and using herbicides).

Greenfield subdivisions: Real estate projects on previously undeveloped land, such as unused or agricultural land.

Hazardous tree: A tree identified as a likely source of harm.

Heat stress: When the body is unable to cool itself enough to maintain a healthy temperature.

Heatwave: When the maximum and the minimum temperatures are unusually hot over a three-day period at a location.

Keystone organisms: Organisms that help define an entire ecosystem. Without its keystone organisms, the ecosystem would be dramatically different or cease to exist.

Land surface temperature: The radiative temperature of land, typically measured by a satellite.

Landscape character: The distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape. It is these patterns that give each locality its 'sense of place', making one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

Liveability: The sum of the factors that add up to a community's quality of life, including the built and natural environments, economic prosperity, social stability and equity, educational opportunity, and cultural, entertainment and recreation possibilities.

Metropolitan Melbourne: The geographical area that defines Melbourne as a city, that includes 31 local government areas.

Natural disaster: A major adverse event resulting from natural processes of the Earth; examples include floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, and other geologic processes.

Percentage point: The simple numerical difference between two percentages. For example, moving up from 40% to 44% is a 4 percentage point increase.

Proactive: Taking action in advance of a future situation, as opposed to acting reactively.

Resilient trees: Trees that are able to tolerate or quickly recover from unfavourable environmental conditions.

Right tree in the right place: A performance-based approach to deliver quality tree planting that considers tree species selection, planting location, planting reason and planting method. Typical tree planting considerations may include the desired tree performance/function, climate, soil type, available soil volume, available space above ground, landscape character, biodiversity value, infrastructure, buildings, sight lines, maintenance, community expectations and sensory appeal.

Senescence: The condition or process of deterioration with age.

Soil-atmosphere gas exchange: The processes of gas exchange between soil and atmosphere. Important for tree root growth and soil microbial activity.

Strategic asset management: Approach to asset management for long-term planning of maintenance and operations.

Streetscape: The visual elements of a street, including the road, adjoining buildings, street furniture, trees and open spaces, etc, that combine to form the street's character.

Transpiration: The process of water movement through a plant and its evaporation from aerial parts, such as leaves, stems and flowers.

Tree canopy: Our term for referring to Yarra Ranges' diverse tree population, and includes trees of all types and sizes across public and private land. It is a way to consider the collective benefits of our trees

Tree establishment: The period following the transplanting of nursery stock into the landscape. A tree is considered established when its growth rates become more or less consistent from one year to the next.

Tree failure: The structural deterioration or breakage of any part of a tree, including the roots, trunk, or branches.

Tree renewal: Removing and replanting trees.

Urban heat island effect: The phenomenon where urban areas are significantly warmer compared to surrounding rural areas due to human activities.

Urban trees: Trees in urban environments including remnant and planted specimens.

Water sensitive urban design (WSUD): An approach to planning and designing urban areas to make use of water as a valuable resource and reduce the harm it causes to rivers and creeks.

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²⁴ Schneemann B, Brack C, Brookhouse M and Kanowski P (2019) *Urban Forest tree species research for the ACT: A Report for the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate* [online document], The Australian National University, Canberra, accessed 14 March 2021.

²⁵ .id (2016) *Yarra Ranges Council: population forecast* [online], .id consulting pty ltd, accessed 14 March 2021.

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²⁹ De Gabriele M and Mountain W (2018) *Comic explainer: forest giants house thousands of animals (so why are we cutting them down?)* [online], The Conversation, accessed 14 March 2021.

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APPENDIX 1 - IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Timeframes

Foundation actions: are high-priority actions to be delivered within two years of Strategy endorsement. Typically, these actions will inform or affect the progression of ongoing and annual actions.

Ongoing actions: are to be delivered periodically over the life of the Strategy.

Annual actions: are to be delivered each year over the life of the Strategy.

Governance

Governance for the Implementation Plan consists of a steering committee to oversee, a program manager to coordinate and working groups to implement.

Working groups of internal staff representing key stakeholders across Council will deliver the Implementation Plan. Where relevant, working groups will collaborate with Council committees, the community, other agencies and will be assisted by various specialist consultants as required.

The Program Manager will convene quarterly meetings of the working groups. The Program Manager will monitor and review the progress of the Implementation Plan and prepare quarterly project status reports to the Steering Committee and annual reports to Council.

The Tree Canopy Strategy and Implementation Plan will be reviewed every five years.





Objective 1. Value, protect and manage trees

Targets:

- Our community will have a greater understanding of the role, function and importance of trees
- Reduce hazardous trees along roadsides for bushfire preparedness
- Improve the condition of large habitat trees on public land
- Our tree management will incorporate policies, plans, programs and tools informed by industry best practices.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
1.1 ¹	Review the Tree Management Plan and include best practice guidelines to maximise the benefits of council trees and minimise risk.	Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2026	\$30,000	Existing internal budget	Tree Management Plan updated
1.2	Develop a management plan for large habitat trees on council managed land in built up areas. Biolinks between large habitat trees to form part of the plan.	Climate & Nature, Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2026	\$10,000	Existing internal budget	Large habitat tree management plan
1.3 ²	Develop a 'living with trees' communication package explaining the role, function, and importance of trees, why trees on private property are important and how to care for them.	Communications & Engagement, Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2026	\$10,000	Existing internal budget	Communications package

¹ Also aligns with Objective 6.

² Also aligns with Objective 2.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
1.4 ³	Develop a monetary valuation method and policy for trees on public land.	Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2025	\$0		Tree valuation method and policy adopted by Council
1.5	Investigate incentives for private landowners to protect and manage large habitat trees on private land.	Climate & Nature, Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2025	\$0		Recommendations report
1.6 ⁴	Review of current process, practice and resourcing for the protection and management of trees on council projects.	Climate & Nature, Design & Delivery, Infrastructure Maintenance, Major Projects, Parks Trees & Trails, Recreation & Sport, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Foundation action by 2025	\$0		Recommendations report
1.7 ⁵	Review current process, practice, and resourcing for the enforcement of tree protection as required by council planning permits and local laws.	Development Compliance, Parks Trees & Trails, Safer Communities	Foundation action by 2025	\$0		Recommendations report
1.8	Advocate infrastructure solutions for the coexistence of healthy trees near utility services.	Design & Delivery, Infrastructure Maintenance, Parks Trees & Trails	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$0		Records of communication

³ Also aligns with Objective 6.

⁴ Also aligns with Objective 6.

⁵ Also aligns with Objective 6.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
1.9	Continue to advocate for State Government infrastructure projects to avoid tree removal and minimise tree impacts.	Climate & Nature, Parks Trees & Trails	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$0		Records of communication
1.10 ⁶	Develop and maintain an inventory of large habitat trees on council managed land in built up areas.	Enterprise Systems, Parks Trees & Trails	Annually 2026-2044	\$0		Large habitat tree inventory
1.11 ⁷	Develop and implement a program to manage large habitat trees on council managed land in built up areas. The program is to include the management of biolinks between large habitat trees.	Climate & Nature, Parks Trees & Trails	Annually 2026-2044	\$75,000/year	Existing internal budget	Large habitat tree management program
1.12 ⁸	Develop and implement a program to manage hazardous trees along council managed roadsides for bushfire preparedness in collaboration with other bushfire reduction works and relevant agencies.	Climate & Nature, Parks Trees & Trails	Annually 2024-2044	\$150,000/year	Existing internal budget	Bushfire preparedness tree management program
1.13 ⁹	Develop and implement an integrated pest and disease management plan (IPDM) to proactively monitor and treat tree pests and disease outbreaks.	Parks Trees & Trails	Annually 2025-2044	\$75,000/year	Existing internal budget supplemented by external funding from partner agencies	IPDM Plan

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⁶ Also aligns with Objective 6.

⁷ Also aligns with Objective 6.

⁸ Also aligns with Objective 5.

⁹ Also aligns with Objectives 4 and 6.



Objective 2. Grow a healthy tree canopy

Targets:

- Increase tree canopy cover from 31.68% to 35% on public land in built up areas
- Tree planting will be fairly distributed, providing a minimum of 25% tree canopy cover on public land across all suburbs and towns
- Increase tree canopy cover for all activity centres, key pedestrian routes, playspaces and biolinks between areas with recognised biodiversity value.
- Successfully establish 95% of new street tree plantings, inclusive of formative pruning

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
Page 220 2.1 ¹⁰	Develop criteria and identify priority areas for tree planting and renewal. Biodiversity value and bushfire risk to be included as criteria for consideration.	Climate & Nature, Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2025	\$20,000	Existing internal budget	Priority area maps
2.2 ¹¹	Develop and implement a community engagement plan for tree planting and renewal projects.	Communications & Engagement, Parks Trees & Trails	Ongoing 2025-2044	\$0		Community engagement survey
2.3	Investigate incentives for private landowners to plant trees on private land.	Climate & Nature, Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2025	\$0		Recommendations report

¹⁰ Also aligns with Objective 5.

¹¹ Also aligns with Objective 6.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
2.4 ¹²	Review existing council design guidelines for developments on private land. Include best practice advice for incorporating trees into developments, to reduce the urban heat island effect through shading and cooling.	Parks Trees & Trails, Strategic Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Foundation action by 2026	\$30,000	Existing internal budget (may be shared across Planning & Sustainable Futures Directorate)	Design guidelines updated
2.5	Investigate opportunities to improve compliance with endorsed landscape plans for development sites, particularly the planting of trees.	Development Compliance, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Foundation action by 2025	\$0		Recommendations report
2.6	Update the Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme to include references to the Tree Canopy Strategy in the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Planning Policy Framework (PPF).	Strategic Planning	Foundation action by 2026	\$0		Recommendations report
2.7 ¹³	Investigate urban design and engineering solutions to enhance healthy soil volume for tree growth and function, and to protect infrastructure and buildings.	Parks Trees & Trails, Storm Water Traffic & Transport, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Foundation action by 2025	\$0		Recommendations report

¹² Also aligns with Objective 6.

¹³ Also aligns with Objectives 4 & 6.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
2.8 ¹⁴	Develop and implement a tree planting and renewal program for priority areas selecting the right tree for the right place, inclusive of two years of establishment maintenance.	Parks Trees & Trails	Annually 2024-2044	\$450,000/year	Existing internal budget	Two year rolling program
2.9 ¹⁵	Develop and implement a formative pruning program for all new street tree plantings.	Parks Trees & Trails	Annually 2024-2044	\$0 (Existing Officer hours)		Four year rolling program
2.10 ¹⁶	Seek opportunities for partnership with the Department of Transport for planting projects along major tourist routes.	Parks Trees & Trails, Storm Water Traffic & Transport, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$0		Records of communication
2.11	Collaborate with the eastern region councils to achieve the goals of the <i>Living Melbourne: Our Metropolitan Urban Forest</i> strategy.	Climate & Nature, Parks Trees & Trails	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$0		Records of communication
2.12 ¹⁷	Review contract specifications for tree planting and establishment. Incorporate guidance for the selection of the right tree for the right place.	Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2024	\$0		Contract specifications updated

¹⁴ Also aligns with Objectives 4 & 6.

¹⁵ Also aligns with Objective 4 & 6.

¹⁶ Also aligns with Objective 3.

¹⁷ Also aligns with Objective 6.



Objective 3. Conserve culturally significant trees and enhance local tourism

Targets:

- Our community will have greater knowledge and appreciation of our culturally significant trees.
- Improve the condition of culturally significant trees on public land.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
3.1 ¹⁸	Develop a management plan for culturally significant trees on council managed land.	Indigenous Development, Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2025	\$10,000	Existing internal budget	Culturally significant tree management plan
3.2	Develop and implement a community engagement plan for culturally significant trees with consideration of indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. Develop in partnership with the Indigenous Advisory Committee, Lilydale Historical Society and Yarra Ranges Tourism.	Business & Tourism, Indigenous Development, Communications & Engagement, Parks Trees & Trails	Ongoing 2026-2044	\$15,000	Existing internal budget (Tree Management)	Community engagement survey
3.3 ¹⁹	Develop and maintain an inventory of culturally significant trees on council managed land.	Enterprise Systems, Indigenous Development, Parks Trees & Trails	Annually 2025-2044	\$0		Culturally significant tree inventory
3.4 ²⁰	Develop and implement a program to manage culturally significant trees on council managed land, including renewing poorly performing trees.	Indigenous Development, Parks Trees & Trails	Annually 2026-2044	\$75,000/year	Existing internal budget	Culturally significant tree management program

¹⁸ Also aligns with Objective 6.

¹⁹ Also aligns with Objective 6.

²⁰ Also aligns with Objective 6.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
3.5	Investigate opportunities to update Planning Scheme heritage controls with reference to the culturally significant tree inventory.	Strategic Planning	Foundation action by 2026	\$0		Recommendation s report
3.6	Investigate opportunities to embed Indigenous references to Country and culture into playspace designs and playspace planting, through collaboration with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.	Indigenous Development, Parks Trees & Trails, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$0		Indigenous references to Country and culture feature in our playspaces
3.7	Investigate opportunities to plant tree lined streets as part of 'Welcome to...' gateways into towns.	Parks Trees & Trails, Storm Water Traffic & Transport, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$0		Records of communication



Objective 4. Improve tree canopy resilience to climate change

Target:

- Increase the diversity and resilience of Council managed trees.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
4.1	Develop a tree planting palette for built up areas with consideration of biodiversity values, species diversity and future climate suitability.	Climate & Nature, Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2025	\$10,000	Existing internal budget	Tree planting palette
4.2	Develop a concept plan and grant proposal for a future climate arboretum.	Parks Trees & Trails, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Foundation action by 2026	\$20,000	Existing internal budget (may be shared across responsible teams)	Concept plan and grant proposal
4.3	Collaborate with researchers and tree growers to trial tree species that may be more suitable for a future climate.	Climate & Nature, Parks Trees & Trails	Ongoing 2024-2028	\$50,000	Existing internal budget/external funding opportunity	Tree species trial project
4.4	Investigate opportunities to incorporate water sensitive urban design (WSUD) principles as part of tree planting and tree management programs.	Parks Trees & Trails, Storm Water Traffic & Transport	Foundation action by 2026	\$0		Recommendations report



Objective 5. Support and enhance community health and wellbeing

Targets:

- Increase tree canopy cover for all activity centres, key pedestrian routes, playspaces and biolinks between areas with recognised biodiversity value.
- Our community will increase their participation in greening and biodiversity programs.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
5.1	Integrate tree canopy cover targets for all activity centres.	Strategic Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$0		All new Structure Plans include tree canopy cover targets
5.2	Integrate shade and cooling principles into the Paths and Trails Strategy/Plan (under development).	Parks Trees & Trails, Recreation & Sport	Foundation action by 2026	\$0		Shade or cool refuge targets in the Paths and Trails Strategy/Plan
5.3	Review landscape guidelines for Council capital works projects and integrate targets for tree planting and/or tree canopy cover. Tree canopy cover targets for new playspaces to be included.	Parks Trees & Trails, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Foundation action by 2025	\$0		Landscape guidelines for Council capital works projects updated

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
5.4 ²¹	Incorporate trees for cooler and greener streets as part of streetscape revitalisation and car park projects.	Design & Delivery, Parks Trees & Trails, Storm Water Traffic & Transport, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Ongoing 2024-2044	See action 2.8	Existing internal budget	Tree canopy is a feature of revitalised streetscapes and car parks
5.5 ²²	Incorporate trees for cooler and greener playspaces as part of the tree planting and renewal program.	Parks Trees & Trails, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture	Ongoing 2024-2044	See action 2.8	Existing internal budget	Tree canopy is a feature of playspaces
5.6 ²³	Continue to advocate for tree planting as part of State Government infrastructure projects, to support and enhance community health and wellbeing.	Parks Trees & Trails, Storm Water Traffic & Transport, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture,	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$0		Records of communication
5.7	Continue to organise tree planting days to engage community members and groups.	Climate & Nature	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$0	Existing internal budget	Community engagement survey
5.8	As per Council’s Nature Plan - Action 2.1, increase support to the community through the Ribbons of Green program, to deliver a revitalised incentive program and implement the Biolinks Plan.	Climate & Nature	Ongoing 2026-2034	\$250,000/year	New operational budget (40%) supplemented by external funding from partner agencies (60%)	Community engagement survey, connectivity of biolinks

²¹ Also aligns with Objective 2.

²² Also aligns with Objective 2.

²³ Also aligns with Objective 2.



Objective 6. Apply best practice tree management

Target:

- Our tree management will incorporate policies, plans, programs and tools informed by industry best practices.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
6.1	Develop a business case and position description for a program manager to coordinate the delivery of the Tree Canopy Strategy.	Parks Trees & Trails	Within 6 months of strategy endorsement	Subject to business case	Subject to business case	Program Manager business case and position description
6.2	Develop a business case and position description for a technical officer to assist the delivery of the Tree Canopy Strategy.	Parks Trees & Trails,	Within 6 months of strategy endorsement	Subject to business case	Subject to business case	Technical Officer business case and position description
6.3	Program Manager to convene a steering committee to oversee, and working groups to implement the Tree Canopy Strategy.	Tree Canopy Strategy Program Manager, key stakeholders	Within 12 months of strategy endorsement	Subject to Program Manager business case	Subject to Program Manager business case	Minutes from quarterly meetings with the Steering Committee and working groups
6.4	Program Manager to monitor, review and report on the progress of the Implementation Plan. Review the Tree Canopy Strategy every 5 years.	Tree Canopy Strategy Program Manager	Annually 2025-2044	Subject to Program Manager business case	Subject to Program Manager business case	Annual report to Steering Committee and 5-yearly reviews.

	Action	Key stakeholders	Timeframe	Estimated cost	Funding source (subject to review)	Measure
6.5	Review the Tree Policy and include reference to the Tree Canopy Strategy and key policy statements (e.g., tree protection, electrical line clearance and species selection).	Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2024	\$0		Tree Policy updated
6.6	Develop a strategic asset management plan for Council managed trees in built up areas.	Asset Planning & Investment, Parks Trees & Trails	Foundation action by 2026	\$0		Tree asset management plan
6.7	Update the Council website to include information on the Tree Canopy Strategy and provide progress updates.	Communications & Engagement, Tree Canopy Strategy Program Manager	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$0		Council website updated
6.8	Develop and maintain a partial tree inventory, including for all new trees planted in built up areas.	Enterprise Systems, Parks Trees & Trails	Annually 2025-2044	\$0		Tree inventory
6.9	Partner with the State Government and neighbouring councils on acquiring, or Council to acquire its own periodic tree canopy cover data.	Enterprise Systems, Parks Trees & Trails	Ongoing 2024-2044	\$200,00-480,000 (\$50,000-120,000 every 5 years)	Within existing budget (funding to be shared across organisation through packaged purchase of spatial data)	Data acquired every 5 years

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11. COUNCILLOR MOTIONS

In accordance with Chapter 3 Division 4 of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

There were no Councillor motions received prior to the Agenda being printed.

12. ITEMS THROUGH THE CHAIR

13. REPORTS FROM DELEGATES

14. DOCUMENTS FOR SIGNING AND SEALING

In accordance with Clause 87 of the Meeting Procedures and Use of Common Seal Local Law 2015, as prescribed by Section 14(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 2020.

There were no Documents for Signing and Sealing listed for this meeting prior to the Agenda being printed.

15. INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

Report Author: Governance Officer
Responsible Officer: Director Corporate Services
Ward(s) affected: All Wards

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public

SUMMARY

Chapter 8, Rule 1, of the Governance Rules requires that records of informal meetings of Councillors must be kept and that the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the matters discussed at the meeting tabled at the next convenient Council meeting and recorded in the Minutes of that Council meeting.

An 'informal meeting of Councillors' is defined in the Governance Rules as a meeting of Councillors that:

- is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors;
- is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
- is not a Council meeting, Delegated Committee meeting or Community Asset Committee meeting.

The records for informal meetings of Councillors are attached to the report.

RECOMMENDATION

That the records of the Informal Meetings of Councillors, copies of which are attached to the report, be received and noted.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. 7 May 2024 - Council Forum
2. 7 May 2024 - Council Briefing

Assembly of Councillors

Public Record



	5.4	Biodiversity Offsets Program - Doongalla Reserve Proposal
	5.5	CT7428: Works & Service Panel (WASP)
	5.6	Local Government Amendment (Governance & Integrity) Bill 2024 – Verbal Discussion
	6.0	Mayor & CEO Update
	7.0	General Business
	8.0	For Noting
	8.1	Submission to the Eminent Panel for Community Engagement
	8.2	Capital Works Monthly report (end of March)
	8.3	Municipal Association of Victoria - State Council - Voting Directions
	8.4	Pre-Budget Submission, Victorian Government 2024-2025
	8.5	Quarterly Corporate Services Reporting (January-March 2024)
	8.6	Indicative Forum & Council Meeting Schedule
Completed By:	Gina Walter	

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Public Record



Meeting Name:	Council Briefing															
Date:	07 May 2024	Start Time: 6.28pm Finish Time:6.35pm														
Venue:	Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Anderson Street, Lilydale and via videoconference															
Attendees:	<p>Councillors: Cr S Todorov (Chair), Cr D Eastham (Deputy Mayor), Cr A Fullagar, Cr J Skelton, Cr F McAllister, Cr R Higgins, Cr T Heenan, Cr L Cox, and Cr Jim Child</p> <p>CEO/Directors: Tammi Rose, Andrew Hilson, Hjalmar Philipp and Phil Murton</p> <p>Via Zoom: Leanne Hurst</p> <p>Officers: Sarah Candeland, Gina Walter and Ben Waterhouse</p> <p>Externals: Nil</p>															
Apologies:	Nil															
Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For transparency the Chief Executive Officer noted their involvement in matters relating to Item 17.1 Confidential Item - Chief Executive Officer Annual Review. 															
Matter/s Discussed:	<p>This briefing covered the following items of business to be considered at the 14 May 2024 Council Meeting.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>9.1</td> <td>Petitions to Council – Request that Yarra Ranges Council allow residents to "opt out" of the FOGO bin as permitted in the New Circular Economy Act 2021 and return weekly rubbish collection to the residents</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9.1</td> <td>Petitions to Council – Request that Yarra Ranges Council build an upgraded, modern, aquatic facility on the Kilsyth Centenary Pool site</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10.1</td> <td>YR-2022/915 - 375 Swansea Rd, Lilydale - Planning Report</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10.2</td> <td>2025 Annual Grants - Initiation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10.3</td> <td>Parking Management in Warburton</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10.4</td> <td>Fair Access Policy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17.1</td> <td>Confidential Item</td> </tr> </table>		9.1	Petitions to Council – Request that Yarra Ranges Council allow residents to "opt out" of the FOGO bin as permitted in the New Circular Economy Act 2021 and return weekly rubbish collection to the residents	9.1	Petitions to Council – Request that Yarra Ranges Council build an upgraded, modern, aquatic facility on the Kilsyth Centenary Pool site	10.1	YR-2022/915 - 375 Swansea Rd, Lilydale - Planning Report	10.2	2025 Annual Grants - Initiation	10.3	Parking Management in Warburton	10.4	Fair Access Policy	17.1	Confidential Item
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10.3	Parking Management in Warburton															
10.4	Fair Access Policy															
17.1	Confidential Item															
Completed By:	Gina Walter															

16. URGENT BUSINESS

In accordance with Chapter 3 Rule 24 of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

17. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

In accordance with Chapter 3 Rule 24 of the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

RECOMMENDATION

That in accordance with section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020, Council resolves to close the meeting to members of the public to consider the following items which relate to matters specified under section 3(1), as specified below.

17.1 Land Purchase

Item 17.1 is Confidential under the terms section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 as it contains information relating to: (a) Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Councils position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

Confidential Item

Confidential Item

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Council is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 11 June 2024 commencing at 7.00pm, at Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Anderson Street, Lilydale and via videoconference.



In providing for the good governance of its community, Councillors are reminded of their obligation to abide by the provisions as set within the Local Government Act 2020 and the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

When attending a Council Meeting, Councillors should adhere to the procedures set out in the Governance Rules developed by Council in accordance with section 60 of the Local Government Act 2020.

The following is a guide for all Councillors to ensure they act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of Yarra Ranges as a whole.

1. Councillors will respect the personal views of other Councillors and the decisions of Council.
2. Councillors may publicly express their own opinions on Council matters but not so as to undermine the standing of Council in the community.
3. The Mayor is the official spokesperson for Council.
4. Councillors will incur expenditure in a responsible manner and in accordance with the Councillor Expenditure and Policy.
5. Councillors will avoid conflicts of interest and will always openly disclose any direct and indirect interests where they exist.
6. Councillors will act with integrity and respect when interacting with Council staff and members of the public.
7. Councillors will demonstrate fairness in all dealings and conduct and be open with and accountable to the community at all times.
8. Councillors will conduct themselves in a manner that does not cause detriment to Council or the Yarra Ranges community.