MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA

5 JUNE 2024

Please consider the environment before printing

Consider carefully how the information in this document is transmitted

Welcome

Welcome to this Meeting of the Port Phillip City Council.

Council Meetings are an important way to ensure that your democratically elected representatives are working for you in a fair and transparent way. They also allow the public to be involved in the decision-making process of Council.

About this meeting

There are a few things to know about tonight's meeting. The first page of tonight's Agenda itemises all the different parts to the meeting. Some of the items are administrative and are required by law. In the agenda you will also find a list of all the items to be discussed this evening.

Each report is written by a Council officer outlining the purpose of the report, all relevant information and a recommendation. Council will consider the report and either accept the recommendation or make amendments to it. All decisions of Council are adopted if they receive a majority vote from the Councillors present at the meeting.

Public Question Time and Submissions

Provision is made at the beginning of the meeting for general question time from members of the public.

All contributions from the public will be heard at the start of the meeting during the agenda item 'Public Questions and Submissions.' Members of the public have the option to either participate in person or join the meeting virtually via Teams to ask their questions live during the meeting.

If you would like to address the Council and /or ask a question on any of the items being discussed, please submit a 'Request to Speak form' by 4pm on the day of the meeting via Council's website:

Request to speak at a Council meeting - City of Port Phillip

MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL

To Councillors

Notice is hereby given that a **Meeting of the Port Phillip City Council** will be held in **St Kilda Town Hall and Virtually via Teams** on **Wednesday, 5 June 2024 at 6:30pm.** At their discretion, Councillors may suspend the meeting for short breaks as required.

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

Nil

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Port Phillip City Council 14 May 2024.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Port Phillip City Council 15 May 2024.

3 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUBMISSIONS

5 COUNCILLOR QUESTION TIME

6 SEALING SCHEDULE

Nil

7 PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

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9 INCLUSIVE PORT PHILLIP

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10 LIVEABLE PORT PHILLIP

Nil

11 SUSTAINABLE PORT PHILLIP

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12 VIBRANT PORT PHILLIP

Nil

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Nil

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Nil

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The information contained in the following Council reports is considered to be Confidential Information in accordance with Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2020.

17.1 VCAT matter - confidential

3(1)(e). legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies.

Reason:

This matter reports on confidential without prejudice negotiations as part of a VCAT Compulsory Conference process.

17.2 Park Street Streetscape Improvement Project and Road Reconstruction

3(1)(a). Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

Reason:

Council will be undertaking procurement during the time of the Council meeting. If the briefing is not confidential, this may impact the value of quotes submitted to undertake these works.

17.3 Shrine to Sea Masterplan Advocacy and Implementation

3(1)(c). land use planning information, being information that if prematurely released is likely to encourage speculation in land values

3(1)(e). legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies.

Reason:

While Council have endorsed the draft Masterplan, the final Masterplan is yet to approved by the Minister for public release. This is expected to be in the next few months.

The MOU/Victorian funding agreement between agencies contains legally privileged information and financial information that is unable to be shared prior to the public release of the Masterplan.

17.4 Legal Matter

3(1)(e). legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies.

Reason:

This report contains sensitive information on Council's position in a legal matter.

1. APOLOGIES

NIL

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RECOMMENDATION:

That the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Port Phillip City Council held on 14 May and the Meeting of the Port Phillip City Council held on 15 May 2024 be confirmed.

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND SUBMISSIONS

5. COUNCILLOR QUESTION TIME

6. SEALING SCHEDULE

Nil

7. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

7.1 Petition: Submission for irrigation in Gill Reserve 6

7.1 Petition: Submission for irrigation in Gill Reserve

A Petition containing 18 signatures, was received from local residents.

The Petition states the following:-

We, the undersigned, are residents and/or owners of premises adjacent Gill Reserve. We request our Council make arrangements for the installation of irrigation in Gill Reserve, as has already been undertaken in the adjoining Reserves along Evans and Station Streets.

Supporting Information

Notwithstanding our previous submissions that in comparison to many other Reserves along route 109, Gill Reserve has again been overlooked for improvement (eg correspondence dated ~March 2011}. In 2011 our Council undertook to manage and improve Gill Reserve in an equitable manner, as Council has done in its approach to managing and improving the other reserves along the route 109 light rail.

Regrettably we residents of Evans Street consider that their Council has again demonstrated an inequitable approach to resource allocation by failing to install irrigation in Gill Reserve.

In the event our request is to be considered by our Councillors during a meeting of our Council, we request that reasonable notice be given to all the undersigned, in order that we may attend and be heard in respect of this request. Otherwise, we look forward to advice from you as to how Council intends to proceed to satisfy our reasonable request.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

Receives and notes the Petition and provides a response to a future Council meeting.

ATTACHMENTS **Nil**

8. PRESENTATION OF CEO REPORT

8.1 Presentation of CEO Report Issue 107 - April, 2024 9

8.1 PRESENTATION OF CEO REPORT ISSUE 107 - APRIL, 2024

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: **JOANNE MCNEILL, EXECUTIVE MANAGER, GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

PREPARED BY: **JACKY BAILEY, HEAD OF CORPORATE PLANNING**
KIHM ISAAC, CORPORATE PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE ADVISOR

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To provide Council with a regular update from the Chief Executive Officer regarding Council's activities and performance.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 In March 2014, the City of Port Phillip introduced a program of more regular performance reporting through the CEO Report.

2.2 The attached CEO Report – Issue 107 (Attachment 1) focuses on Council's performance for April 2024.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Notes the CEO Report – Issue 107 (provided as Attachment 1).

3.2 Authorises the CEO or their delegate to make minor editorial amendments that do not substantially alter the content of the report.

4. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

4.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS **1. CEO Report Issue 107 April 2024 Final**

CEO Report

April 2024

Volume 107

Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

portphillip.vic.gov.au

Message from the CEO



Welcome to the April CEO Report which includes an update on the priorities that Council has set for me.

Deliver the Council Plan

Overall project portfolio delivery status for January is 64 per cent on-track progressing as planned, 17 per cent at-risk, and 16 per cent off-track. This is slightly lower than last month, related to cost pressures and some delays.

In April, we completed a safety upgrade to the underpass at the St Kilda Junction improving pedestrian safety in this very busy transport intersection. We also completed the Acland Plaza Creative Lighting Project - a priority for local traders - part funded by the State Government. In addition, we reached practical completion of the Lagoon Reserve Sports Field and Lighting Project under budget. All going well, after a period of bedding in the new turf it will be available for public use including for sport, recreation, and dog walking in August.

In April, consultation opened on our draft Budget 2024/25 and Council Plan Year 4 update. This draft budget reflects the economic challenges we are experiencing as a City. The draft Budget continues to provide targeted relief for those who need it most as inflation and cost of living pressures, including interest rates, are causing many community members to do it tough. We are also consulting on introducing higher differential rates for derelict and vacant land and unactivated retail land to incentivise landowners and discourage neglect linked to safety and amenity concerns. You can find out more here.

Governance and Advocacy

In April we started our preparations for the upcoming Council election in October 2024. The VEC has made some changes to how our Council-enrolled voters enrol to vote, and we will be writing to all these voters in the coming weeks to ensure they add their name to the election role in time for the vote in October.

This month we continued our Great Places and Precincts initiative, which is all about improving our shopping precincts and high streets. Traders, Councillors, landlords, staff, and residents have been walking our high streets together to assess the condition of assets, find opportunities for uplift and activation, voice concerns about issues and hear about some of the works occurring in the area. Following the initial walks, reports were generated for each precinct, prioritising opportunities and initiatives. We will continue our street audits as the year progresses and I look forward to reporting on some of the projects arising from this important work.

Community, Stakeholder, and Customer

For April, 89 percent of community complaints were resolved within agreed timeframes, exceeding the target of 70 percent and the result the previous year (75 percent for April 2023). As well as this, 85 percent of community service requests were resolved within agreed timeframes for April 2024. This result surpassed the 80 percent

Message from the CEO

target. Performance has remained consistently high since May last year, suggesting that our processes and systems can support ongoing high performance across the organisation even with increased volumes in April.

Kerbside missed bins have been trending positively closer to target in recent months settling at 12.9 missed collections per 10,000 bins. The improvement trend is continuing since the significant issues of July. Officers continue to work with Citywide to improve missed bin services through regular contract meetings and system improvements.

In April, our organisation underwent an annual upgrade of our core software platform, OneCouncil. The upgrade realigns Council with the most advanced support, functionality, and security features available.. Customers and community will see improvements to the self-service portal *MyPortPhillip* which will streamline navigation in the portal, provide better payment plan visibility, and greater transparency of rate payments and any amounts owing.

Finance, assets, and value for money

As of 31 April 2024 the full year forecast for 2023/24 is a cumulative cash surplus of $0.14 million representing a decrease of $0.1m since March. This year, there have been several impacts to Council's financial position. These include provision for the partial return of government funding for aged care services, the re-instatement of budget for contracted parking ticket machine maintenance, the decline in utilisation of Council's long day care services, and a reduction in street occupation fees caused by declining building activity in the municipality. We have also experienced a decline in parking infringement income, however, there has been an improvement in collection of outstanding fines reducing Council's provisions for doubtful debts.

Culture and capability

Our turnover rate is sitting at a year-to-date average at 12.4 percent compared to a 19.5 percent turnover rate for the same period last year. The percentage of occupational health and safety incidents reporting within 24 hours has been trending positively at 95 per cent for April which is above the 75 per cent target. Additional communications are being undertaken to understand any issues and remind staff and leaders of the importance of immediate reporting of incidents. Violence, threats, and abuse of staff by community members is an area of particular focus for the organisation.



Chris Carroll
CEO, City of Port Phillip

Strategic Direction 1

Inclusive Port Phillip

A City that is a place for all members of our community, where people feel supported and comfortable being themselves and expressing their identities.

Key highlights

Outdoor play resumes at St Kilda Playgroup

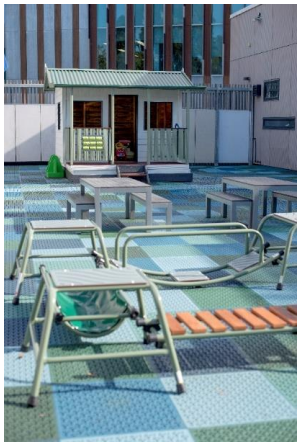
In April, we reopened the outdoor rooftop play space at Bubup Nairm Family and Children's Centre.

The play space was closed since early 2023 while improvements were made, including the installation of a waterproofing membrane and new cladding and play surface. Old equipment was removed and replaced with new equipment to be enjoyed by the children, including:

- a renovation of the cubby house
- children's tables and chairs for mealtimes outside
- portable play equipment that caters for a range of children's ages
- outdoor building blocks.

The reopening of the play space coincides with the resumption of the Solihull parenting playgroup and return of the Spanish playgroup after a long break.

St Kilda playgroup is home to 13 playgroups, including Japanese, Russian, French, Spanish, German and age specific playgroups. Our Family Youth and Children programs also operate from the family friendly spaces with new parents connecting in this space through Maternal Child Health and Supported Playgroup.



New equipment and toys at St Kilda Playgroup, Bubup Nairm

Youth Advisory Committee

The Youth Advisory Committee had a busy start to 2024 by welcoming new members, developing a two-year plan, and running a successful leadership workshop called Amplify Your Voice.

This workshop aimed to equip young people with the skills to engage with local government and make a positive impact. Councillors provided support and attendees found the experience enlightening, with some expressing interest in future involvement with the Council.

Lagoon Reserve Upgrades

Stage 1 works to upgrade the Lagoon Reserve; renewal of the sports ground is now complete. A 16-week establishment period has commenced, during which the park will remain closed to the public until August 2024.

The upgrade will support opportunities for increased sport participation particularly for junior and female participants as well as the broader local community. The improved playing surfaces, complemented by the lighting improvements will provide level playing surfaces and improved safety for all users. The infrastructure installed to support formal sport includes a synthetic cricket wicket, cricket training nets, soccer goal posts and sportsground lighting.

Stage 2 works to upgrade the Pavilion at the reserve is due to commence in early 2025.



Lagoon Reserve renewed sports ground

Friends of Suai trivia night

On 18 April, Friends of Suai held a trivia night at Middle Park Bowls Club. There were over 100 attendees with many local businesses and individuals generously donating goods for the raffle and silent auction. Over $11,00 was raised on the night.

The Covalima Community Centre staff in Suai showed their appreciation by sharing photos of the team holding signs to thank the Port Phillip community for supporting the fundraising event.



Covalima Community Centre staff sending Friends of Suai well wishes for the trivia night on 18 April.

Easter Pop-up Playgroup with Elwood Toy Library

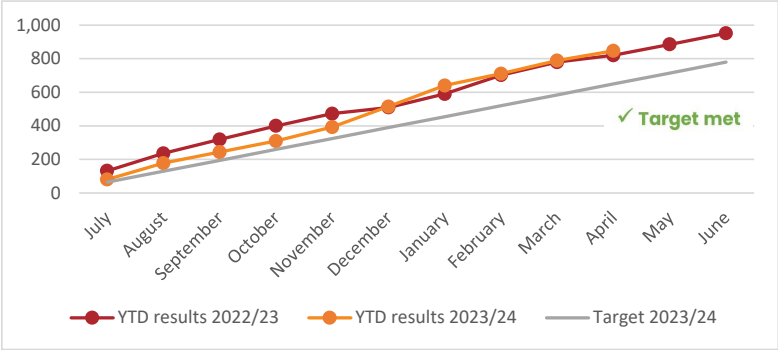
In April, an Easter school holiday pop-up playgroup took place at St Kilda Adventure Playground. We welcomed a younger group of children, parents, and grandparents to enjoy the trampolines, slides, and the wooden maze. The skate ramp was used as a slide by a brave few!

An Easter egg hunt encouraged the children to explore all the nooks and dens. Additionally, we joined Elwood Toy Library, borrowing a pull along train and large blocks for extra excitement, transforming the basketball court into a train station.

This was a key highlight and helped to promote how wonderful the toy libraries in Port Phillip are.

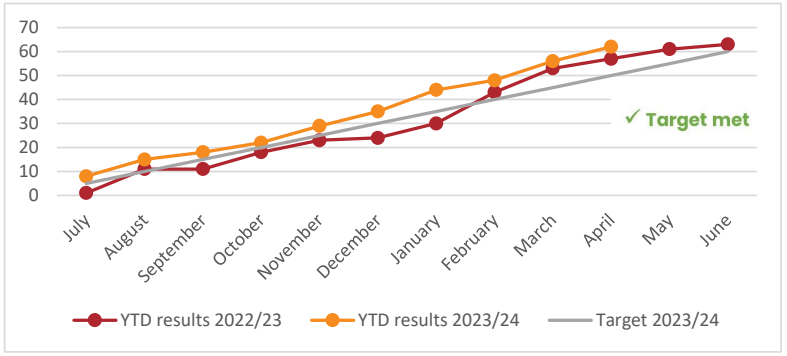
People are supported to find pathways out of homelessness

Number of direct hours of housing assistance supporting older local people (cumulative year to date)



The number of direct hours of housing assistance for April 2024 was 58 hours, bringing the year-to-date total to 847 hours of assistance provided, exceeding the target of 650 hours. Performance for this measure is also above the 821 hours provided year to date for the same period last year.

Number of older local persons housed (cumulative year to date)



For April 2024, the number of older persons housed was six – a decline from eight compared to last month. The result varies depending on the availability of social housing properties. Year-to-date, the result is above target at 62 older persons housed against a target of 50. This result is also above last year's performance of 57.

Strategic Direction 2

Liveable Port Phillip

A City that is a great place to live, where our community has access to high quality public spaces, development and growth are well-managed, and it is safer and easy to connect and travel within.

Key highlights

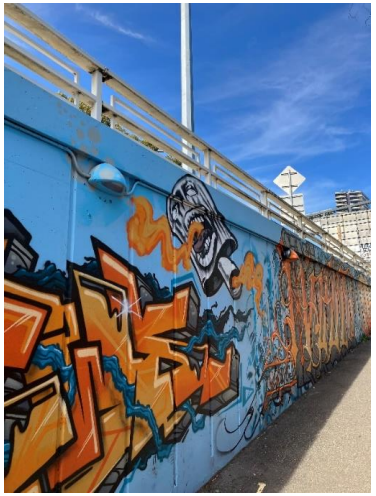
St Kilda Junction underpass safety upgrade

In April, we completed a safety upgrade to the underpass at the St Kilda Junction. The junction is one of the busiest and most complex convergences of roads in the City of Port Phillip serving as a key intersection for drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, and public transport users consisting of multiple lanes of traffic, tram tracks and bus routes.

Over the last five years, increased residential development and growth in the area has resulted in increased use and attention on the junction which was considered unappealing and unsafe with some pedestrians preferring to cross the road rather than use the designated underpass or signalled crossing points.

Through completion of this project, we have improved pedestrian safety and encouraged higher utilisation by implementing the following upgrades:

- Delivery of lighting design and installation/replacement of existing lights to improve lighting throughout the underpass.
- Supply and installation of new electrical point connection.



New artwork at St Kilda Junction Underpass

Increasing public open space and our city

In December 2021 Council adopted its Public Space Strategy. It envisaged acquisition of property for public open space. Over the past 18 months Council has acquired six properties for public open space. This includes:

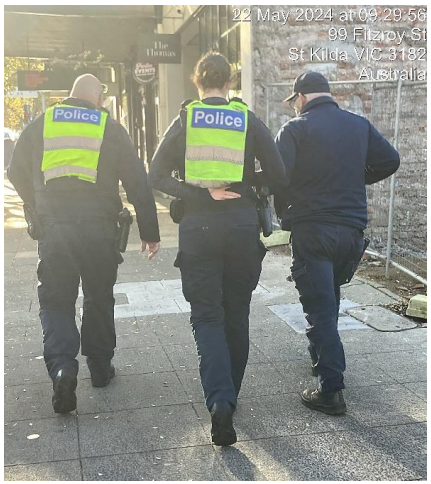
- Two properties abutting Pakington Street Reserve, in St Kilda
- One property abutting Jim Duggan Reserve, in St Kilda
- Two properties along Lansdowne Road, St Kilda East
- One property in Fishermans Bend, at 509 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne

We are also in negotiations to purchase other properties in the municipality to further advance the vision and actions of the Public Space Strategy.

Fitzroy Street Community Safety

Our community and local traders have been understandably concerned about recent increases in criminal activity and arrests being made on Fitzroy Street. We have accordingly been focusing on anti-social and illegal behaviour in this neighbourhood, including undertaking four proactive patrols per day and attending regular joint patrols with Victoria Police.

We are also working with a range of stakeholders to address social supports that are needed for vulnerable people in our community. Our aim is to provide support for our more vulnerable community members, to assist them to get the help they need. This includes supporting complex mental health issues, which are also often compounded by insecure or lack of housing.



Fitzroy Street joint patrols with Victoria Police

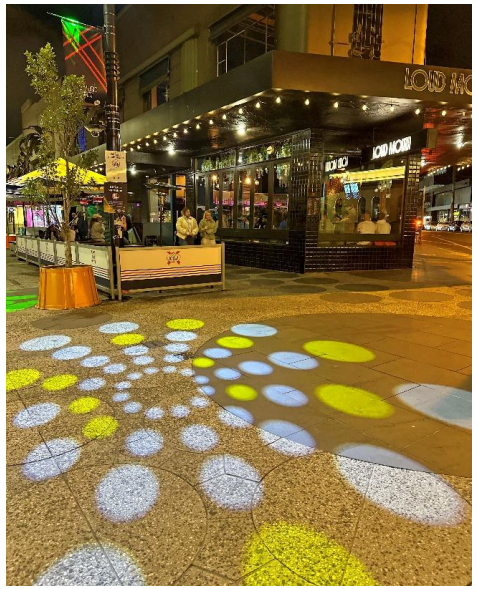
Acland Street Lights

We recently unveiled new lighting features that we have installed on Acland Street.

We were awarded a grant by former DJPR – Office for Suburban Development – Suburban Revitalisation Program to co-fund the installation of the Acland Plaza Creative Lighting project. This initiative was based on feedback from a range of stakeholders including Councillors, residents, and local traders.

The permanent lighting installation is in line with our broader Great Precincts and Places project, contributing to the vibrancy and colour of the precinct. Moreover, the project plays a vital role in supporting the plaza's nighttime economy and fostering extended dwell times within the area.

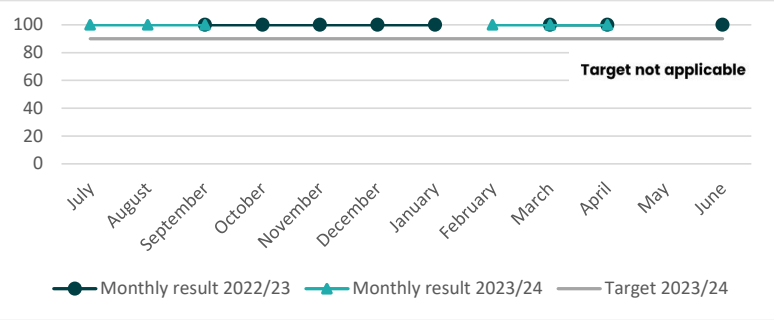
To complement the Acland Plaza Creative Lighting project, we have also installed fairy lights on many of the majestic palms that line the street. This initiative highlights the much-loved palm trees that are synonymous with St Kilda, while bringing additional vibrancy and atmosphere to the iconic strip.



Acland Plaza Creative Lighting Project

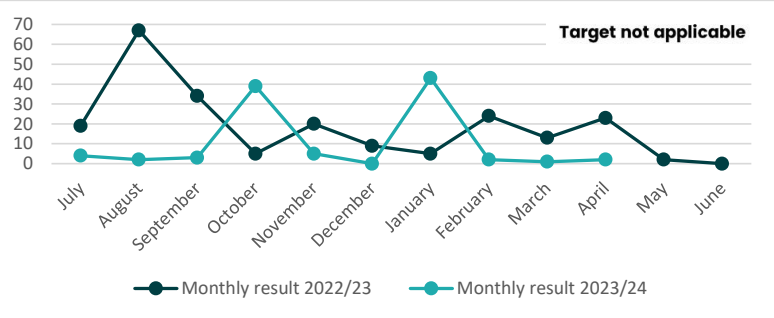
Port Phillip is safer with liveable streets and public spaces for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy

Percentage of successful animal management prosecutions



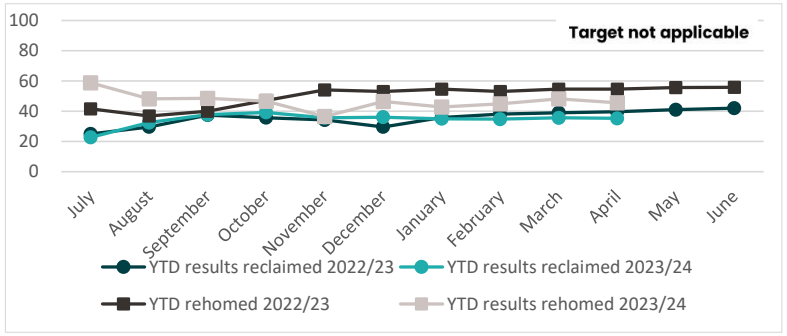
For April 2024, there were two management prosecution cases. Year-to-date there has been 100 per cent success with animal management prosecutions.

Number of fines issued related to animal management



There were two fines related to animal management issued in April. The increase in January 2024 is due to morning patrols in hotspot areas issuing dog off leash fines. The spike in October 2023 is due to the increased number of fines issued to pet owners who failed to renew their yearly pet registration. Each year, a bulk of fines go out to pet owners who fail to renew their registration. This was carried out in August last year, representing the peak in the graph. This is reported as trend data, no targets.

Percentage of collected animals reclaimed and rehomed (year to date)



For July 2023 to April 2024, 190 animals were collected. This is an increase of 6% (11 animals) compared to the same period last year.

Of these animals, 67 (35%) were reclaimed by their owners which is a similar result to the same period last year however, behind the target of 50 percent.

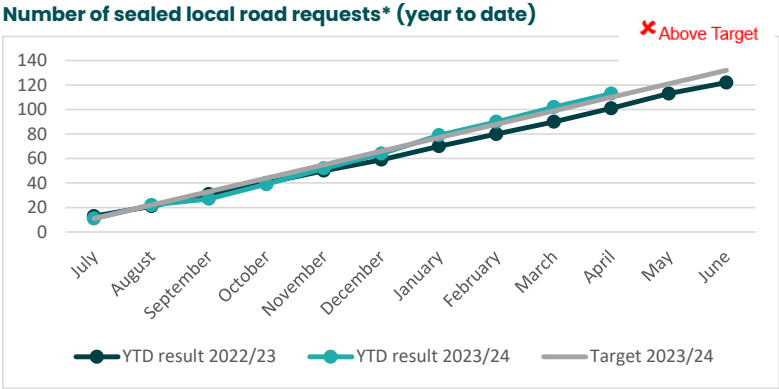
Out of the remaining 123 animals, 56 animals were rehomed (45%). The percentage of animals rehomed has decreased YTD compared to 55% (59 animals) during the same period last year.

A further 24 (19.51%) animals were being assessed at the time this report was generated. All avenues are explored to ensure animals find new homes.

Forty-six out of the 190 animals collected were surrendered by their owners (24.21%).

The City is well connected and easy to move around with options for sustainable and active transport

Number of sealed local road requests* (year to date)



Council received 11 sealed local road requests in April which is comparable to the same time last year and at the benchmark target of not more than 11 requests per month. Year to date (from July 1) there have been a total of 113 requests against a cumulative target of 110. Compared to the same time last year we have received 12% more requests (113 compared to 101).

Strategic Direction 3

Sustainable Port Phillip

A city that has a sustainable future, where our environmentally aware and active community benefits from living in a bayside city that is greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient.

Key highlights

South East Councils Climate Change Alliance project delivery

In April, two key projects were delivered by the South East Councils Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA).

The Enhancing Community Resilience project identified community groups vulnerable to climate change within the SECCCA region, and the assets and services that support them. This enabled member Councils to assess the community impacts of climate change and develop appropriate responses.

By spatially representing how climate change will affect communities and council assets and services, tools developed in the project provided a visual means to map scenarios and assess options.

The project leveraged the outputs of the SECCCA Asset Vulnerability Assessment project and was funded by the Minderoo Foundation. The toolkit and reports are now available for local governments across Australia to build community resilience to climate change in their local area.

SECCCA and the Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM) worked together to develop a regional Net Zero Emissions 'Roadmap' for the south east of Melbourne.

This Roadmap identifies three roles for councils to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 (or sooner) across five key sectors (industrial, commercial, residential, transport and waste):

1. Communication with residents and businesses, encouraging more investment in emissions reductions
2. Advocacy for changing policies, programs, and regulations to respond effectively to climate change
3. Project and research delivery

An implementation plan is being developed to guide effective actions over the next four years, leveraging the strengths of the SECCCA and GSEM members and region.

Delivery of these projects aligns with commitments made through the Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy, supporting community greenhouse emissions reduction and climate resilience.



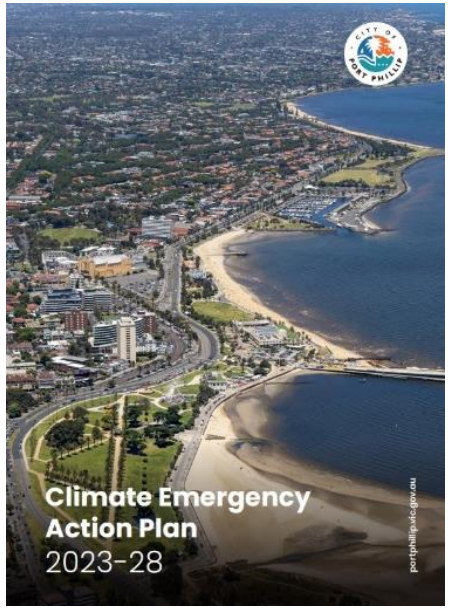
SECCA Enhancing Community Resilience Toolkit

Sustainability strategy and plans now available

The Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2023 - 28 and the Climate Emergency Action Plan have been finalised and are available on our website - Council's sustainability action - City of Port Phillip.

The Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2023 - 28 provides the direction for Council and community to act together to respond to the challenges of climate change our city faces. The revised strategy is complemented by the Implementation and Monitoring, Evaluating, Reporting and Improvement guide (MERI).

The new Climate Emergency Action Plan follows Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019 and is a five-year roadmap with actions designed to tackle the climate emergency already underway in our city.



Climate Emergency Action Plan

The Adaptation Game - preparing community for climate change

On 20 April, the Sustainability and Climate Change team continued to deliver free community programs and activities by launching 'The Adaptation Game' (TAG) a climate board game event aimed at supporting the community to prepare for a changing climate. The games were launched at St Kilda town Hall with Cr. Tim Baxter in attendance.

Forty community members came to play the board game and tested their resilience to climate shocks such as flood, storm, and heat. Players then selected ways they could adapt by playing out real world scenarios to protect their home, community, and environment. Community members were involved in the development of the game as well as facilitating the game on the day.

We will continue to roll out this game in the community and support our community's climate resilience.



Port Phillip community members playing TAG

Environmental Leaders Program

The City of Port Phillip Environmental Leaders Program supports people to develop the skills and personal growth to deliver environmental action throughout Port Phillip and beyond.

The first Environmental Leaders course for 2024 has just wrapped up with 9 new projects initiated and over 200 community actions taken. The course has seen 248 residents participate with hundreds of projects initiated.

City of Port Phillip has broadened the reach of its program by collaborating with the Cities of Glen Eira and Stonnington to form a group known as the Environmental Leader Action Network (ELAN) that has around 400 members.

Feedback from participants was positive, with an average score of 88.5% satisfaction (20 responses).

> *"The course exceeded my expectations and has been life changing. Thank you for providing it."*

"Thank you for this life changing opportunity. I am feeling inspired and empowered to live more sustainably and will connect with like-minded people."

"Awesome course! Very useful indeed. Learnt so much. Brett is so knowledgeable and willing to help out with anything and everything at any stage. Has given me so much confidence to get my project off the ground. Can't thank Brett, Helen, and my fellow participants enough!"



Environmental Leader Graduates April 2024

Food Rescue at South Melbourne Market

In April, the South Melbourne Market finalised an agreement with Port Phillip Community Group (PPCG) to help deliver the Share the Food program, providing food staples, toiletries and hygiene products to people facing financial hardship.

This partnership is integral to the delivery of the South Melbourne Market Sustainability Strategy and waste reduction whilst also improving our partnership opportunities with food rescue organisations to increase collection volumes.

While the Market is very proud that its food waste is diverted from landfill, the better outcome is that food doesn't get wasted at all.

Every Sunday, starting from 12 May, PPCG will be collecting food from traders at closing time.

Instead of going to the organics bin, Traders' produce will go towards:

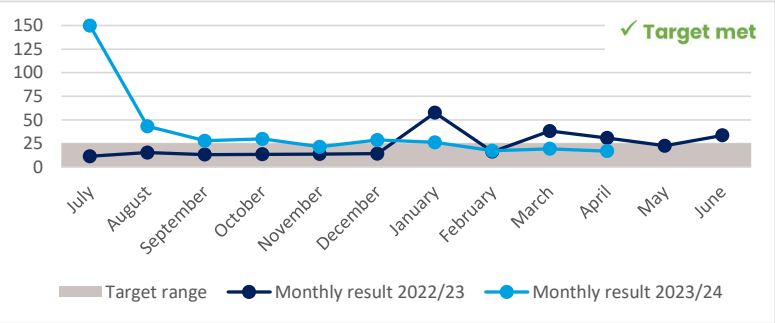
- A local network of 20 agencies
- Social Meals program feeding 150 residents each month, in 13 community and rooming houses
- Food parcels for individuals and families



Food rescue at South Melbourne Market in April

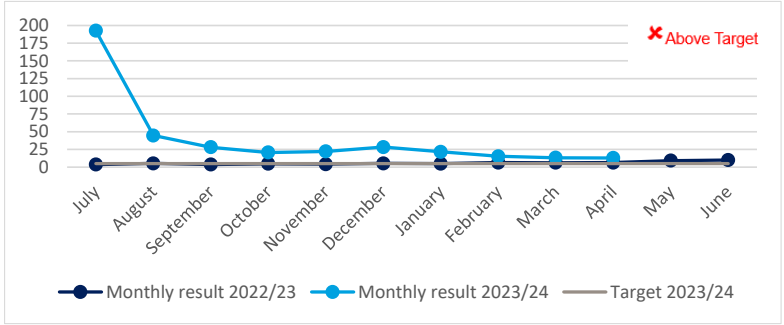
Port Phillip manages waste well, maximises reuse and recycling opportunities and supports the circular economy

Kerbside bin collection requests (per 1,000 households)



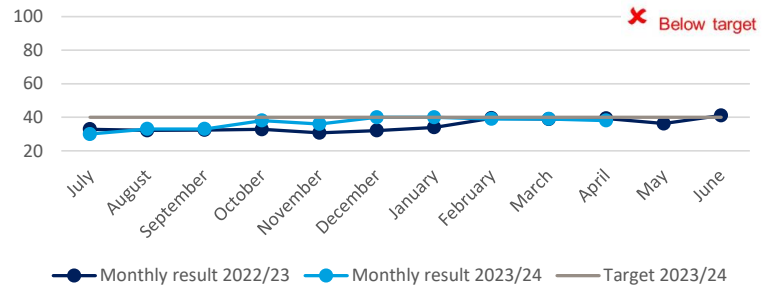
Kerbside bin collection requests were down slightly in April at 16.9 requests against a monthly target of 25 per 1,000 households. A positive improvement since the significant issues of July. Officers continue to work with Citywide to improve bin collection services through more regular contract meetings and system improvements.

Kerbside collection bins missed (per 10,000 scheduled kerbside bin lifts)



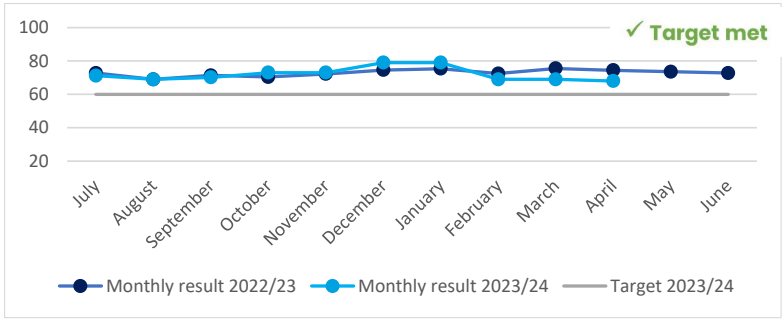
Kerbside missed bins have been trending positively closer to target in recent months settling at 12.9 missed collections per 10,000 bins against a benchmark of 5 missed bins. The improvement trend is continuing since the significant issues of July. Officers continue to work with Citywide to improve missed bin services through regular contract meetings and system improvements.

Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill



In April 2024, 38% of kerbside collection waste was diverted from landfill. This is just below the 40% target. Year-to-date, waste diverted from landfill is trending positively at 36% compared to 34% for the same period last year.

Percentage of investment in fossil-free institutions



Investment in fossil-free investment in April is at 68%, still tracking above a 60% target. The percentage of investment in fossil-free institutions has been relatively stable over the past year and consistently above the target.

Strategic Direction 4

Vibrant Port Phillip

A City that has a flourishing economy, where our community and local businesses thrive, and we maintain and enhance our reputation as one of Melbourne's cultural and creative hubs.

Key highlights

Free cooking demonstration at South Melbourne Market

South Melbourne Market partnered with A Better Choice and the Australian Mushroom Growers Association to present free cooking demonstrations at the Market with MasterChef winner and celebrity chef, Callum Hann. The cooking demonstrations promoted healthy eating, cooking with seasonal produce and quick and easy recipes that the whole family can enjoy.



Cooking demonstration with Callum Hann

South Melbourne Market Early Adopter Sustainability Grant

The Market's Early Adopter Sustainability Grant program is an action of the Market's first Environmental Sustainability Strategy, which helps contribute to projects, initiatives and innovations that support sustainable business practices.

One of the recipients of the Market's 2023 grants, Theo's Deli, has taken a step towards a more sustainable future by upgrading their refrigeration system.

The upgrade to Theo's refrigeration system has resulted in the reduction of energy use and provides the ideal environment for their artisanal produce.

Visit our website to find out more about environmental sustainability at the Market.



The team from Theo's Deli

St Kilda Film Festival program has launched

St Kilda Film Festival (SKFF) is celebrating 40 years of short films on the big screen from 6-16 June.

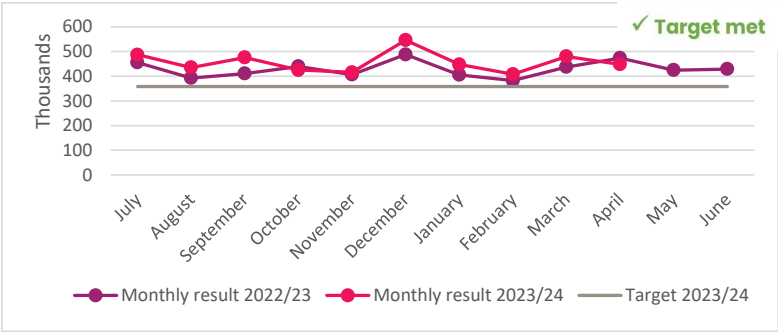
Proudly produced and presented by City of Port Phillip, SKFF is returning with another huge year featuring a stellar and diverse selection of Australian short films by both emerging and accomplished filmmakers across a vast range of sessions. Whether you're into comedy, drama, horror, sci-fi, documentary, animation, or something else, there are special screenings and events for all sensibilities.

The Festival will be at The Alex Theatre and other iconic St Kilda and South Melbourne venues for its milestone edition. The entire program can be viewed on the SKFF website. [Screenings & Special Events | SKFF (stkildafilmfestival.com.au)]



Port Phillip's main streets, activity centres and laneways are vibrant and activated

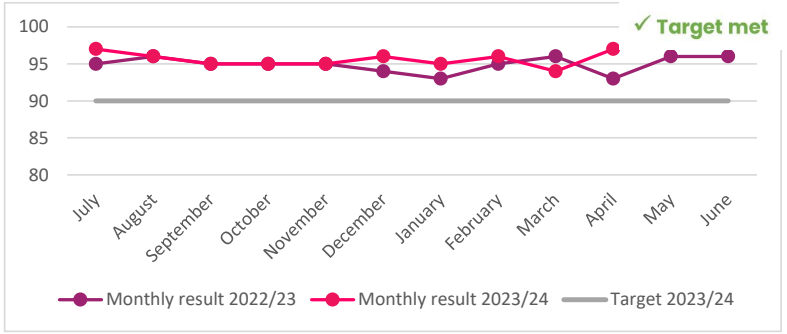
Visits to South Melbourne Market



April visitation to the market was strong with 448,244 visits to South Melbourne Market with increased foot traffic during the school holiday period. This was a decrease of 10% compared to the same time last year however not unusual as Easter fell in March this year.

Visits for 2023/24 are consistently trending above the 358,333 monthly target and exceeding the year-to-date target visitation by 28% (4.47m actual visits compared to a target of 3.58m visits).

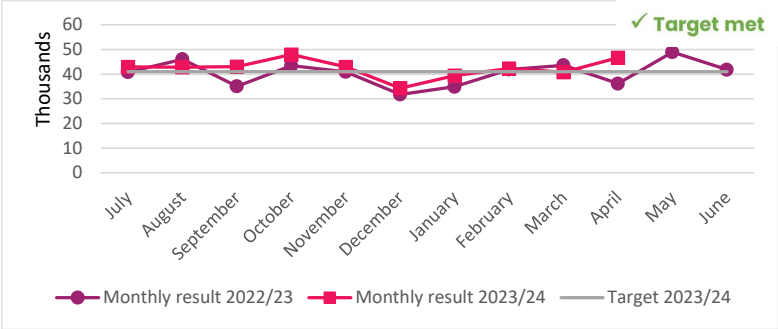
Per centage of street cleaning audit compliance



The street cleaning audit compliance score for April 2024 improved by 3 percentage points to 97% which is above the 90% target and slightly above the same month of the previous year (93% in April 2023). Overall, results for street cleaning audit compliance are relatively stable and consistently above target.

Arts, culture, learning, and creative expression are part of everyday life

Visits to libraries*



Visits to libraries in April was the second highest monthly visitation this financial year with 46,616 visits (against a target of 41,000 visits). This was also 29% higher than the same month last year (36,189 visits). Ongoing network issues affecting Middle Park Community Centre affected visitor statistics from that site.

For the current financial year (1 July to 30 April) visitation is 13,126 (3%) higher than the year-to-date target.

*The door counter at St Kilda Library was broken for several months for the financial year 2022/23. Library visits during that time have been estimated by calculating the ratio of the visitor numbers between Albert Park and Middle Park for July and June where we had complete data, then using the median value between to project the St Kilda visitor statistics.

Strategic Direction 5

Well Governed Port Phillip

A city that is a leading local government authority, where our community and our organisation are in a better place as a result of our collective efforts



Key highlights

Council Election Update

The 2024 Victorian local council election will be held in October.

We have been working hard to prepare for this important event, with a few key changes being introduced for these elections.

There are two types of voters who are eligible to vote in this election – state-enrolled and council-enrolled. If you are on the state roll you will be automatically enrolled to vote where you live.

For council-enrolled voters (who own a property in the municipality or a business but do not live in the municipality), you must apply or re-apply to vote in the 2024 council elections, even if you have voted in previous Port Phillip elections. Voting at the election is compulsory for everyone who is enrolled.

All individuals who are eligible to be a Council-enrolled voter must complete an enrolment form and the form must be received by Council by 4pm on the day the roll closes.

We will send letters to everyone who is eligible to be a Council-enrolled voter with a copy of their application form to enrol by the end of May. You can also enrol online.

We are also moving to a single member ward structure at this election. This means we will go from having three wards with three councillors per ward, to nine wards with one councillor per ward.

You can find out more about the election and what these changes mean for you, including how to become a candidate yourself, by clicking heading to our 2024 Council Election website.

Safety and wellbeing initiatives

In April, the Safety and Wellbeing team continued with the delivery of key initiatives.

An employee 10,000k step, ride or roll challenge was undertaken for four weeks to encourage participants to incorporate more movement into their day. Teams of 4 were formed by employees as they explored beautiful virtual destinations.

Approximately 200 employees participated in the event with the winning team walking more

Vision super sessions were help at both St Kilda town Hall and Operations centre during April.

Customer Service Update

Customer service performance for community requests continues to trend positively in April with 85% completed on time against a target of 80%. Performance has remained consistently high since May last year, suggesting that our processes and systems can support ongoing high performance across the organisation even with increased volumes in April.

Customer service feedback remains consistent month to month also averaging 4 out of 5 stars since August 2023.

We regularly review our service performance through volume of requests, complaints, timely completions, and customer service feedback amongst a range of other factors to prioritise improvements for our staff and customers - making it easier for our customers to tell us what they want from Council and for our staff to deliver on those requests.

Most recently, updates to the Parks and Trees customer request form have allowed us to gather better information firsthand. This enables greater understanding of the customer request whilst improving the data we have to identify hot spots across the municipality and plan for the future.

Government Spatial Information Group

On 19 April the City of Port Phillip hosted the Southeast Spatial Information Group at our Council Chambers.

The group was established in 2012 and is comprised of 13 local government areas in the southeast metropolitan. The purpose of the collaborative group is to work across local government borders by sharing best practices and problem-solving spatial information challenges.

Spatial Information, also known as Geographic Information System (GIS), is used by Councils to create, manage, and link spatial information to the Council's IT systems. It creates a map and links information together via an address (like Google Maps). City of Port Phillip data is available on our website Using Port Phillip maps - City of Port Phillip.

In April the group discussed working with the Department of Transport and Planning on new data for vegetation analysis which will support Council's greening policies under the performance indicator of green coverage.

The group also shared a sneak peak of City of Glen Eira's 3D Development Activity Model, a project funded by the Victorian Government's digital planning grants which aims to improve planning processes and services through a 3D city model of the City of Glen Eira.

The next Southeast Metro GIS User Group will be hosted by City of Stonnington in November.



Meeting of the South East Spatial Information Group, 19 April

Generative AI and our workplace

In April the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) recently released a public statement relating to the use of ChatGPT and other generative AI platforms. This has resulted in clear direction for Council where we must not:

- use personal information with ChatGPT or any other forms of genAI
- use Chat GPT/ genAI to formulate decisions, undertake assessments or for other administrative actions that may have consequences for individuals, for example evaluations, assessments, or reviews.

OneCouncil upgrade

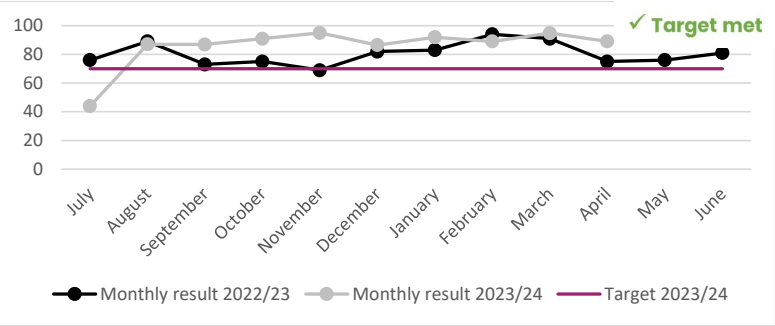
On 29 April, our organisation underwent an annual upgrade of our enterprise management solution, OneCouncil. The upgrade realigns Council with the most advanced support, and security features available for an enterprise management solution.

Customers and community will benefit most from the improvements made including more streamlined navigation in the self-service portal 'MyPortPhillip' as well as improved payment plan visibility and greater transparency of rate payments and any amounts owing in the portal.

Data security continues to be a priority and as part of the roll-out and we have bolstered customer data protection in the back end by strengthening log-in and customer upload data procedures.

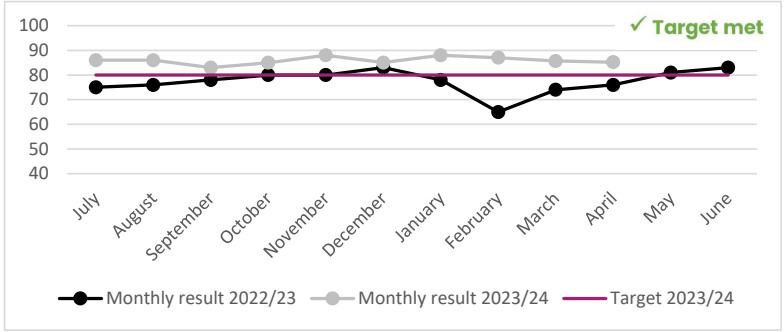
Port Phillip Council is cost-effective, efficient and delivers with speed, simplicity and confidence

Percentage of community complaints resolved within agreed timeframes



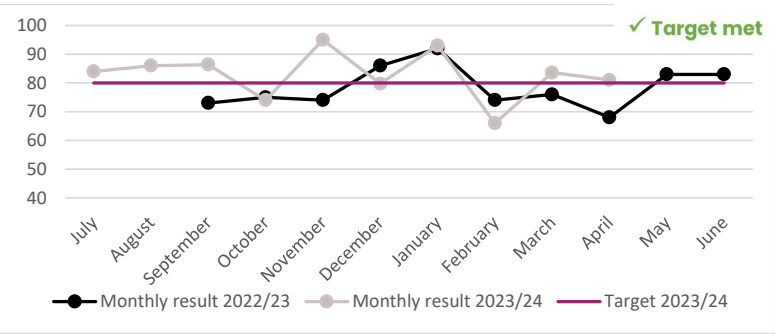
For April, 89 percent of community complaints were resolved within agreed timeframes, exceeding the target of 70 percent and the result the previous year (75 percent for April 2023). This shows consistent high level of service since July 2023, which was impacted by the waste contractor transition.

Percentage of community requests resolved within agreed timeframes



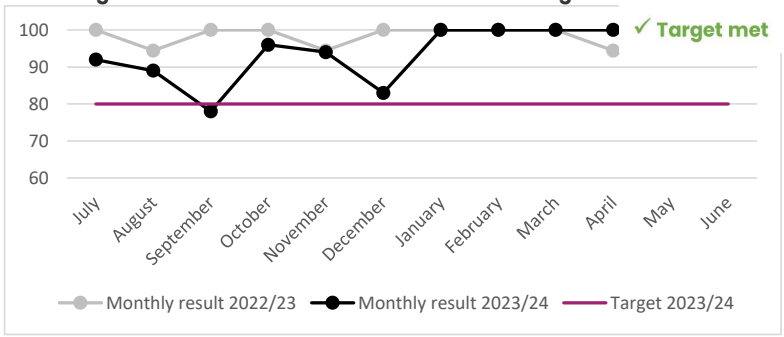
Overall, 85 percent of community service requests were resolved within agreed timeframes for April 2024. This result surpassed the 80 percent target as well as performance for the same time last year (76 percent for April 2023).

Percentage of Councillor requests resolved within agreed timeframe*



Eighty-one percent of Councillor requests were resolved within agreed timeframes for April which is just above the target of 80% and an improvement compared to the same time last year at 68%.

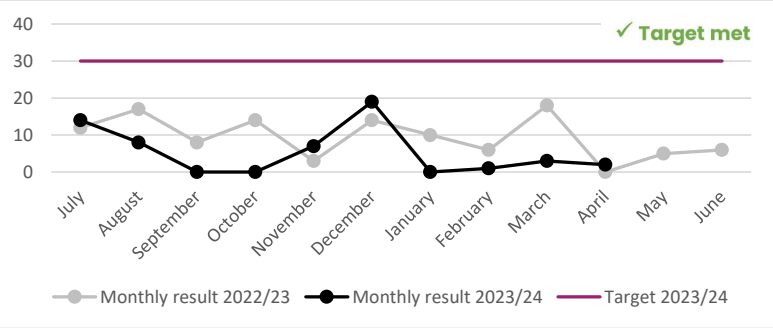
Percentage of Councillor attendance at council meetings*



No Council meetings were held in January 2024. There was 100% attendance for April Council meetings.

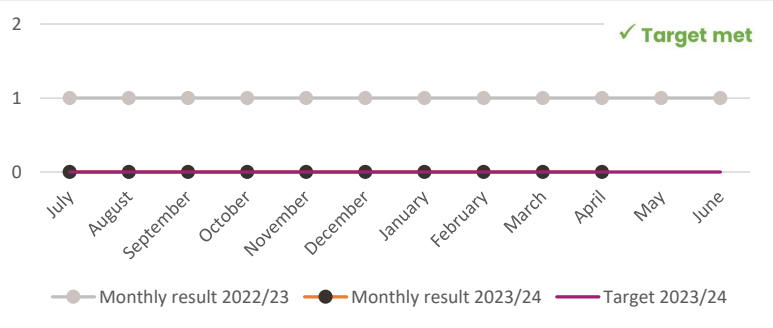
* Amendments made to 2022/23 data after annual review process.

Percentage of Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public



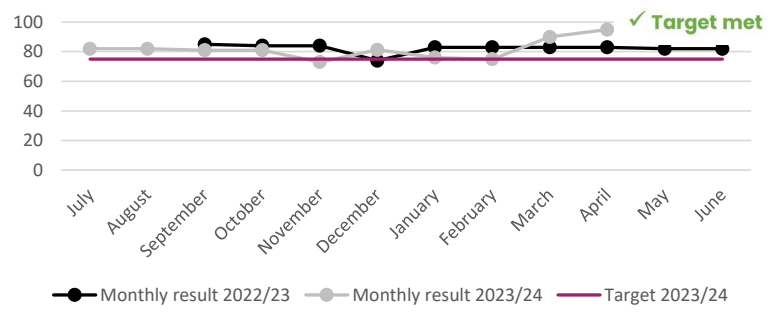
A total of 14 decisions were made at meetings held in April 2024. Of these, two decisions were made in a meeting that was closed to the public.

Number of material legislative breaches



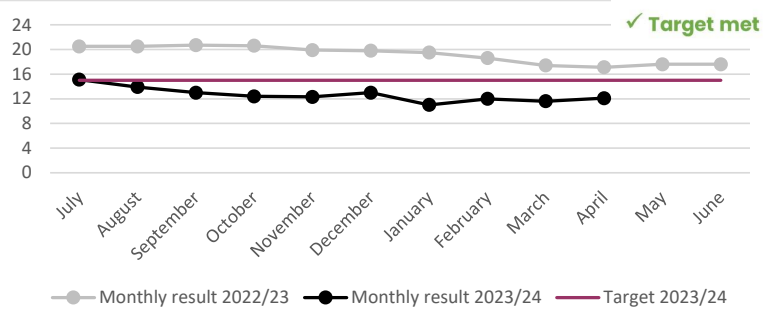
There were no material legislative breaches for April 2024.

Percentage of occupational health and safety incidents reported within 24 hours (cumulative)



The percentage of occupational health and safety incidents reporting within 24 hours has been trending positively at 95% for April which is above the 75% percent target. Additional communications are being undertaken to understand any issues and remind staff and leaders of the importance of immediate reporting of incidents.

Staff turnover (rolling 12-month average)



April turnover has increased slightly by 0.5%. Our turnover rate is continuing to improve, with the year-to-date average at 12.4 percent compared to a 19.5 percent turnover rate for the same period last year.

Project Portfolio

Overall status

The project portfolio is made up of projects and programs which achieve the initiatives set out in the Council Plan and Budget 2021-2031.



On track 64%	At risk 17%	Off track 16%	No report 2%
Latest result has achieved target for measure. On track across all elements.	Latest result experienced a minor miss in relation to target for measure. One or more elements at risk.	There is a significant variation from targeted result for measure. Off track for one or more elements.	Status update was not available at the time this report was generated.

The percentage of projects on track is stable with many finalising procurement for delivery at this stage of the financial year. Projects at risk are being managed back into on track by proactive management of issues, including time restraints around the election period.

Portfolio status trend

	12-month average	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
On track	68%	62%	66%	61%	64%
At risk	19%	24%	22%	21%	17%
Off track	10%	12%	11%	13%	16%
No report	2%	2%	1%	5%	2%

Portfolio financial performance

	Number of projects	Annual budget ($ million)	Annual forecast ($ million)	YTD forecast ($ million)	YTD actuals ($ million)	YTD variance ($ million)
Capital	138	60.0	44.6	31.3	22.6	8.7
Operating	73	13.7	12.2	7.8	6.3	5.9
Total	**211**	**73.7**	**56.8**	**39.1**	**28.9**	**27.9**

Project Achievements for April

- South Melbourne Town Hall Renewal moves to on track with the contract award. (This remains a project with high levels of complexity.)
- Lagoon Reserve Sports Field and Lighting project - works completed and will be ready for use after a turf establishment period.
- Footpath Renewals Program package 1 completed.
- St Kilda Junction Underpass safety Upgrade works complete.
- The construction delivery of Road Resurfacing Works 2023/24 has been completed.

Financial update

As of 31 April 2024, the full year forecast for 2023/24 is a cumulative cash surplus of $0.14 million representing a minor decrease of $0.1m since March. This year, there have been several impacts to Council's financial positions. These include provision for the partial return of government funding for aged care services because of service delivery challenges impacting the achievement of contracted performance targets.

There are several factors that have impacted Council's ability to deliver aged care service targets including the implementation of the Aged Care Reforms as the Federal Governments moves to a competitive marketplace reducing the volume of service referrals that Council receives, industry resourcing challenges, and the growing cost of delivering services above funding rates.

In addition to this, the surplus has been further reduced due to the re-instatement of budget for contracted parking ticket machine maintenance as budgeted efficiencies were not achieved through procurement of a new contract. As a result, the existing contract for parking machine maintenance has been extended and procurement will be reconsidered.

The decline in utilisation of Council's long day care services and a reduction in street occupation fees caused by declining building activity in the municipality has also impacted the surplus. Council has also experienced a decline in parking infringement income, however, there has been an improvement in collection of outstanding fines reducing Council's provisions for doubtful debts.

Additional spend was approved for the St Kilda Triangle engagement and market testing, feasibility works at Fishermans Bend Gymnastics Club and Elwood Reserve Change Rooms and Toilets (predominately reserve funded). These unfavourable movements have been partially offset by an increase grant income, additional supplementary rates, and increased interest income because of higher than anticipated cash available for investment and higher investment returns.

Forecast Open Space Developer Contributions has been reduced by $2.40m for 2023/24. This has been caused by a reduction in subdivision activity and the rise in 'build to rent' development which does not trigger an Open Space Contribution. Build to rent developments have already resulted in $4.8m foregone contributions.

Summarised income statement converted to cash

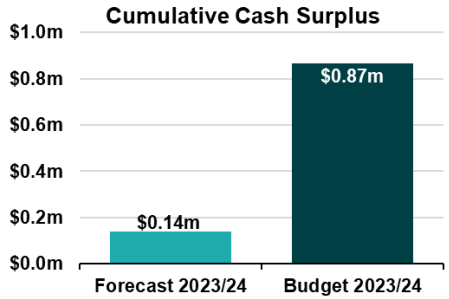
	Year to Date				Full Year			
	Actual ($,000's)	Forecast ($,000's)	Variance ($,000's)	%	Forecast ($,000's)	Budget ($,000's)	Variance ($,000's)	%
Total Income	208,394	207,898	496	0%	258,428	261,944	(3,516)	(1%)
Total Expenses	191,397	190,804	(593)	(0%)	250,953	251,544	591	0%
Operating Surplus/ (Deficit)	**16,997**	**17,095**	**(97)**	**(1%)**	**7,475**	**10,400**	**(2,925)**	**(28%)**
Income Statement Converted to Cash:								
Capital Expenditure	(21,814)	(25,979)	4,165	16%	(39,711)	(57,972)	18,261	31%
Non-cash operating items	20,388	20,277	111	1%	31,465	32,251	(786)	(2%)
Financing Items	(1,121)	(1,435)	314	(22%)	(1,733)	(2,233)	500	(22%)
Net Reserves Movement	0	0	0	0%	(5,741)	10,049	(15,790)	(157%)
Current Year Cash Surplus/(Deficit)	**9,991**	**5,916**	**4,074**	**69%**	**(8,246)**	**(7,505)**	**(741)**	**(10%)**
Opening cash surplus balance	8,386	8,386	0	0%	8,386	8,370	16	0%
Accumulated Cash Surplus	**18,377**	**14,302**	**4,074**	**28%**	**140**	**865**	**(725)**	**(84%)**

Key Financial Highlights and Indicators:

- Overall low risk rating using the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) financial sustainability indicators.
- Forecasted positive net operating result of $7.5 million (3 per cent of total revenue).
- A healthy working capital ratio of 428 per cent.
- Proposed efficiency savings of $1.5 million for 2024/25, working towards a target of $1.8 million efficiency savings for Budget 2024/25. Noting efficiency savings are becoming increasingly hard to achieve.
- A forecast cumulative cash surplus balance of $0.14 million noting ongoing risk of changing economic conditions and persistent inflationary pressures.

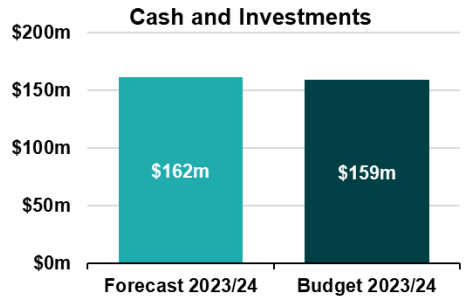
Financial statement snapshot

Income Statement



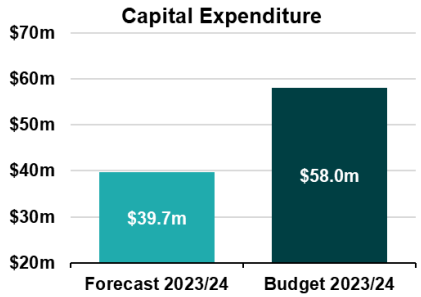
The decrease in the cash surplus is predominately due to a provision for return of government funding for aged care due to service delivery challenges, low utilisation in childcare services, additional projects such as the St Kilda Triangle market testing, feasibility works at Fishermans Bend Gymnastics Club and a decrease in development activity reducing income for permits relating to street occupations. This has been partially offset by identifying efficiencies, an increase in grant income, additional supplementary rates, and interest income.

Cash and Investments



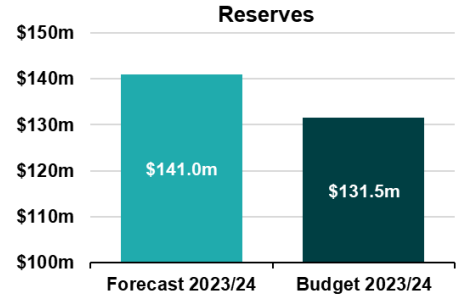
The forecast cash and investments balance has increased. This is predominately due to project deferrals to future years (funds held in reserves) partially offset by increased receivables projected during 2023/24 and a decrease in anticipated developer contributions, partially offset by project deferrals. Despite this, Council's return on investment KPIs and Corporate Social Responsibility targets were achieved. Over $141m of this balance is held in reserves and tied to specific delivery of projects and services (e.g., open space developer contributions, project deferrals and specific grants)

Capital Works



The decrease in capital expenditure is due to net capital project deferrals to 2024/25 and future years. Project deferrals have been caused by various factors including limited availability of project managers, supply chain issues (initially due to the pandemic and more recently from global conflict).

Reserves



Council reserves have increased predominately due to project deferrals to 2024/25 and future years. This has been partially offset by the anticipated reduction in open space developer contributions (funds ringfenced in reserves). While the balance of reserves appears significant, these funds are held for specific purposes and will help to fund the significant capital portfolio over the next ten years.

Detailed financial statements and notes will be published on a quarterly basis as part of the quarterly financial updates and mid-year review.

9. INCLUSIVE PORT PHILLIP

9.1 State of Children's Services 3rd Annual Report 37

9.2 Fair Access in Sport Policy and Action Plan 113

9.1 STATE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES 3RD ANNUAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: **TARNYA MCKENZIE, INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER, COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND INCLUSION**

PREPARED BY: **KARLA COOMBES, COORDINATOR FAMILY SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE

1.1 In line with the implementation of the *Every Child, Our Future Children's Services Policy* (the Policy), the draft *The State of Children's Services Within Port Phillip Annual Report 2024* (Draft Annual Report 2024) has been prepared to give a snapshot of Children's Services in the municipality.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to present the Draft Annual Report 2024 for endorsement by Council, which provides an update on the implementation of the of the Children's Services Policy throughout 2023 and through the life of the Policy, including the performance of Council managed children's centres.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The *Every Child, Our Future Children's Services Policy* took effect on 1 July 2020.

2.2 When endorsing the Policy, it was agreed that an Annual Report of Children's Services would be prepared to understand the performance of Children's Services in Port Phillip and any additional factors impacting the implementation of the Policy.

2.3 This is the third annual report to be prepared since the adoption of the Policy, (see Attachment 1 The Draft:*The State of Children's Services Within Port Phillip Annual Report 2024*) and focuses on achievements in 2023, noting that 2022 data has been included where it was not available for the inclusion in the previous report.

2.4 The Draft Annual Report 2024 includes performance data for Council's five early education and care centres, noting that these services did not meet anticipated financial targets and continue to experience operational challenges. However, Council managed services continue to support more families and children, across a range of vulnerability types, as a proportion of all licenced places compared to community managed services operating from Council facilities.

2.5 Key Policy implementation actions undertaken in 2023 include:

2.5.1 Implementation of a performance improvement action plan to address declining utilisation and financial performance of Council's five early education and care centres. The plan continues to be a priority in 2024 and includes a focus on the key areas of marketing and promotions, physical environments, workplace culture, staffing recruitment and retention, and service development.

2.5.2 Installation of new play equipment at Skinners Adventure Playground following consultation with children who frequent the playground, staff members, and the wider community.

2.5.3 Consultation on the conceptual designs for the renovation and redevelopment of six early education and care facilities over the next seven years, including:

- Risk analysis and mitigation planning.
- Advocacy for and inclusion of natural materials in the design.

- Appointment of Senior Advisor Children's Services Infrastructure role to work closely with the centres to plan and address service operational matters in the lead up and throughout the future building and construction.
- Disability Discrimination Act compliance and works to increase the number of available, free kindergarten places for three- and four-year old children.
- Continued advocacy for a funding contribution from the Federal Government of $10m over the next five years.

2.5.4 Implementation of the Children's Services Integrated Registration and Enrolment (CSIRE) system has progressed, with the new scheme to be operationalised in May 2024. Work has also commenced to include stand-alone kindergarten programs in the CSIRE from 2025.

2.5.5 Work began with the Department of Education to update the Kindergarten Infrastructure Services Plan, using updated demographic data and considering the impact of State Government early years reforms on kindergarten demand.

2.5.6 The Maternal and Child Health client survey of 304 families highlighted the importance families place on the MCH service and their nurse.

2.5.7 An additional one-off grant was provided to Toy Libraries to support service growth and new initiatives.

2.5.8 MCH and Supported Playgroup collaborated with the Royal Women's Hospital to support vulnerable families in the Cornelia Program.

2.5.9 Collaboration and funding agreements with Better Health Network and St Kilda Gatehouse for improved health and wellbeing outcomes of residents experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage through the provision of targeted parenting supports.

2.5.10 A realignment of roles in 2023 allowed the Middle Years and Youth Services team to strengthen their relationship and referral pathways with local schools, Victoria Police, and Adventure Playgrounds. Referrals significantly increased in 2023, demonstrating the program's growing impact on identifying and supporting at-risk youth.

2.5.11 Successful funding application to the State Government's Multicultural Storytime grant program, with Storytime sessions in Mandarin, Hindi, Arabic and Oromo to commence in 2024.

2.5.12 Barring Djinang Kindergarten and Coventry Children's Centre were assessed under the National Quality Standards (NQS) and awarded a rating of Exceeding Quality Standards. This raised the percentage of Council services Exceeding National Standards to 100%, highlighting the value of investing in systems and structures that support services to deliver high-quality education and care.

2.5.13 In partnership with the Department of Education and the Early Learning Association Australia, Albert Park Kindergarten was supported to review and update their governance arrangements.

2.6 Key themes and challenges highlighted through the Draft Annual Report 2024 include:

2.6.1 The financial performance of Council's five early education and care centres continues to be a focus. Council managed services monitor key performance

metrics monthly to oversight operations, consider current and future community needs, and respond to the State Government Early Years Policy Reforms. Despite a concerted effort, the financial performance of Council services did not meet its anticipated targets and the overall operating result declined in 2022/23 compared to the year prior. The factors of high labour shortages and reform implementation had the highest ongoing impact on improved performance which continued to be a priority.

2.6.2 Supporting families in transitional accommodation and or navigating housing issues continues to add to the complexity of our case work, particularly where families may be staying with friends or other family members in Port Phillip, but their address listed with Centrelink is not in Port Phillip.

2.6.3 Four-year-old kindergarten participation in Port Phillip increased from 78.3% in 2021 to 84.1% in 2022. The introduction of Free Kindergarten is likely to have contributed to this however the limited availability of Sessional Kindergarten in Port Phillip will be an ongoing barrier to achieving participation in line with the State average of 91.6%.

2.6.4 Waiting lists, the complexity of state and federal funding and the differences across early education and care services (such as Centre policies and bonds) continue to impact families' participation in early education and care.

2.6.5 Family Services has seen an increase in referrals, including where families are needing support to navigate material aid such as food, clothes, and nappies.

2.6.6 We continue to monitor the performance of Council's five early education and care centres in how effectively services are supporting vulnerable children. With three years of data collection demonstrating the quantum of vulnerable children participating in Councils' services, we have seen Council managed services provide consistent support to children accessing inclusion support funding and the Preschool Field Officer program (both externally provided supports) and the number of children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Endorses the draft *The State of Children's Services Within Port Phillip Annual Report 2024.*

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

4.1 At the 4 September 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council resolved to formally adopt *Every Child, Our Future Children's Services Policy* which committed Council to continue its delivery of existing early childhood services and provide greater support to the children and families that benefit most from and are least likely to access services.

4.2 At the 6 April 2022 Ordinary Council Meeting, Council noted the first Annual Report 2022 and that Council's operation of childcare continues to meet public interest due to the ongoing support provided for children and families experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability.

4.3 The second Annual Report 2023 provided new data on children in Port Phillip, including AEDC data, kindergarten participation data and how families accessed and participated in Council-managed and Council-funded children's services. The report included

comparison data, trends over time, Council's performance and highlighted the work of Council-run and Council-funded services towards the three policy outcomes of the *Every Child, Our Future Children's Services Policy*.

4.4 The third Annual Report 2024 provides similar information, with the advantage of additional data for comparison in some measures, including kindergarten participation, enrolment and attendance in Supported Playgroup, Toy Library memberships, MCH engagement and service satisfaction. Where the collection and presentation of data has changed since the previous report, this has been acknowledged, noting that reporting requirements for externally funded programs may have changed, we rely on the sharing of data from our partners, noting sometimes data doesn't align with reporting timeframes, we continue to strive for improved collection and reporting of data. The Draft Annual Report 2024 shows the success over the life of the Policy since its adoption in and its commitments, including:

4.4.1 An increasing need for assertive outreach and subsidises to support children experiencing vulnerability to access childcare and kindergarten.

4.4.2 A 25% increase in referrals to the Family Services Lead Family Worker program, with 67 of the 81 referrals received from MCH, highlighting the important early intervention role MCH provide for families.

4.4.3 Ongoing monitoring of services ensures we have up to date data and adequate provision of services now and into the future, evident particularly in our work with the Department of Education and the planning for kindergarten places.

4.4.4 Investment in coordination services, networking, resource sharing, and strong governance supports partnerships that provide an integrated response to families and improved health and wellbeing outcomes for residents experiencing vulnerability.

4.4.5 Facilitating outdoor learning environments is highly valued and consultation with children, young people and families continues to highlight the need for well-planned and purposeful formal and informal outdoor play opportunities.

4.4.6 Targeted funding for our stakeholders is crucial to support changing community needs, to bridge health inequalities, and meet the unique challenges faced by small not-for-profit organisations.

4.4.7 Advocating for all children to have access to high quality and accessible children's services requires a multi-pronged approach and should consider the broader social, environmental, and economic impacts of Council's investment.

4.5 In 2022 we focussed on building relationships, recognising that implementation of the Policy was impacted by COVID-19, including connections between services, organisations, and families. We saw this markedly in community playgroups and Toy Libraries and in co-located services. In 2023 we increased engagement with our stakeholders and used considered and well-planned engagement to co-design programs and projects.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 The Policy was developed through broad and diverse community consultation and engagement in 2019.

5.2 Delivery of the Policy requires ongoing consultation and engagement with stakeholders and the community as the environment in which services are delivered changes and early years reforms progress. Recent and current engagement topics include:

5.2.1 Consultation with children, staff and the community on new play equipment at Skinners Adventure Playground.

5.2.2 Partnership with the Early Years Education and Care Network and community consutlation to create a shared vision for children and families in Port Phillip and development of the CSIRE.

5.2.3 Evaluation of the Lead Family Worker Program and the Solihull Parenting Program to inform programs offered in 2024.

5.2.4 Middle Years and Youth Services attended St Kilda Festival, engaging with over 130 young people, seeking input of what matters to young people as well as issues currently faced by local young people. The results of the survey will inform a Youth Summit event.

5.2.5 MCH client survey experienced an increase from 24% to 32% of enrolled families responding to the survey.

5.2.6 An expanded Parenting Information Program Annual Survey provided additional topic suggestions and delivery models, recognising families' interest in returning to face-to-face activities and more opportunities to connect with each other.

5.2.7 Consultation on the conceptual designs for the redevelopment of the six early education and care facilities is underway, including risk analysis and mitigation planning.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The recommendations in this report are not considered to have any material legal or risk implications.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 The recommendations in the Draft Annual Report 2024 have no financial impact. The draft 2024/2025 budget has been prepared on the basis of continued service delivery for the suit of services provided by Council as detailed in the Draft Annual Report 2024.

7.2 Sound financial management of Council run childcare centres continues to be a focus, with Council monitoring a performance improvement action plan to lift and improve performance.

7.3 Funding and grant seeking to support both service delivery and infrastructure development is a continual focus to support the community needs.

7.4 Every dollar invested in high-quality early childhood education returns between $1.50 and nearly $3, and the return grows to double digits for children from families experiencing disadvantage (source: Victorian Government, Early Childhood Reform Plan, 2017, https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/educationstate/ec-reform-plan.pdf)

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 The recommendations of this report are not considered to have any material environmental impact.

8.2 Issues relating to sustainability and the climate crisis are high on the agenda of children, young people, and families in general. Several commitments in the Policy address the need to prioritise opportunities for children to access outdoor learning environments and promote children's connection to nature and environmental sustainability practices. These commitments are evident in a substantial increase to the operational funding provided to Toy Libraries in 2023, improvements to outdoor play spaces, offering of outdoor playgroups and collaborating with the EcoCentre to promote environmental sustainability.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 The implementation of the Policy is seeking to deliver on the following community impacts:

9.1.1 All children living in Port Phillip are supported to develop their full potential.

9.1.2 Parents, carers and families are supported to increase their capacity and capability.

9.1.3 The effects of disadvantage on children's development are minimised.

9.2 The Draft Annual Report 2024 seeks to outline the extent to which we are achieving these outcomes and assess the impact programs are having on children and their families in our community. The Draft Annual Report 2024 contributes to Council's data and benchmarking body of knowledge, to track impact over the life of the policy.

9.3 The Policy has been a strong guiding tool for internal and external services, improving decision-making, and strengthening partnerships. The Draft Annual Report 2024 highlights Council's investment in programs that generate social benefits not just for families attending programs but also acknowledging the important contribution volunteer parent committees bring to the suite of Children's Services in Port Philip, building a sense of civic responsibility, agency, and connection well beyond the time families are engaged in a service.

9.4 Governments subsidise early childhood education and care services due to the benefits these services provide to society. The Productivity Commission identifies the social benefit of investment in early childhood education and care policies as including:

9.4.1 Greater workforce participation, noting 92% of the early childhood workforce are women. Barriers to accessing early childhood education and care was a main barrier to labour force participation for about 275,000 parents, of whom 95% were women.

9.4.2 Increasing gender equality and disrupting intergenerational disadvantage.

9.4.3 Reducing the 'motherhood penalty' by providing avenues to help mothers to return to work earlier and helps to increase workforce supply to other sectors of the economy.

9.5 Research tells us that our investment in early interventions and community programs provide invaluable economic benefit. The cost benefit analysis of playgroups shows that there is a $3.60 return on investment for every $1.00 spent on Australian community playgroups. Over the next ten years, this suggests a $584 million net

benefit to Australia"[1]. The Australian Child Maltreatment Study[2] highlights the cost-effectiveness of family support models addressing psychosocial risk factors for child physical and emotional abuse, such as parenting support programs.

9.6 The Productivity Commission identifies childcare as important for parents and guardians, enabling them to work, volunteer, train, or study to support income, career development and other contributions to the community. At scale, the ability for parents and guardians to work, volunteer, train or study has productivity benefits for the Australian economy.

9.7 The Front Project, an independent national enterprise, commissioned A Smart Investment for a Smarter Australia, working with PwC, to quantify the benefits of early childhood education now and into the future and to reveal the enormous opportunity when we invest in children. The economic analysis examined the measurable costs and benefits for children, governments, families, and businesses. The evidence indicates for every dollar invested now; Australia receives $2 back over a child's life. The benefits include:

9.7.1 Children become confident learners, are prepared for school, and are put on a path to better educational achievement and therefore higher earnings throughout their lives.

9.7.2 Parents have the opportunity to return to work or increase their hours, increasing workforce participation.

9.7.3 Government benefits from increased taxation as a result of higher workforce participation and increased taxation now, and the higher earnings of today's children in years to come.

9.7.4 Business benefits from a more educated, efficient, and adaptable workforce.

9.8 The Australia Institute identifies how matching the investments of other industrial countries would create hundreds of thousands of new jobs in childcare centres and related industries, tens of billions of dollars in new GDP, and billions of dollars in government tax revenue.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 The Annual Report 2024 aligns to the Council Plan 2022-2031:

10.1.1 *Proudly Port Phillip: a liveable and vibrant City that enhances the wellbeing of our community.*

10.1.2 Strategic Direction *Inclusive Port Phillip: A City that is a place for all members of or community, were people feel supported and comfortable being themselves and expressing their identities*

10.2 The Policy describes Council's role in children's services and what we will do to support the wellbeing and development of children and families in our community.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

[1] Playgroup Australia. (2022). *Playgroup Statement*. https://www.playgroupaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/221018_Playgroup_Statement_final.pdf
[2] Australian Child Maltreatment Study. (2023). *The prevalence and impact of child maltreatment in Australia: Findings from the Australian Child Maltreatment Study: 2023 Brief Report*.

11.1.1 Many of the Policy commitments are now embedded in the work of Council programs however it continues to inform the annual Family Youth and Children Department Plan and the co-ordination of projects. The plan highlights the commitment activities that require targeted resources and is monitored internally through the Family Youth and Children Leadership team quarterly and externally through The State of Children's Services Within Port Phillip Annual Report.

11.1.2 The plan is updated as stakeholders are engaged at various stages, informing the direction and next steps of each priority. Consultation with the Early Years Education and Care Network and young people are examples where the Department plan has been informed by feedback.

11.1.3 If endorsed by Council, the Annual Report 2024 will be shared with children's services stakeholders and partners as a tool to inform and develop future Department plans, the new Council Plan and annual budget submissions.

11.1.4 Following The State of Children's Services Annual Report 2025, renewal of the Policy will begin. With four years of data, the report will include the performance and achievements over the life of the Policy and inform consultation with stakeholders for the setting of the new Policy and commitments.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

11.2.1 If endorsed by Council, the Annual Report 2024 will be shared with Children's Services stakeholders and partners as a tool to be used to inform and further develop Children's Services in Port Phillip.

12. OFFICER MATERIAL OR GENERAL INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. **DRAFT The State of Children's Services within Port Phillip Annual Report 2024**

The State of Children's Services Within Port Phillip Annual Report 2024

DRAFT

portphillip.vic.gov.au

Document Set ID: 7969806

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Introduction

In 2020 the *Children's Services Policy Every Child, Our Future*[1] (the Policy) was endorsed. The Policy describes the City of Port Phillip's (Council) role in children's services and sets out Council's vision:

> *'A children's services environment that honours diversity, builds creativity and social connections and encourages all children and families to maximise their development outcomes now and in the future.'*

The Policy seeks to achieve three outcomes:

1. All children living in Port Phillip are supported to develop their full potential.
2. Parents, carers and families are supported to increase their capacity and capability.
3. The effects of disadvantage on children's development are minimised.

In April 2023 the *City of Port Phillip State of Children's Services Annual Report 2023*[2] (Annual Report 2023) was presented to Council to give a snapshot of Children's Services in the municipality and form the benchmark or baseline data set that will enable us to track impact over the life of the Policy and how we are meeting the seven policy objectives:

- **Policy Objective 1** – Council will work with partners to ensure that every child, regardless of their abilities or background, will have access to affordable, safe, accessible, quality Early Years' services to support development to their full potential.
- **Policy Objective 2** – Council will understand current and future needs of families in the city and influence the provision of early years services to meet those needs.
- **Policy Objective 3** – Early years' services will be financially sustainable and consistently aligned with relevant policies and legislation at the local, state and federal level.
- **Policy Objective 4** – Council will encourage collaboration across all early years' services.
- **Policy Objective 5** – Families will have access to the services and information they need, at the times they need it, to make choices appropriate for their needs.
- **Policy Objective 6** – Early years services will be supported by safe, accessible, contemporary, fit-for-purpose, sustainable facilities and environments.
- **Policy Objective 7** – Children will have access to natural environments that allow them to learn about and experience play in nature. This includes natural environments within early years' services.

Since the Annual Report 2023 we have seen participation increase to pre COVID-19 numbers, with

[1] City of Port Phillip. (2023). *Children's Services Policy*. https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/about-the-council/strategies-policies-and-plans/children-s-services-policy
[2] City of Port Phillip. (2023). *City of Port Phillip State of Children's Services Annual Report 2023*. https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/eo2hhyjh/9-1-att-1-the-state-of-children-s-services-within-port-phillip-annual-report-2023.pdf

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improved pleasing rates for funded four-year-old kindergarten and a pleasing increase on toy library memberships. We look forward to seeing similar positive results from the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data [3] collected from children starting school in 2024.

As we wait for the release of many new local data sets to inform our work, we have considered national inquiries and studies that were released in 2023, including;

- The *Australian Child Maltreatment Study* (ACMS), identifying for the first time how many Australians in the general population experienced any of the five types of child abuse and neglect (physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, and exposure to domestic violence).
- The *Wellbeing of Australia's Children*, a high-level analysis of the most recent indicators of child wellbeing released by Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) and UNICEF Australia. This report aims to highlight key policy areas that can be leveraged to enhance the wellbeing of all Australian children.
- *Childcare inquiry final report*, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) inquiry into the market for the supply of childcare services and the impact market outcomes have on different households in Australia.
- *A Path to Universal Early Childhood Education and Care*, the Federal Government's inquiry into the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector in Australia, with the scope to make recommendations that will support findings and recommendations related to the impact of childcare reforms, prices, costs, profits, competition within childcare markets, subsidies and price regulation models.

In 2023 the Australian Government also consulted on the development of an Early Years Strategy (the Strategy) to shape its vision for the future of Australia's children and their families. The Strategy is a statement on what the Australian Government values and what it is trying to achieve for children aged 0 to 5 years and how to deliver the best possible outcomes for our children.

The draft Strategy[4] includes five guiding principles to inform future actions and eight high-level outcomes describing what success looks like to achieve its vision.

There are four priority areas:

- Value the early years;
- Empower parents and caregivers;
- Support and work with communities; and
- Strengthen accountability and coordination.

These four priority areas align with Councils seven policy objectives and recognise that the key to progressing our vision for children is through a strong direction and framework, supported by data and developed through genuine partnerships with families, the community, and stakeholders.

[3] Australian Early Development Census. (2023). *Data*. https://www.aedc.gov.au/data
[4] Department of Social Services. (2023, December). *Early Years Strategy – Draft Strategy*. https://engage.dss.gov.au/early-years-strategy-2/early-years-strategy-draft-strategy/

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This 2024 Annual Report provides where possible a comparison from previous and new data that supports our understanding of Children's Services in the municipality, acknowledging the work undertaken to progress our vision through Council-run and Council-funded services. We also acknowledge in this report the invaluable contribution other services make to children and families in Port Phillip through collaboration and projects.

Council will soon embark on the renewal of the Children's Services Policy and consider how we continue to provide high quality services in a changing community, alongside the Victorian Governments' Early Childhood Reform Plan, *Best Start, Best Life*. In November 2023 the Victorian Government released a new strategy, *Transforming early childhood education together: What we heard, what we're doing.* This strategy will drive many of our future actions under the Children's Services Policy, as we work in partnership with the Victorian Government to transform early childhood education.

We look forward to sharing the *City of Port Phillip State of Children's Services Annual Report 2024* with all our partners, using the data and evidence to inform our future work and prepare for the opportunities we hope will present from the invaluable findings and recommendations made in 2023, to ensure every child in Port Phillip has the best start in life.

Reading this report

The report is structured as follows:

Section 1: Children in Port Phillip
This section summarises demographic and developmental trends for children in Port Phillip and environmental factors that have influenced their health, wellbeing and access to services since the Annual Report 2023.

Section 2: Access and Participation
This section looks at the demand and need for children's services and programs in Port Phillip that support the wellbeing and development of children and families in our community.

Section 3: Our Services
This section outlines the range of Council-run and Council-funded early education and care services and programs available for families and children and includes performance of Council-run and Council funded centres, and services in regard to quality and service delivery.

Section 4: Outcomes for Children and Families
This section highlights the work of Council-run and Council-funded services in addressing the seven objectives that describe Council's priorities for ensuring the vision for children's services is achieved.

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Children in Port Phillip

This section summarises demographic and developmental trends for children in Port Phillip and environmental factors that have influenced their health, wellbeing and access to services since the Annual Report 2023.

Children living in Port Phillip

Last year we told you that not a lot has changed for our children from the 2016 Census to the 2021 Census.

The Australian Bureau of Statistic's (ABS) 2022 estimated resident population data for Port Phillip shows a slight decrease from 2021 as a percentage of total population in age groups from 0 to 14 years, 11.1% in 2022 compared to 11.5% in 2021. Children aged 0 to 9 years made up 7.5% of all residents, a decrease from 7.9% in 2021. Both groupings have seen a similar trend of relative stability as a percentage of total population with declines from 2020 for the 0 to 9 years grouping and from 2021 for the 0 to 14 grouping.

Looking at 5 year groupings:

- The 0 to 4 years age group has been in decline since 2018 both in numbers and as a percentage of the total population.
- The 5 to 9 years age group has been in decline since 2020, both in numbers and as a percentage of the total population.
- The 10 to 14 years age group however has grown since 2017 in both numbers and as a percentage of total, with a slight decrease in the 2022 estimated figure.
- The 15 to 19 years age group has remained stable both in numbers and as a percentage of total with a small increase in 2022.
- The 20 to 24 years age group has experienced a significant decline to 2021 in numbers with a steady decline as a percentage of total, with a small increase in 2022.

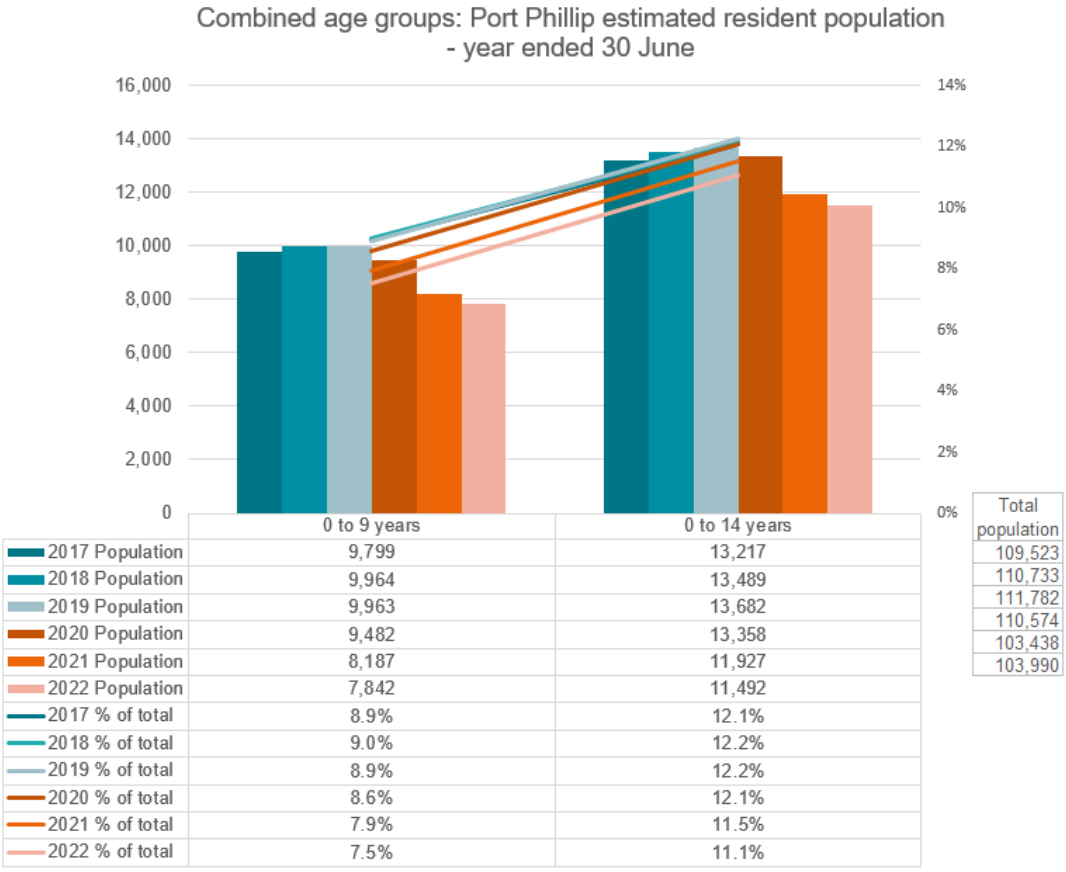
The population of the City of Port Phillip is forecast to grow over the period 2021 to 2041, with most of this growth occurring in Fishermans Bend. The ABS estimated in 2022 children aged 0 to 14 years made up 11.1% of the resident Port Phillip population. Population forecasts anticipate growth in numbers for children aged 0 to 14, the strongest growth being in the 0 to 4 age category, however they are expected to decline as a proportion of the population to 9.9% by 2041[5]. Overseas migration has an important role to play in Port Phillip's overall population and we expect that to continue.

This is reflected in declining fertility rates per woman (see figure 3) which is consistent with our declining birth notifications (see Maternal and Child Health Performance section).

[5] Forecast ID. (2024). *City of Port Phillip Population and age structure*. https://forecast.id.com.au/port-phillip/population-age-structure?AgeTypeKey=2

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Figure 1 Combined age groups: Port Phillip estimated resident population – year ended 30 June[6]

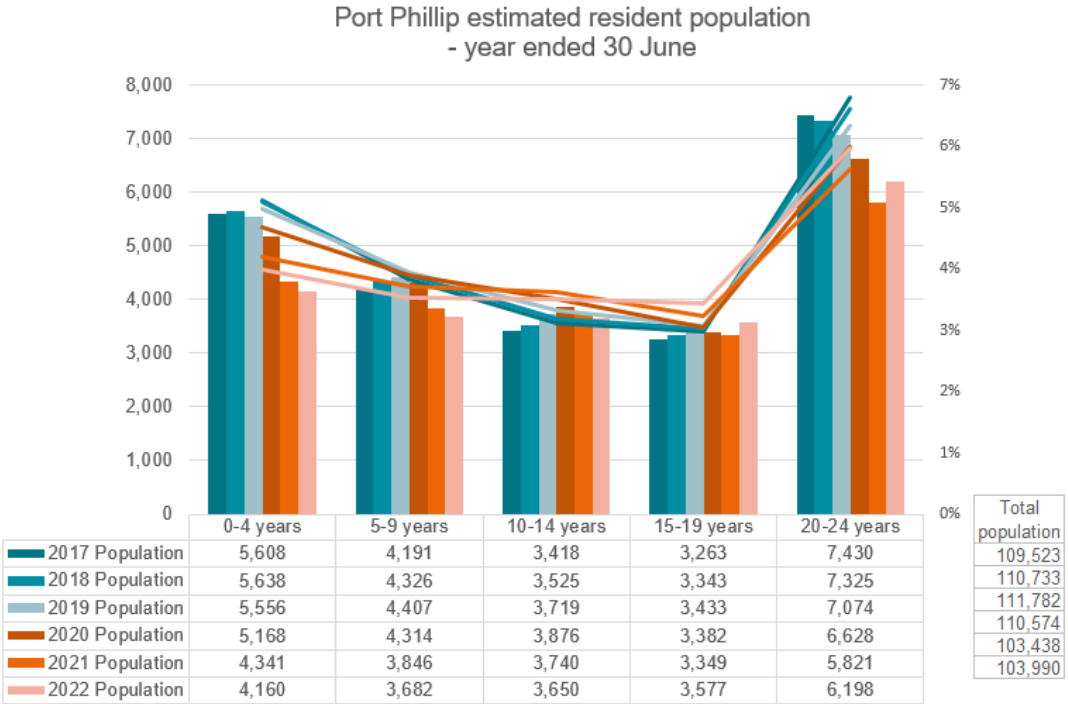


	0 to 9 years	0 to 14 years	Total population
2017 Population	9,799	13,217	109,523
2018 Population	9,964	13,489	110,733
2019 Population	9,963	13,682	111,782
2020 Population	9,482	13,358	110,574
2021 Population	8,187	11,927	103,438
2022 Population	7,842	11,492	103,990
2017 % of total	8.9%	12.1%	
2018 % of total	9.0%	12.2%	
2019 % of total	8.9%	12.2%	
2020 % of total	8.6%	12.1%	
2021 % of total	7.9%	11.5%	
2022 % of total	7.5%	11.1%	

[6] Data source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Region summary: Port Phillip*. https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lyr=lga&rgn=25900

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Figure 2 Port Phillip estimated resident population – year ended 30 June[7]

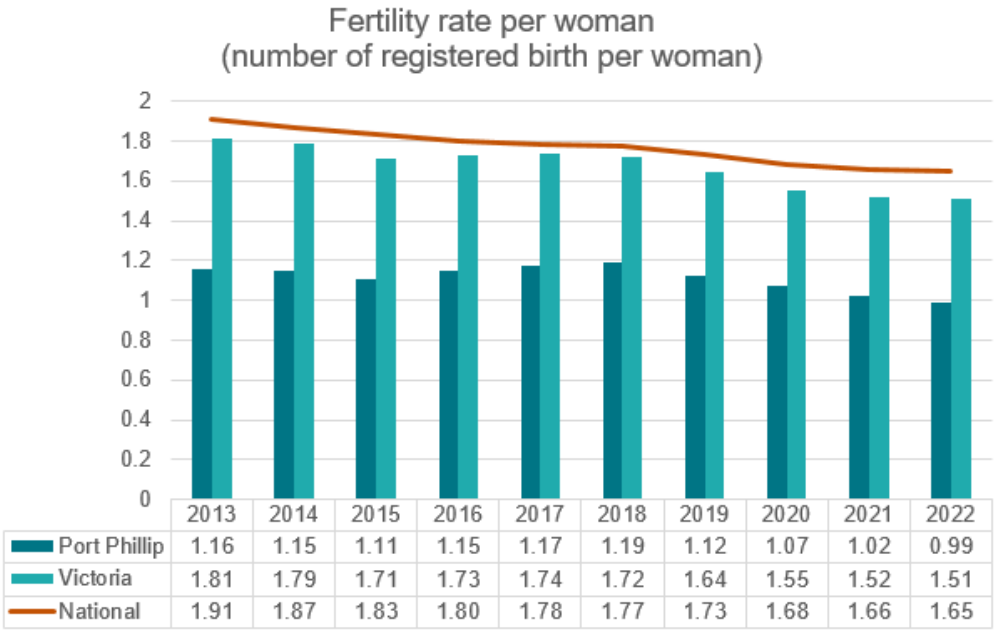


	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	Total population
2017 Population	5,608	4,191	3,418	3,263	7,430	109,523
2018 Population	5,638	4,326	3,525	3,343	7,325	110,733
2019 Population	5,556	4,407	3,719	3,433	7,074	111,782
2020 Population	5,168	4,314	3,876	3,382	6,628	110,574
2021 Population	4,341	3,846	3,740	3,349	5,821	103,438
2022 Population	4,160	3,682	3,650	3,577	6,198	103,990
2017 % of total	5.1%	3.8%	3.1%	3.0%	6.8%	
2018 % of total	5.1%	3.9%	3.2%	3.0%	6.6%	
2019 % of total	5.0%	3.9%	3.3%	3.1%	6.3%	
2020 % of total	4.7%	3.9%	3.5%	3.1%	6.0%	
2021 % of total	4.2%	3.7%	3.6%	3.2%	5.6%	
2022 % of total	4.0%	3.5%	3.5%	3.4%	6.0%	

[7] Data source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Region summary: Port Phillip*. https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lyr=lga&rgn=25900

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Figure 3 Fertility rate per woman (number of registered birth per woman)[8]



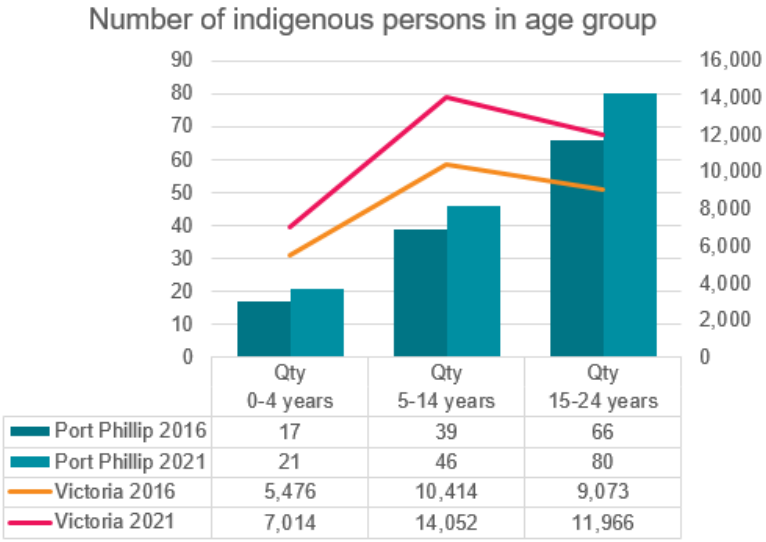
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Port Phillip	1.16	1.15	1.11	1.15	1.17	1.19	1.12	1.07	1.02	0.99
Victoria	1.81	1.79	1.71	1.73	1.74	1.72	1.64	1.55	1.52	1.51
National	1.91	1.87	1.83	1.80	1.78	1.77	1.73	1.68	1.66	1.65

Although the number of Indigenous Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children increased from the 2016 Census to the 2021 Census in both Port Phillip and Victoria, there was a decline as a proportion of the age groups.

[8] Data source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Births, Australia*. https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/births-australia/2022

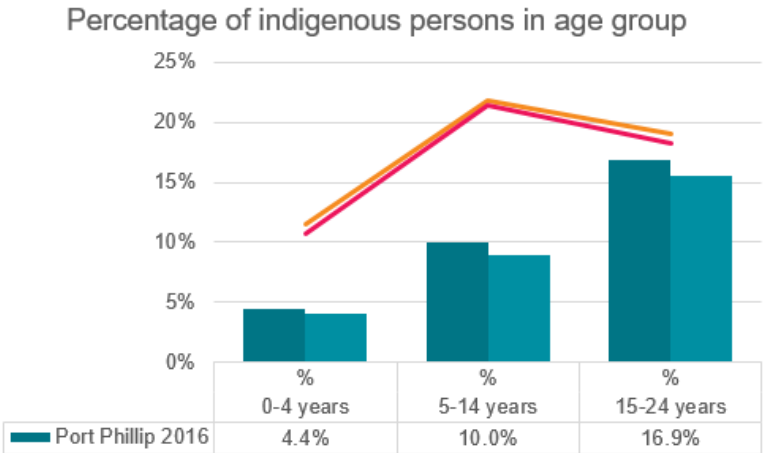
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Figure 4 Number of indigenous persons in age group[9]



	Qty 0-4 years	Qty 5-14 years	Qty 15-24 years
Port Phillip 2016	17	39	66
Port Phillip 2021	21	46	80
Victoria 2016	5,476	10,414	9,073
Victoria 2021	7,014	14,052	11,966

Figure 5 Percentage of indigenous persons in age group[9]



	% 0-4 years	% 5-14 years	% 15-24 years
Port Phillip 2016	4.4%	10.0%	16.9%
Port Phillip 2021	4.1%	8.9%	15.5%
Victoria 2016	11.5%	21.8%	19.0%
Victoria 2021	10.7%	21.4%	18.2%

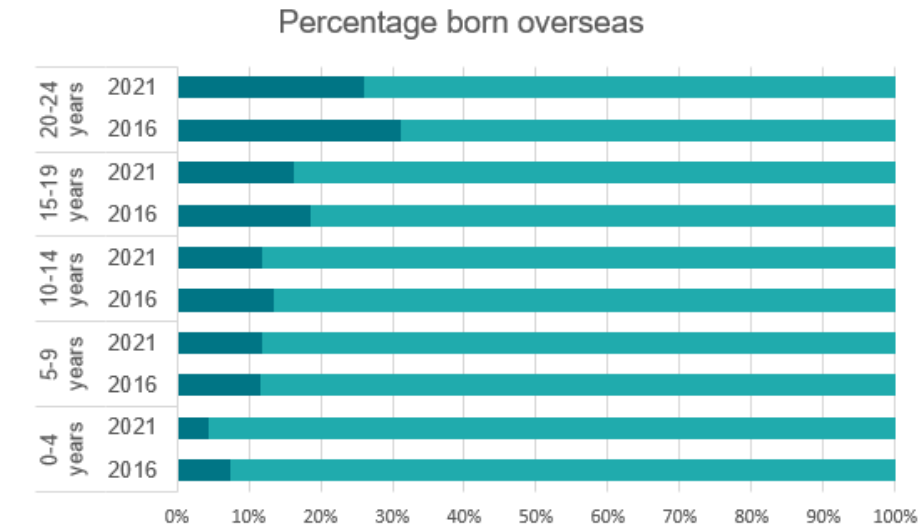
[9] Data sources:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Port Phillip (C) 2016 Census Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people QuickStats*. https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2016/IQSLGA25900
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Port Phillip (C) 2021 Census Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people QuickStats*. https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/IQSLGA25900

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In the 2021 Census 8.0% of children aged 0 to 9 years residing in Port Phillip were born overseas, rising to 9.2% of children aged 0 to 14 years. Both were a decrease from the 2016 Census which saw 9.3% for 0 to 9 years and 10.4% for 0 to 14 years. There was no change, however, in the 5 to 9 years subset.

Figure 6 Percentage of children born overseas[10, 11, 12]



	0-4 years		5-9 years		10-14 years		15-19 years		20-24 years	
	2016	2021	2016	2021	2016	2021	2016	2021	2016	2021
Born overseas	7.5%	4.5%	11.7%	11.7%	13.6%	11.8%	18.6%	16.2%	31.2%	26.0%
Born Australia	92.5%	95.5%	88.3%	88.3%	86.4%	88.2%	81.4%	83.8%	68.8%	74.0%

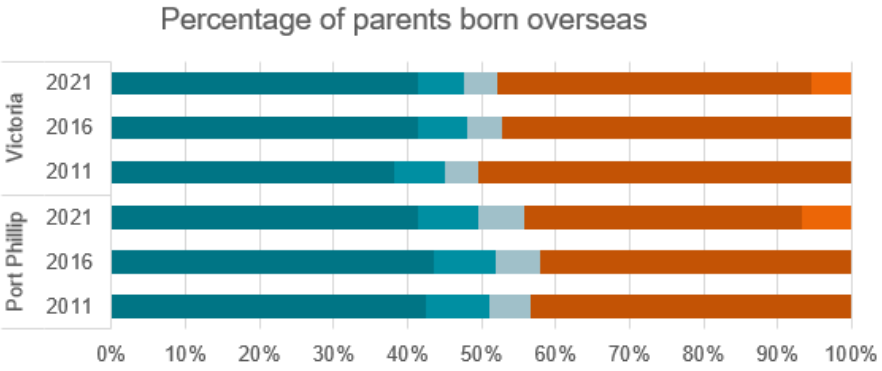
The average number of children per family for families with children has not changed from 1.6 from the 2011 Census to the 2021 Census.

After a dip in the 2016 Census, the percentage in 2021 of Port Phillip parents born overseas has almost returned to 2011 Census levels for both parents and father only, and was greater than the 2011 Census for mother only. Port Phillip percentages of parents born overseas are all higher than those for Victoria for 2011, 2016 and 2021.

[10] Data source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Region summary: Port Phillip*. https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lyr=lga&rgn=25900
[11] Data source:Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Port Phillip (C) 2016 Census All persons QuickStats*. https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2016/LGA25900
[12] Data source:Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Port Phillip (C) 2021 Census All persons QuickStats*. https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA25900

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Figure 7 Percentage of parents born overseas[11, 12, 13]



	Port Phillip			Victoria		
	2011	2016	2021	2011	2016	2021
Both	42.4%	39.0%	41.5%	38.1%	38.5%	41.3%
Father only	8.6%	7.5%	8.1%	6.9%	6.2%	6.3%
Mother only	5.7%	5.3%	6.1%	4.6%	4.4%	4.6%
Born in Australia	43.3%	37.6%	37.6%	50.4%	44.1%	42.4%
Not stated			6.7%			5.4%

Where children live

The Annual Reports 2022 and 2023 reported on household income, the type of dwellings children live in and the SEIFA Index of Advantage and Disadvantage for children living in Port Phillip by suburb (which uses various ABS Census data, such as employment and income, to rank level of advantage and disadvantage by location). Updated data will be available following the 2026 census; however we know that the areas with the lowest SEIFA scores align with the highest density of social housing.

Two in five (or 40%) children live in rented housing (compared with 28% in Greater Melbourne) and 12% live with a single parent (consistent with Greater Melbourne). Around a third of Port Phillip children aged 0 to 11 reside in dwellings with two or fewer bedrooms.

Council provides a range of supports to families in high density social housing and recognises the additional challenges these families experience, including security, safety and maintenance issues, quality concerns, noise levels and access to information and supports. Case studies based on the experiences families have shared with Council were used to inform Council's recent submission to the Department of Social Security's National Housing and Homelessness Plan – Issues Paper.

2023 was the second year Council partnered with Better Health Network on the Better Start Project at Park Towers high rise public housing in South Melbourne.

The project aimed to understand the experiences of parents raising children in high rise public

[13] Data source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2024). *Port Phillip (C) 2011 Census All persons QuickStats*. https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2011/LGA25900

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housing and its impacts on children during the first 1,000 days. Better Health Network funded this community-based research project with financial contribution from Council and partnered with Murdoch Centre of Community Child Health as experts in child health and development.

The project ended in 2023 and a Project Report will soon be officially launched with the findings a timely release as the State Government announces the retirement and transformation of all public housing towers across Victoria. This report will provide important perspectives and experiences of women, to be integrated into the new developments so that spaces are safe and inclusive for everyone.

Key recommendations from the report are aligned with the key factors that influence a child's first 1,000 days, being safe communities, secure housing, toxin-free environments, green spaces, opportunities to learn through play, nutritious food, and loving and responsive relationships. The report strongly recommends prioritising gender-sensitive design in public housing, highlights the pivotal role of place-based initiatives in cultivating a sense of community, and the value of social connection in relation to service information, access, and referral.

Factors influencing children's health and wellbeing

Wellbeing indicators

The Victorian Government's Better Health Channel describes wellbeing as "not just the absence of disease or illness. It's a complex combination of a person's physical, mental, emotional and social health factors"[14].

To develop The Nest[15], Australia's national wellbeing framework for children and young people aged 0 to 24 years, the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) consulted with children and young people on the things they needed to have a good life. In 2023 ARACY and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported[16] on outcomes relating to the framework's six wellbeing domains:

- to be Valued, Loved, and Safe;
- to have Material Basics;
- to be physically and mentally Healthy;
- to be Learning;

[14] Department of Health, State Government of Victoria. (2024). *Wellbeing*. https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/wellbeing
[15] Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth. (2024). *The Nest in Action*. https://www.aracy.org.au/the-nest-in-action
[16] Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth. (2023, March). *The Wellbeing of Australia's Children: A story about data, a story about* change. https://assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/99f113b4-e5f7-00d2-23c0-c83ca2e4cfa2/7157d4c1-214f-4539-8fd7-eedb9876b6a8/Australian-Childrens-Wellbeing-Index-Report_2023_for%20print.pdf

- to be Participating;
- and to have a Positive Sense of Identity and Culture.

It can be celebrated that the report found most children are doing well in most areas, with access to supports they need. We know though that there are still many persisting inequities impacting the wellbeing of children, which were highlighted and exacerbated by COVID-19. The Annual Reports 2022 and 2023 acknowledged the impact COVID-19 restrictions had on services for families, families' participation in services and the indirect impacts it had on children and young people such as behaviours and learning. Council services continue to see this impact, mainly in the support needs of families and children, and see and hear this through feedback from families and increased referrals. Key areas have been family violence, school refusal and housing insecurity.

Families with complex needs may need assistance from various disciplines and in this situation we seek the support of partner agencies and invest in skill development of our staff to ensure our response is trauma informed, strength based and co-designed with families. These partners are acknowledged in the Outcomes for Children section of this report and Council thank them for their commitment to families in Port Phillip.

Maltreatment

In 2023 the findings of the Australian Child Maltreatment Study (ACMS)[17] were released, presenting the first nationally representative rates of all five types of child maltreatment among Australians (aged 16-65+). These rates were:

- 32% experienced physical abuse
- 28.5% experienced sexual abuse
- 30.9% experienced emotional abuse
- 8.9% experienced neglect, and
- 39.6% experienced exposure to domestic violence

The findings provide a breakdown of experiences by girls versus boys, with girls experiencing double the rate of child sexual abuse at 37.3% versus 18.8% for boys. The severity was further explored for all five types of child maltreatment but also children who experienced more than one type of maltreatment, with one in four Australians (23.3%) experiencing three to five types of maltreatment.

The study examines the associations between child maltreatment and health service use, health risk behaviours and conditions throughout life (particularly mental disorders), and shows that parental separation, family mental illness, family substance abuse and family economic hardship doubles the risk of multiple-type maltreatment. Council services see this in their work with vulnerable children and families and welcomes the evidence and research that the study uses to promote the cost-effectiveness of family support models addressing psychosocial risk factors for

[17] Australian Child Maltreatment Study. (2023). *The prevalence and impact of child maltreatment in Australia: Findings from the Australian Child Maltreatment Study: 2023 Brief Report*. https://www.acms.au/resources/the-prevalence-and-impact-of-child-maltreatment-in-australia-findings-from-the-australian-child-maltreatment-study-2023-brief-report/

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child physical and emotional abuse, including home visiting, family support programs, and parenting education programs, not only as effective measures to reducing some types of maltreatment but also cost effective.

The ACMS goes on to advocate for better prevention strategies, major government reform, and better and greater investment, which it now has the evidence to inform.

In their analysis of the ACMS, Matthews and Scott (2023, page S48)[18] note that in 2020 the Productivity Commission's *Mental Health Inquiry Report*[19] recommended "prevention and intervention early in life, …including support for new parents, socio-emotional development of school children, and a whole-of-government" approach to mental health. Council recognises the importance of this approach, with interventions and programs that address the needs of communities, and its vision for children in the Children's Services Policy.

Council welcomes the acknowledgement that there must be greater support for all new parents to establish personalised needs and "create a culture promoting equal opportunity in child health and parental capacity, which can then extend to other key transition points" (Matthews and Scott, 2023, page S49).[18]

Outcomes for children when they enter school

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a national assessment to examine how children have developed by the time they start school, and highlights what is working well and the areas that need focus to support children and families[20].

In the Annual Reports 2022 and 2023 we reported on the findings from the AEDC data collected in 2021 and noted the majority of Port Phillip children have transitioned well into school despite an upward trend of children requiring further assessment for special needs status.

The percentage of Port Phillip children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains and two or more domains in the first year of school are lower than the Victorian average and across each of the domains, and Port Phillip demonstrate lower proportions of children recorded as developmentally at risk or vulnerable than children in Victoria[21].

The sixth AEDC data collection will take place in 2024 and we look forward to using the data to inform future policy and strategies at Council.

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[18] Matthews, B. & Scott, J. G. (2023). Introducing the Australian Child Maltreatment Study: baseline evidence for a national public health challenge. *The Medical Journal of Australia*, *218*(6). https://www.mja.com.au/system/files/2023-03/MJA2_v218_is6_Iss2Press_Text.pdf

[19] Australian Government Productivity Commission. (2020). *Mental health Final report released*. https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/mental-health#report

[20] Australian Early Development Census. (2024). *Public Benefit Statement*. https://www.aedc.gov.au/about-the-aedc/public-benefit-statement

[21] Commonwealth of Australia. (2022). *Australian Early Development Census*. https://www.aedc.gov.au/data

Children's Services Access and Participation

This section looks at the demand and need for children's services and programs in Port Phillip that support the wellbeing and development of children and families in our community.

Goals for our children

A Path to Universal Early Childhood Education and Care[22] was released by the Federal Government in November 2023, providing draft findings and recommendations to address the barriers that affect access to Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services and to support better outcomes for children and families.

The report notes that the Federal Government recognizes participation in quality ECEC has important developmental, social, and educational benefits for children and provides a foundation for children's future well-being and success but that children experiencing disadvantage and vulnerability – who are likely to benefit most from ECEC services – are less likely to attend.

The inquiry aimed to identify solutions to enable universal and affordable education and care, as it claims to do for universal Medicare and universal superannuation and in doing so consider the impacts on demand, supply and fee growth, access to quality and flexible services, adequacy of the market, policy settings, system complexity, impacts on the economy and interactions with other incentives and disincentives for parents and carers to join or increase workforce participation.

The report includes 43 findings and 32 recommendations, whilst recognising that despite substantial collections of data in the sector, there are many gaps, particularly around the experiences that make a difference to children, research into ECEC and the use of available data to improve decision making.

For anyone working in the sector, there are no surprises to the findings. The data only strengthens our knowledge that many families find ECEC difficult to access, there is little coordination across governments, the systems are complex and lack flexibility, demand for staff is at record levels so workforce challenges constrain the availability of services, integrated services are important, ECEC is critical to family wellbeing and affordability, and complexity should not be barriers to access.

Supply of childcare services

On 29 January 2024, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) released its

[22] Australian Government Productivity Commission. (2023, November). *Early childhood education and care | A path to universal early childhood education and care Draft report*. https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/childhood/draft

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Childcare inquiry final report[23] for the inquiry into the market for the supply of childcare services.

The inquiry considered matters such as operating costs, including labour, and availability of and the impact change in childcare policy has had on the prices charged since 2018. The differences in providers, service type, characteristics of the service, location and quality were also considered in regard to costs and prices.

The final report outlines 31 findings and makes eight recommendations, noting that the current market is not delivering on accessibility and affordability for all children, a single approach to government regulation ('one size fits all') and the interconnection of government support and regulations (across different levels of government) are unlikely to deliver government objectives or meet community expectations. Key aspects include:

- A new price regulation mechanism, a market stewardship role and supply side subsidies were suggested to ensure government objectives are delivered and to assist in placing downward pressure on fees.
- To further support participation, the childcare subsidy activity test and the information needs of parents and guardians were recommended for reconsideration.
- Once parents and guardians have determined how much childcare to use, price plays a less influential role and providers compete more on quality to attract and retain families.

The inquiry acknowledged the "serious workforce shortage, which significantly impacts supply and costs of childcare" (page 23), and educator burnout, noting pay, conditions and increasing responsibility on the staff as main contributors. For this challenge the ACCC report recommends further review of the regulatory frameworks that support and influence the workforce.

What services are children using?

According to *A Path to Universal Early Childhood Education and Care*[22] approximately 840,000 children attended centre-based day care services nationally in the December 2022 quarter, across 8,900 services, however whilst the number of services are growing and the offering of services and providers is diverse, not all families have access to the services they need.

The findings from the report highlight the following factors that impact families' access to care:

- Days available
- Service quality
- Cultural safety
- Long waiting lists
- Workforce constraints
- Lack of inclusion supports

[23] Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. (2023, December). *Childcare inquiry final report*. https://www.accc.gov.au/system/files/ACCC%20Childcare%20Inquiry-final%20report%20December%202023.pdf?ref=0&download=y

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Data from the Annual Reports 2022 and 2023 highlighted families' preferences and use of a variety of education and care options and noted a decrease in the use of nannies and grandparents, and an increase in kindergarten participation in Port Phillip. Nationally, one in three families with children under five use informal care, primarily provided by grandparents (and one in five families use both formal and informal care).

In the Annual Report 2023 we recognised that not only is access important, but so is engagement and participation. It should be noted that the current Early Years Reforms do not identify the monitoring of participation as a priority.

Early Education and Care

Kindergarten and Long Day Care

Early education and care lay the foundation for healthy future development and supports parents and caregivers as the child's first teachers. Research shows that participation in quality early education and care leads to better health outcomes and education and employment opportunities in life. The early years are critical for establishing a child's physical health, social skills, emotional health, cognitive capacity and language skills.

Kindergarten and childcare (long day care) are regulated under the National Quality Framework under the Victorian Childrens Services Act 1996 and Childrens Services Regulations 2020, however are funded separately. Childcare is funded through Australian Government (Commonwealth) funding and Kindergarten is funded through the Victorian Government funding.

Kindergarten is a program, not a place, and is delivered in both long day care and standalone kindergarten settings. Families can choose which setting best meets their needs – the kindergarten programs are the same.

Kindergarten is a one-to-two-year preschool program for children aged 3 to 5 years old before they start primary school. Programs provide play-based learning led by a degree qualified early childhood teacher.

A standalone kindergarten offers up to 15 hours of a funded kindergarten program to eligible three- and four-year-old children with some providing options for extended hours of attendance. The State Government's Best Life, Best Start rollout will span across 10 years and include $14 billion of reforms. The rollout will be prioritised in regional LGAs and reach metro LGA's in 2030, when pre-prep will be rolled out for 16-20 hours per week, increasing to 30 hours per week for 4-year-old children in 2032.

Childcare (or long day care) provides a full day of education and care to children from birth through to school age. Centres provide a funded kindergarten program as part of their service often with the Degree qualified teacher-led program integrated with additional hours of education and care. This provides flexibility for parents and carers by providing childcare before and after the kindergarten program.

A Path to Universal Early Childhood Education and Care[22] acknowledges that the early childhood

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education and care system can be confusing and hard for families to navigate, with multiple sources, programs and governments involved and the out-of-pocket expenses and entitlements were hard to understand. These challenges are barriers to participation in both kindergarten and long day care, despite supply and capacity. Through the draft recommendations, the report notes that Integrated services and navigation support, providing services in a cohesive and holistic way can reduce complexity for families.

Free Kindergarten

For families who have a three-year-old child, this means from 5 and up to 15 hours per week of a kindergarten program is free.

For four-year-old children, this means 15 hours per week (or 600 hours a year) is free.

For families who attend a kindergarten program in a long day care setting, a $2,000 Free Kinder subsidy will offset the kindergarten program component of their out-of-pocket fees compared to stand-alone kindergarten families who receive a $2500 subsidy.

Capacity

Childcare centres continue to offer the bulk of early education and care in Port Phillip (noting they offer both long day care and kindergarten programs), with minimal change to the range of provider types reported in previous years. The number of approved places in private for-profit services is less than at January 2023 however we are aware of one provider consolidating sites and one service closed in 2023, reopening in 2024 by a new provider. The expansion, relocation, sale or purchasing of education and care sites does not require Council intervention where it is not Council property, however we work with the Department of Education to understand the changes in service provision across the City.

The number of services offering a funded kindergarten program has been strong, despite a decline in sessional kindergarten programs. Families decide where to send their children and how to access kindergarten based on a variety of factors, including services available in their local community and what works best for their family and child. Fees, structure, days and hours of operation are also important considerations.

Council operates four services in Council-owned properties and leases space to operate one kindergarten.

Additionally, Council supports a group of community-managed centres, which are managed by a committee, board or co-operative made up of parents or guardians of children and community members. Council supplies the buildings and funding to support the running of these centres. Resumption of funding of one centre is pending their successful completion of a governance review. Two centres in non-Council properties ceased receiving a funding agreement in January 2023.

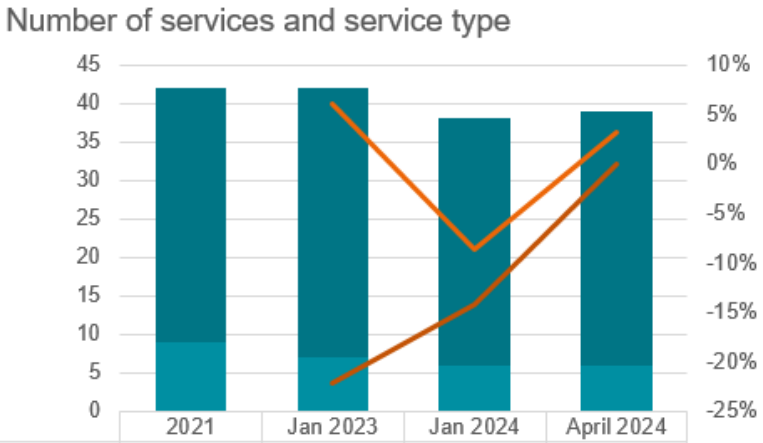
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Table 1 Council- and community-managed early education and care services

Site	Long Day Care	Sessional Kindergarten	Council-**owned** property	Funding Agreement as at Dec 2023
Council-managed services				
Barring Djinang Kindergarten, Southbank	✓	×	×	n/a
Bubup Nairm Children's Centre, St Kilda	✓	×	✓	n/a
Clark Street Children's Centre, Port Melbourne	✓	×	✓	n/a
Coventry Children's Centre, South Melbourne	✓	×	✓	n/a
North St Kilda Children's Centre, St Kilda	✓	×	✓	n/a
Community-managed services				
Ada Mary A'Beckett Children's Centre, Port Melbourne	✓	×	✓	✓
Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre, Port Melbourne	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clarendon Children's Centre, South Melbourne	✓	×	✓	✓
Eildon Road Children's Centre, St Kilda	✓	×	✓	✓
Elwood Children's Centre, Elwood	✓	×	✓	✓
Poets Grove Family and Children's Centre, Elwood	✓	×	✓	✓
South Melbourne Child Care Cooperative (Albert Park)	✓	×	✓	✓
The Avenue Children's Centre, Balaclava	✓	×	✓	✓
Albert Park Kindergarten, Albert Park	×	✓	✓	×
Civic Kindergarten, Middle Park	×	✓	✓	✓
Lady Forster Kindergarten, Elwood	×	✓	✓	✓
Lilian Cannam Kindergarten, South Melbourne	×	✓	✓	✓

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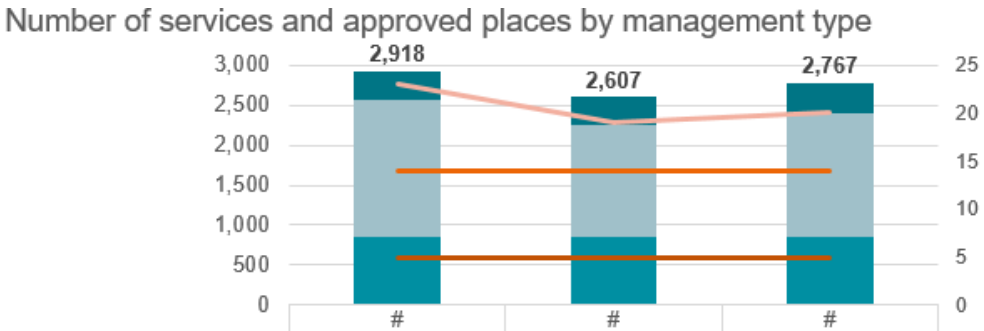
Figure 9 Number of services and service type[24]



	2021	Jan 2023	Jan 2024	April 2024
Childcare centres	33	35	32	33
Stand-alone kindergartens (sessional or extended)	9	7	6	6
Childcare centres % change		6.1%	-8.6%	3.1%
Stand-alone kindergartens (sessional or extended) % change		-22.2%	-14.3%	0.0%

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Figure 10 Number of services and approved places in Port Phillip by management type[24]*



	# Jan 2023	# Jan 2024	# April 2024
Local Government Approved Places	362	362	362
Private (includes commercial, Not For Profit, Jewish and non-govt schools) Approved Places	1,703	1,392 (-18.3% change)	1,552 (11.5% change)
Community Managed Approved Places	853	853	853
Local Government Services	5	5	5
Community Managed Services	14	14	14
Private (includes commercial, Not For Profit, Jewish and non-govt schools) Services	23	19 (-17.4% change)	20 (5.3% change)
	Total: 42	Total: 38	Total: 39

* Community Managed includes two centres in non-Council properties which received Council funding prior to Jan 2023. One centre in a non-Council property which previously received Council funding was reclassed as Not For Profit.

[24] Data sources:

- 2021 data: Department of Education. (2020). *Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan City of Port Phillip*. https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/City_of_Port_Phillip_KISP_Signed.pdf
- Jan 2023 and Jan 2024 data: Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority. (2024). *National Registers*. https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/national-registers

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Table 2 Kindergarten offering[25]

Measure	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of services that offer a funded kindergarten program	39	38	39	41	41
Number of services operated by an Early Years Manager	Not available	8	7	7	7
Number of services operated by a single provider	Not available	30	32	34	Not available

Participation

The Department of Education provides Council with an annual Early Learning Profile of early learning service types and participation data collected during the annual kindergarten census. The profiles are provided in approximately July the year following the local census.

With the introduction of funded three-year-old kindergarten we now have data on some aspects of participation of three-year-olds. The number of children who attended a funded three-year-old program in 2022 was 712.

The Early Learning Profiles reported consistent four-year-old kindergarten participation in Port Phillip from 2017 to 2022, sitting between 82% and 86%. The rate dropped to 78.3% in 2021 likely due to COVID-19, we welcome the return of participation to 84.1% in 2022 however it is still below the State participation rate of 91.6%.

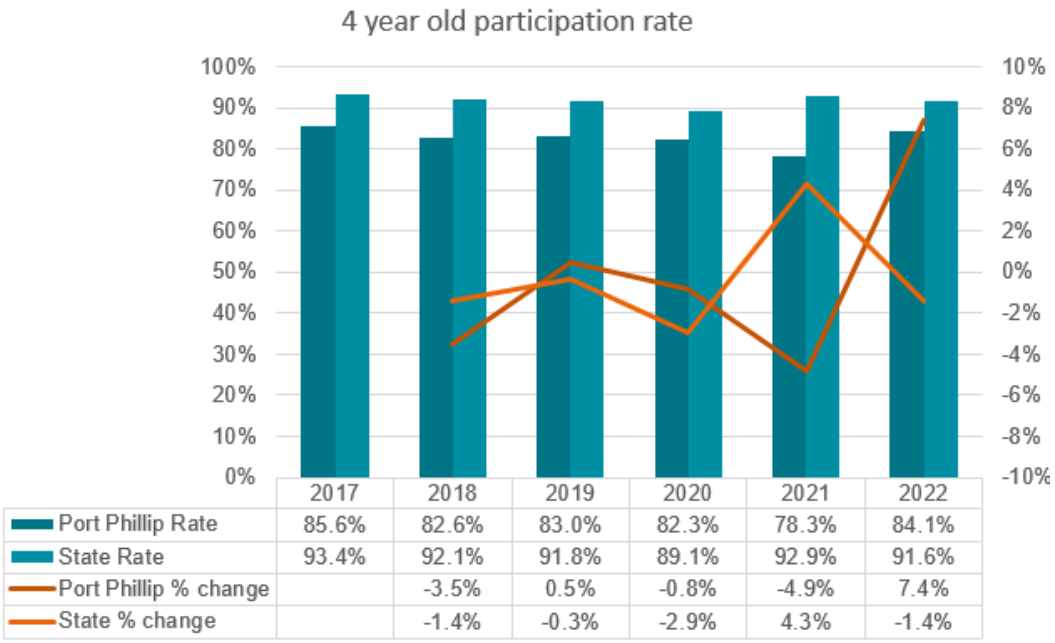
795 children attended four-year-old kindergarten in Port Phillip of which 722 reside in the municipality[25]. We know that approximately 22.9% of Port Phillip children attend funded kindergarten in other municipalities[25], with Glen Eira, Melbourne and Stonnington serving the highest numbers. Similarly, children from these municipalities attend services in Port Phillip, with more from other areas attending services in Port Phillip (207) than those travelling outside of Port Phillip for education and care (156)[25].

Supporting participation in kindergarten is a core objective of the Early Years Assertive Outreach Program.

[25] Data sources: Department of Education Port Phillip ECE Profiles

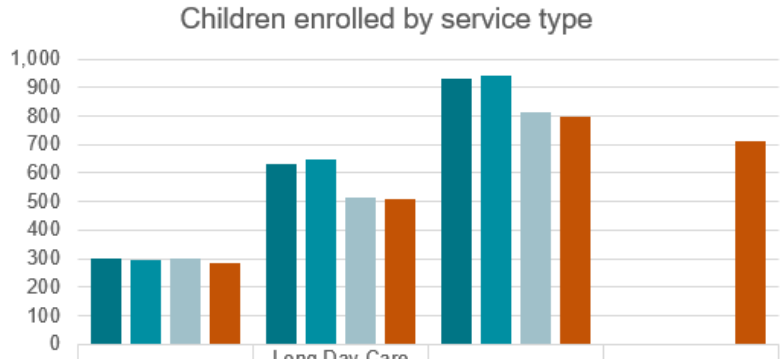
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Figure 11 4 year old participation rate[25]



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Port Phillip Rate	85.6%	82.6%	83.0%	82.3%	78.3%	84.1%
State Rate	93.4%	92.1%	91.8%	89.1%	92.9%	91.6%
Port Phillip % change		-3.5%	0.5%	-0.8%	-4.9%	7.4%
State % change		-1.4%	-0.3%	-2.9%	4.3%	-1.4%

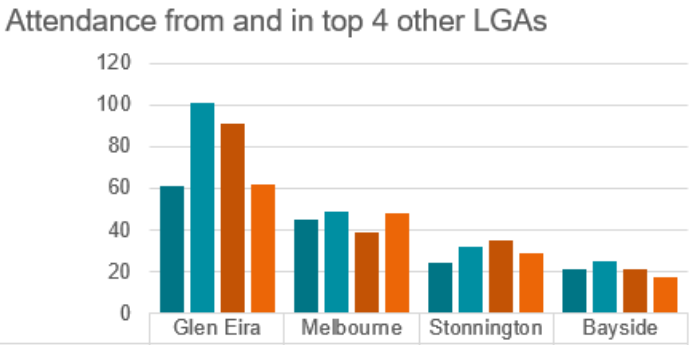
Figure 12 Children enrolled by service type[25]



	Kindergarten 4yo children enrolled	Long Day Care 4yo children enrolled	Total 4yo children enrolled	Total 3yo children enrolled
2019	299	633	932	
2020	297	646	943	
2021	300	513	813	
2022	285	510	795	712

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Figure 13 Attendance from and in the top 4 other LGAs[25]



	Glen Eira	Melbourne	Stonnington	Bayside
2021 Attended in Port Phillip from other LGA	61	45	24	21
2022 Attended in Port Phillip from other LGA	101	49	32	25
2021 Other LGA attended by Port Phillip children	91	39	35	21
2022 Other LGA attended by Port Phillip children	62	48	29	17

Supply and demand

The supply and demand analysis conducted in partnership with the Department of Education, the 2020 *Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plan City of Port Phillip* (KISP),[26] demonstrated that there is likely to be adequate supply of childcare and kindergarten places in Port Phillip through to 2026. Council also undertook further supply and demand analysis in the 2022 *Modelling Demand for Early Education and Care in the City of Port Phillip*[27]. We know that services in Port Phillip continue to assess their program models and kindergarten offering, especially as they implement the increase in funded three- and four-year-old funded kindergarten hours and Free Kinder. Council began working with the Department of Education in 2023 to update the KISP, it is anticipated that this work will be completed in 2024.

The updated KISP will be able to consider in its analysis the impact of the State Government early years reforms on kindergarten demand, updated demographic data and the increase in provision that will be achieved through the Building Blocks Partnership Agreement.

Growth of Early Education and Care Services in the City

In October 2022, with the signing of the Building Blocks Partnership, Council and the State Government entered into an agreement to invest in 6 early education and care facilities over the

[26] Department of Education. (2020). *Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan City of Port Phillip*. https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/City_of_Port_Phillip_KISP_Signed.pdf

[27] City of Port Phillip. (2022). *Modelling Demand for Early Education and Care in the City of Port Phillip*. https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/City_of_Port_Phillip_KISP_Signed.pdf

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next 7 years that will result in an increase of over 57 licensed kindergarten places in the municipality. This partnership builds on the results in the supply and demand analysis of the KISP.

The Building Blocks agreement will see our Council provide more than $18 million and the Victorian Government is contributing up to $12.6 million to the renovation and redevelopment of the 6 early education and care facilities.

Whilst this funding goes a long way toward helping to secure the future of these early education and care centres, a significant investment is still required from the Federal Government. Prior to the 2022 election, Amanda Rishworth, Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education, wrote to the City of Port Phillip committing an Albanese Labor Government to work with Council, the Victorian Government, and local childcare centres to find 'a suitable resolution'. As such, Council continues its advocacy and is seeking a funding contribution from the Federal Government of $10m over the next 5 years, phased as $2m each calendar year. The funds will be used directly towards the infrastructure (bricks and mortar) to upgrade buildings that early education and care is delivered from.

Council has begun a consultation process with the six early education and care facilities and initial planning and design are underway. Council is pleased to be working collaboratively with center Committees of Management, services and families to achieve high quality educational outcomes for Port Phillip's children well into the future.

Factors impacting access and participation

Average fees at early education and care providers

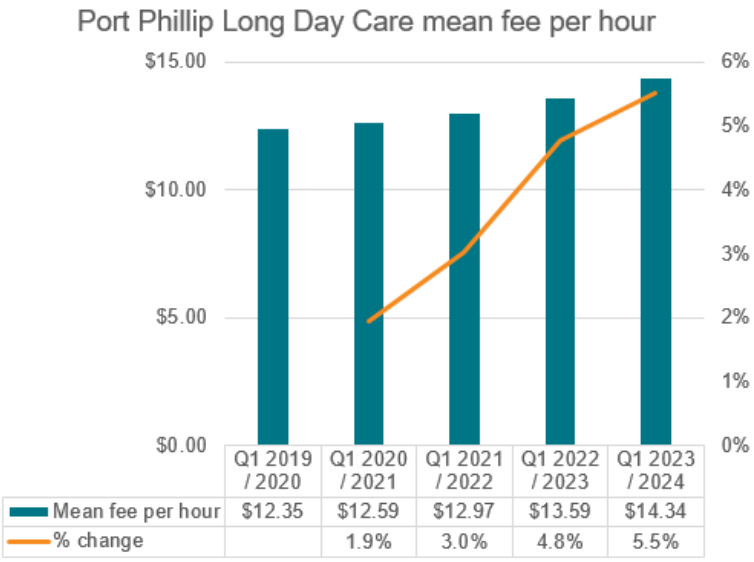
Department of Education data shows mean fees per hour in Port Phillip have increased over time from $12.35 in quarter 1 2019/2020 to $14.34 in quarter 1 2023/2024.

Increased operating costs have contributed to increasing fee growth from year to year, including improved conditions in the City of Port Phillip Enterprise Agreement 2022 and the Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement 2020 and higher costs for items such as food.

All other Victorian local government Statistical Areas Level 3 (SA3) areas within the top ten highest mean fees per hour have also had increases year-on-year, with the highest being in Yarra, with an 11.8% increase from quarter 1 2022/2023 to quarter 2 2023/2024. Port Phillip had the second highest mean fee per hour in Victoria SA3 in quarter 1 2021/2022 but shifted down to sixth in quarter 1 2023/2024, lower than neighbours Stonnington West and Glen Eira but higher than neighbours Stonnington – East and Bayside.

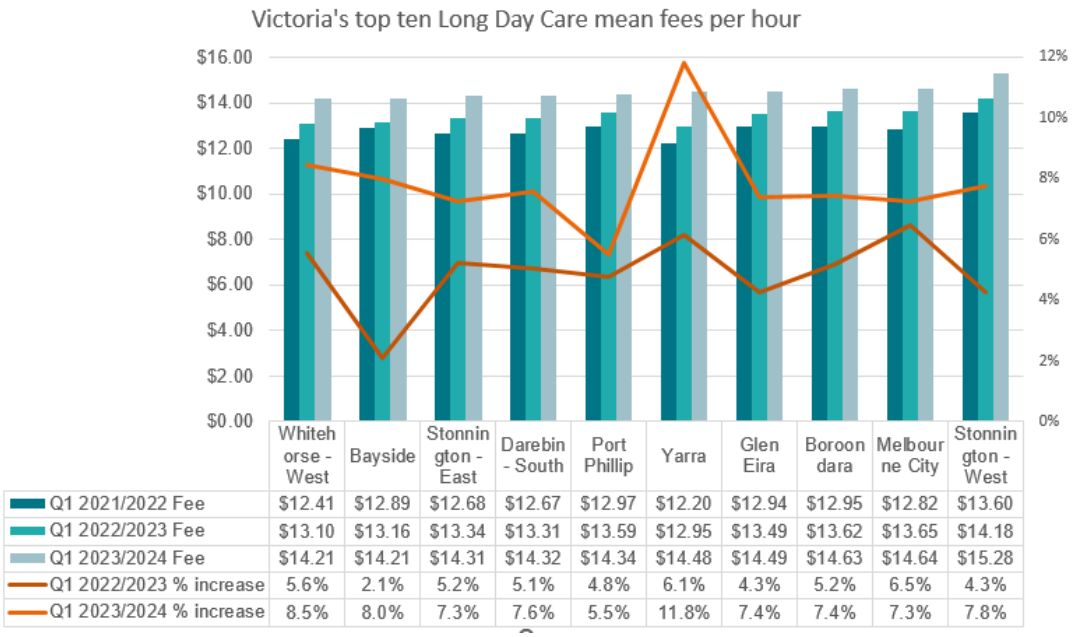
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Long Day Care mean fee per hour in Port Phillip[28]



	Q1 2019 / 2020	Q1 2020 / 2021	Q1 2021 / 2022	Q1 2022 / 2023	Q1 2023 / 2024
Mean fee per hour	$12.35	$12.59	$12.97	$13.59	$14.34
% change		1.9%	3.0%	4.8%	5.5%

Figure 14 Victoria's top ten Long Day Care mean fees per hour[28]

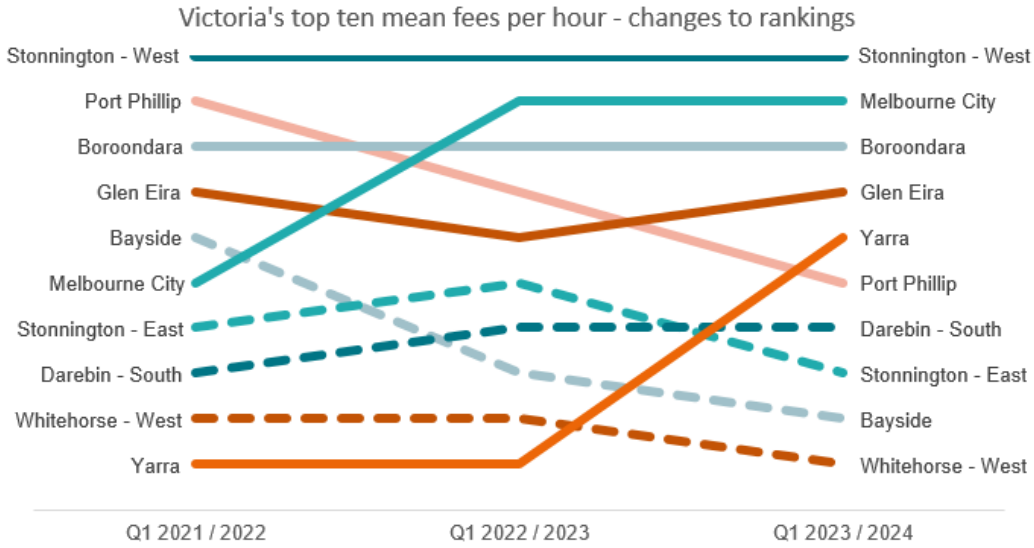


	Whitehorse - West	Bayside	Stonnington - East	Darebin - South	Port Phillip	Yarra	Glen Eira	Boroondara	Melbourne City	Stonnington - West
Q1 2021/2022 Fee	$12.41	$12.89	$12.68	$12.67	$12.97	$12.20	$12.94	$12.95	$12.82	$13.60
Q1 2022/2023 Fee	$13.10	$13.16	$13.34	$13.31	$13.59	$12.95	$13.49	$13.62	$13.65	$14.18
Q1 2023/2024 Fee	$14.21	$14.21	$14.31	$14.32	$14.34	$14.48	$14.49	$14.63	$14.64	$15.28
Q1 2022/2023 % increase	5.6%	2.1%	5.2%	5.1%	4.8%	6.1%	4.3%	5.2%	6.5%	4.3%
Q1 2023/2024 % increase	8.5%	8.0%	7.3%	7.6%	5.5%	11.8%	7.4%	7.4%	7.3%	7.8%

[28] Data source: Department of Education. (2024). *Quarterly reports on usage, services, fees and subsidies*. https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/early-childhood-data-and-reports/quarterly-reports-usage-services-fees-and-subsidies

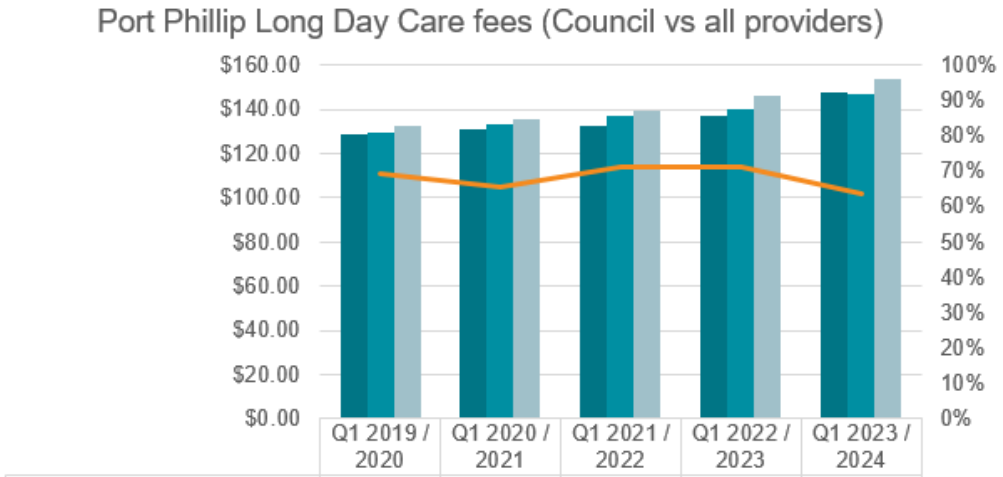
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Figure 15 Victoria's top ten mean fees per hour – changes to rankings[28]



Council managed childcare centres saw an increase in fees in the 2023/2024 financial year to $147 per day.

Figure 16 Long Day Care fees (Council vs all providers)[29]



	Q1 2019 / 2020	Q1 2020 / 2021	Q1 2021 / 2022	Q1 2022 / 2023	Q1 2023 / 2024
Fees cap - 10.75 hours	$128.79	$131.15	$132.33	$136.96	$147.60
Council-Run Fee	$129.50	$133.50	$137.00	$140.50	$147.00
Mean Fee - 10.75 hours	$132.76	$135.34	$139.43	$146.09	$154.16
% services above the cap	69.40%	65.70%	71.10%	71.40%	63.60%

[29] Sources: Council data and see footnote [28]

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City of Port Phillip
The State of Children's Services Within Port Phillip Annual Report 2024
proudly port phillip

Council conducted benchmarking of service fees, using eight community-based services and eight commercial services in Port Phillip and the five City of Yarra centres. Comparing the average fees of each provider type suggests one reason Council and community managed services are in high demand, being an affordable option in comparison to commercial providers. It should be noted that providers offer individualised services, particularly regarding operating hours, staff to child ratios and pedagogical programs, therefore this benchmarking is a useful comparison of daily fees, but it is not a comparison of like for like services.

Figure 17 Average Long Day Care Fees - Port Phillip versus Yarra as at January 2024[30]

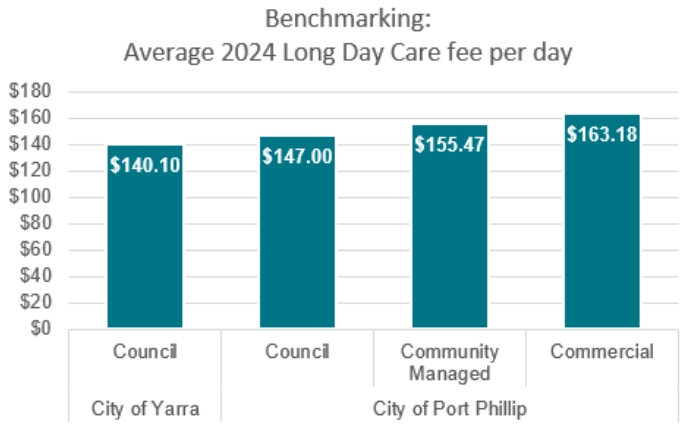
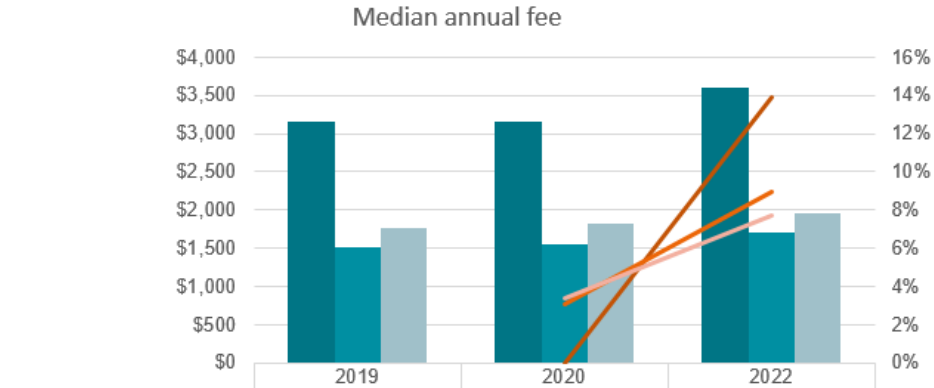


Figure 18 Median annual fee[25]



	2019	2020	2022
Port Phillip Fee	$3,160	$3,160	$3,600
Non Metro Fee	$1,513	$1,560	$1,700
Metro Fee	$1,760	$1,820	$1,960
Port Phillip % increase		0.0%	13.9%
Non Metro % increase		3.1%	9.0%
Metro % increase		3.4%	7.7%

[30] Data source: Non-exhaustive benchmarking of eight community based, eight commercial and five City of Yarra centres.

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Whilst Council's long day care daily fee was lower than that of community managed and commercial services in Port Phillip, the median annual fee to attend a State Government funded four-year-old kindergarten program in Port Phillip was substantially larger than it is to attend in other metro areas and more than double compared to non-metro areas.

Whilst daily fees are a useful comparator, what families pay is determined by two key government policies. The Australian Government Child Care policy means that most families receive some fee reduction, with families earning up to $80,000 receiving a 90% subsidy. The subsidy is calculated on several factors including family income, number of children in care, the type of care used and the hours of recognised activity (work and or study). The Victorian Government Free Kinder policy means that, families who attend a kindergarten program in a long day care setting, receive a $2,000 Free Kinder subsidy to their fees.

The introduction of Free Kinder (see section below) in 2023 will provide for interesting data available from the Department of Education in late 2024.

Note: 2021 data is not available due to changes enacted to support families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our Services

This section outlines the range of Council managed and Council-funded early education and care services and programs available for families and children.

Children's Services

Quality

All Council managed and community managed centres are meeting or exceeding the National Quality Standards (NQS), while one community managed centre is rated as Excellent which is consistent with 2022.

Delivering high quality, accessible childcare services is an ongoing priority under the Children's Services Policy, and in 2023 Council celebrated the re-rating of North St Kilda Children's Service and Coventry Children's Centre, resulting in all Council managed services achieving Exceeding National Standards. A focus on capacity building educators has assisted to achieve this great result, noting that all five Council managed services were rated Exceeding in the Service Quality Areas of:

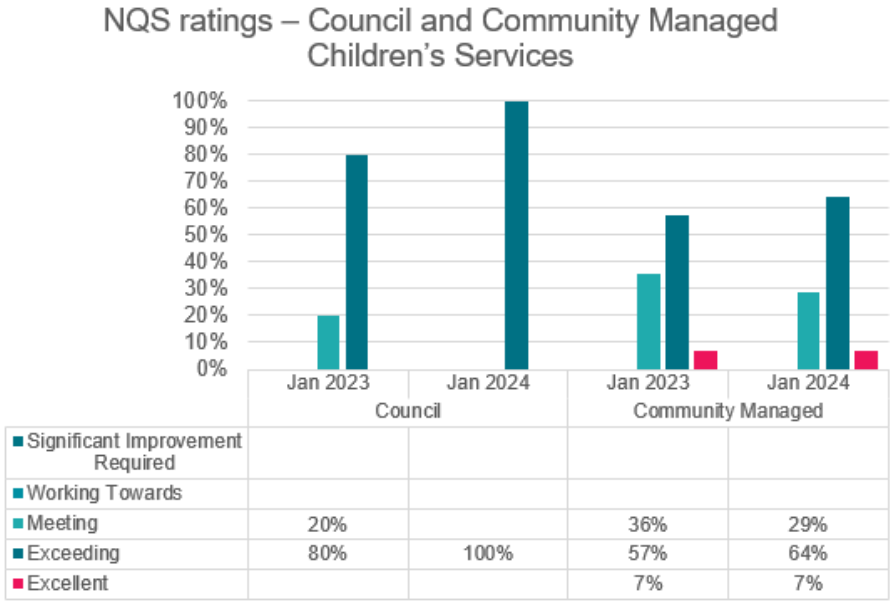
- Educational Program and Practice,
- Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities, and
- Governance and Leadership.

The Children's Policy identifies our commitment to working with all children and families, particularly those experiencing factors associated with vulnerability and identifying and reducing

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barriers such as navigating the system and accessing available subsidies. We can see this focus in practice and evident through the vulnerability statistics in Table 3 and the increase in families assisted to access additional childcare subsidy.

Figure 19 NQS ratings – Council and Community Managed Children's Services[24]



Efficiency and effectiveness – Council-managed services

Council managed services monitor key performance metrics monthly to oversight operations and consider current and future community needs, including addressing the State Government Early Years Policy Reforms.

Strategies implemented in 2023 included a performance improvements plan that focused on five key areas: marketing and promotions, physical environments, workplace culture, staffing recruitment and retention, and service development.

2022/2023 performance data below includes:

- An additional quarter of internal levies to bring Q4 levies within the same financial year. The financial impact is an additional $223k in charges this financial year.
- An additional quarter of internal subsidies to bring Q4 subsidies within same financial year. The financial impact is an additional $96k in subsidies this financial year. Net $127k addition to shortfall.

As can be seen in Table 2 below, the performance of Council services did not meet its anticipated targets (even accounting for the considerations mentioned above) and the overall operating result declined in 2022/23 compared to the year prior. This result is despite a concerted effort on performance improvement and this focus remains an ongoing priority and a yet to be resolved challenge. The persistently high labour shortages presented the biggest challenge to improved

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performance over this period.

Table 3 Children's Services performance over time[31]

Key Performance Measure	Target 2022/23	Actual 2022/23	Actual 2021/22	Actual 2020/21	Actual 2019/20	Actual 2018/19
Child to Staff Ratio	2.66	2.39	2.68	3.09	2.91	2.58
Utilisation	77.8%	63.5%	72.9%	75.8%	85%	87.1%
Operating result	($324,727)	($926,756)	($878,990)	$868,482	($402,148)	($371,029)

Supporting vulnerable children

In 2020/2021 Council introduced new performance measures and reporting requirements for community managed children's services operating from Council facilities, to monitor how effectively services are supporting vulnerable children and families.

The waitlist reporting indicates:

- In 2023, 43 children or 8% of all children who were placed at a Council managed or community managed early childhood education and care facility had a Health Care Card (see figures 24 and 25). This represents an increase in numbers from the previous year however a decrease in the proportion of children placed as the total number of children placed returned to pre-COVID-19 figures.
- There has been a similar pattern in the number of children placed at a Council managed or community managed early education and care facility who were associated with one or more vulnerability factors.

High Priority Referrals

A High Priority Referral process supports children and families that are experiencing significant trauma and/or crisis to be considered for accelerated access into an education and care setting.

Council receives High Priority Referrals from Enhanced Maternal Child Health, Agencies, Family Services or in some cases from families themselves. Most of such referrals are not existing registrants on the waitlist system. Each application is evaluated for it meeting a higher priority consideration.

The supporting agency works with the family and Council to ensure a family can access a service that best meets their needs. Considerations may include walkability to the service, availability of other support services nearby, public transport convenience and proximity to housing.

In 2022-2023, 25 High Priority children were placed in Council education and care settings and 4

[31] Data source: Council records

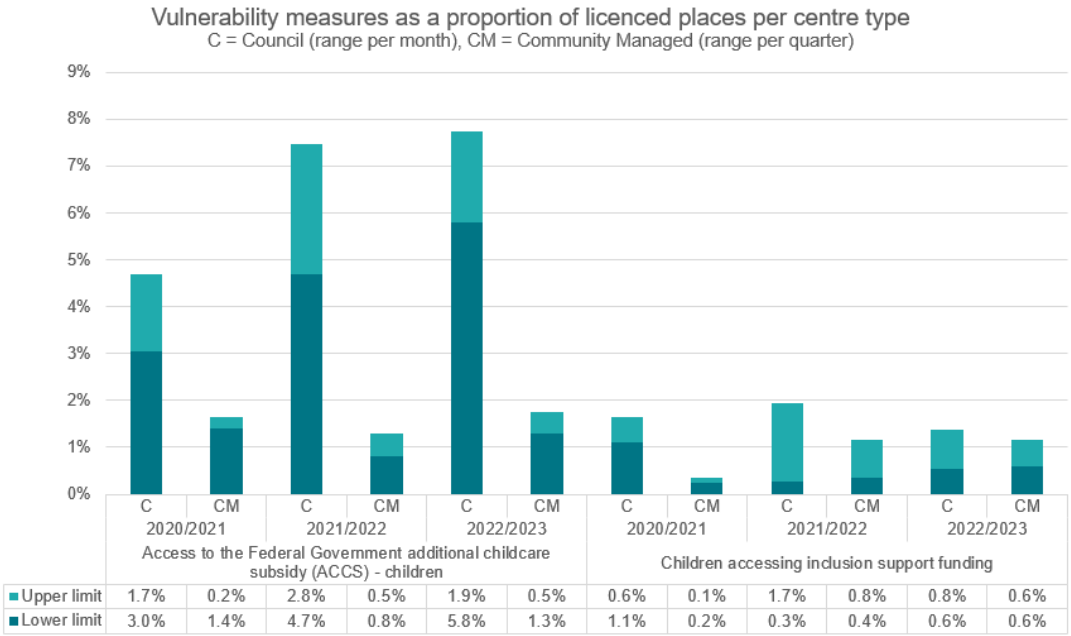
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High Priority children were placed in community managed education and care settings.

In figures 19, 20 and 21 below, the number of children accessing different supports is documented. Its important to note that children and families move in and out of vulnerability and access to some of these supports may only be for short periods of time as may be access to services which is often determined on housing availability. The upper and lower limits depicted below represent this transitional nature. Together this data shows that Council managed services support more families and children across a range of vulnerability types as a proportion of all licenced places compared to the community managed services. There are several reasons for this, including capacity and our integrated service model.

In the three charts below, one community managed children's centre did not provide 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 statistics. Where no figure is provided the data is either not collected or available at this time.

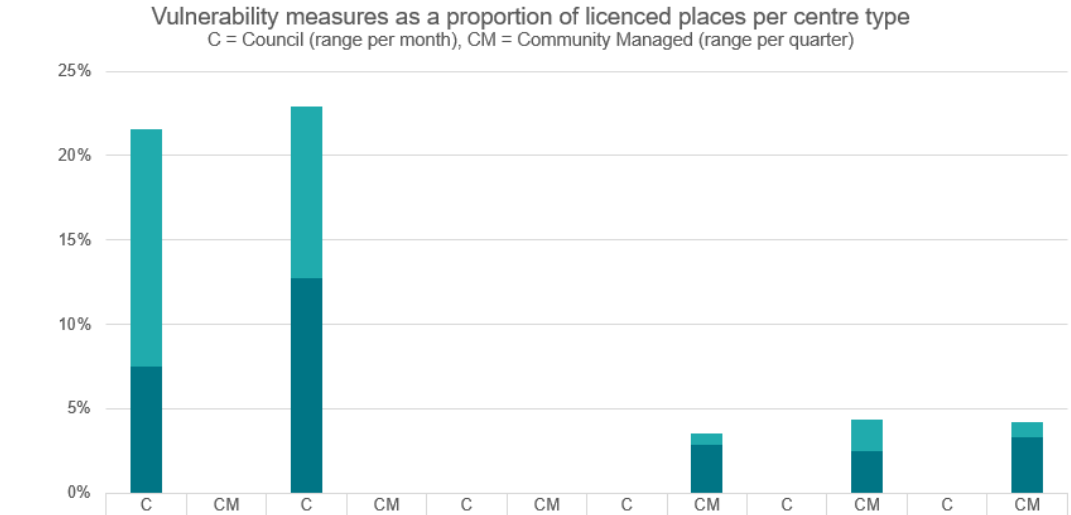
Figure 20 Vulnerability measures as a proportion of licenced places per centre type – ACCS and inclusion support[32]



[32] Data sources: Council records and community managed Children's Services Funding Agreement acquittal reports

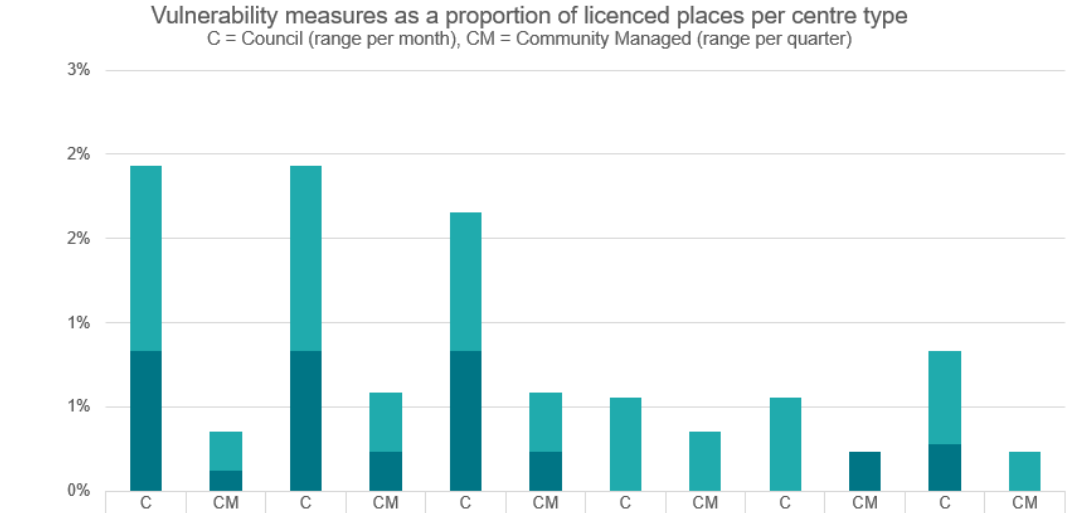
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Figure 21 Vulnerability measures as a proportion of licenced places per centre type – health care cards[32]



	Children who lived in households with a low-income health care card						Children who lived in households with a low-income health care card (4yo only)					
	2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023		2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023	
	C	CM	C	CM	C	CM	C	CM	C	CM	C	CM
Upper limit	14.1%		10.2%					0.7%		1.9%		0.9%
Lower limit	7.5%		12.7%					2.8%		2.5%		3.3%

Figure 22 Vulnerability measures as a proportion of licenced places per centre type – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and out of home care[32]



	Children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds						Children in out of home care					
	2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023		2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023	
	C	CM	C	CM	C	CM	C	CM	C	CM	C	CM
Upper limit	1.1%	0.2%	1.1%	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%	0.6%	0.4%	0.6%	0.0%	0.6%	0.2%
Lower limit	0.8%	0.1%	0.8%	0.2%	0.8%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%

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Centralised Waiting List

Council provides a central point for families to register children for Council and community managed early childhood education and care services located in Council-owned buildings.

Central registration provides a single point of contact for families to apply for multiple services in their area and helps ensure families secure a place that best suits their needs. From May 2024 a new centralised waitlist scheme will be operationalised – the Children's Services Integrated Registration Enrolment (CSIRE) scheme. Responding to expressed community needs, the new system enables families to manage their own waitlist information via a family portal and navigate options for early childhood education and care. All Council managed services participate in the CSIRE with community managed services offered the option to join. During 2024 work will commence to include standalone kindergarten programs in the CSIRE from 2025.

The following services participate in the CSIRE scheme:

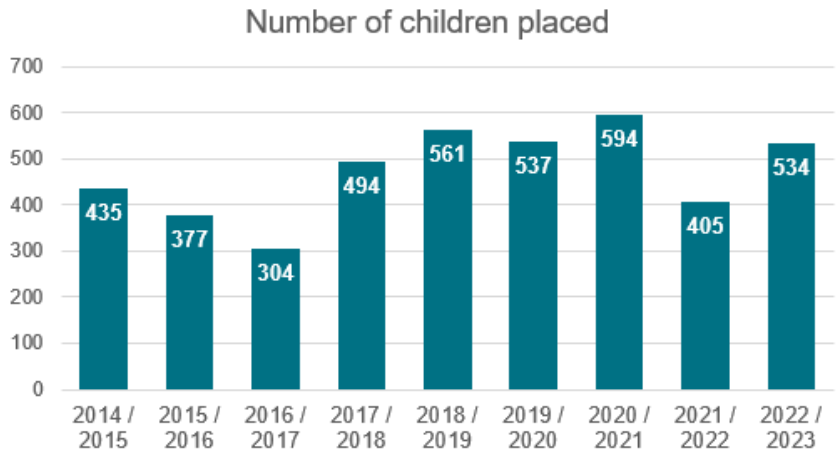
- Council managed early childhood education and care services:
    - Barring Djinang Kindergarten, Southbank
    - Bubup Nairm Family and Children's Centre, St Kilda
    - Clark Street Children's Centre, Port Melbourne
    - Coventry Children's Centre, South Melbourne
    - North St Kilda Children's Centre, St Kilda
- Community managed early childhood education and care services:
    - Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre, Port Melbourne
    - Clarendon Children's Centre, South Melbourne
    - Eildon Road Children's Centre, St Kilda
    - Elwood Children's Centre, Elwood
    - Poets Grove Family and Children's Centre, Elwood
    - The Avenue Children's Centre, Balaclava

Over the three-year period from 2019 to 2021, the number of children placed via the Children's Services Wait List (the waitlist) has remained consistent at over 500 per year, a substantial increase from earlier years. However, this decreased to 405 children being placed via the waitlist in 2022 before rebounding to 534 in 2023.

The reduction in 2022 was due to an increase in usual rate of declined positions. One factor influencing the high decline rate is the bonds families have paid at other centres they have registered for when seeking to secure a place for their child. Bonds are fees charged by providers in the registration process and in most cases are only returned when the family leave the centre (but are not refundable if the registration does not progress to enrolment). The cost-of-living pressures for families has impacted families who may choose family care arrangements instead of accessing childcare.

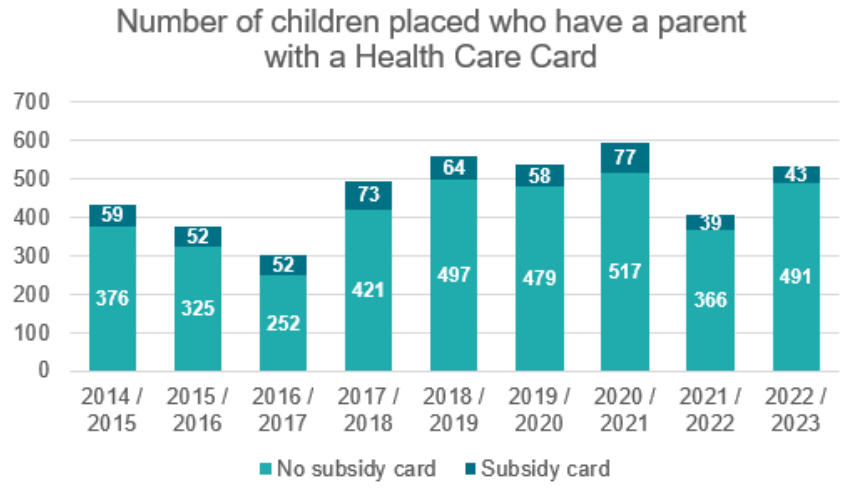
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Figure 23 Number of children placed in Children's Services[33]



The number of those placed who have a parent with a health care card declined 50.6% from 77 in 2020/2021 to 39 in 2021/2022 but then increased slightly to 43 in 2022/2023.

Figure 24 Number of children placed who have a parent with a Health Care Card[33]



As can be seen in the figure below, as proportion of all placements, there is a downward trend from 2020/2021 with the proportion of those placed who have a parent with a health care card now at 8% in 2022/2023. However, this contrasts with the proportion of those placed with a vulnerability factor which has increased to 23%.

[33] Data source: Children's Services Wait List Data

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Figure 25 Proportion of children placed who have a parent with a Health Care Card[33]

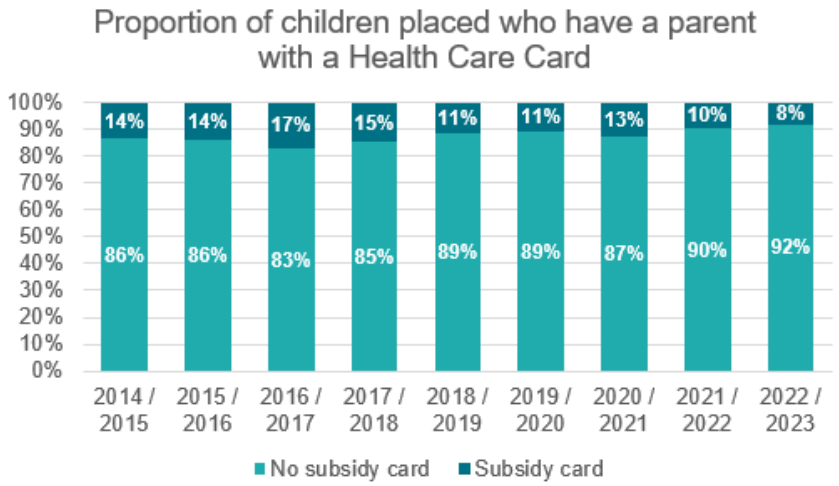
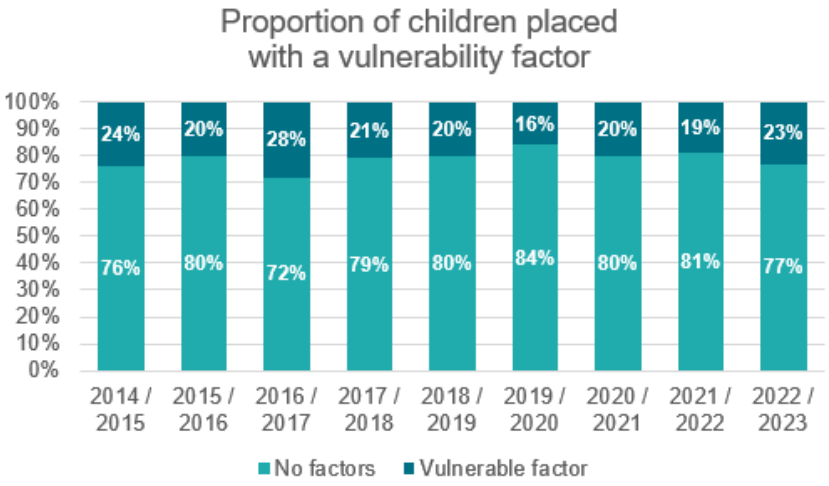


Figure 26 Proportion of children placed with a vulnerability factor[33]



The average number of days to be placed following activation increased significantly in 2022/2023 across both community and council managed centres, increasing from approximately two months in 2020/2021 to three months in 2021/2022 and now to six months. There are several factors influencing the increase, including:

- Parents may defer accepting an offer until their preferred centre is available oramilies may accept a vacant position elsewhere but elect to remain on the waitlist in case a position becomes available at a more preferred centre. This option inflates the waitlist figures.
- Waitlist data is also inflated by family reluctance to remove their registration, despite having been made offers, should their circumstances or need for a position changes.

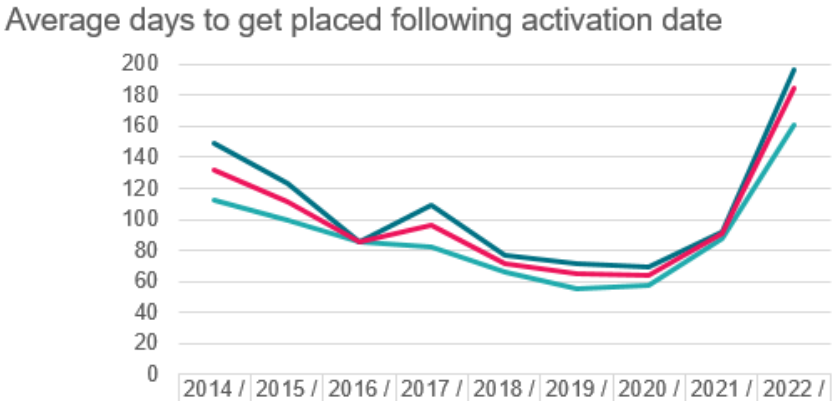
Strong utilisation and limited movement (families leaving the centre) in the community managed

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centres. This is particularly important to note for families who are not able to or want to travel to alternative centre. The childcare inquiry final report[22] notes the challenges with understanding waitlist data and the availability of childcare to different age cohorts, including the existence of waitlists does not necessarily indicate unmet demand and it is expected that the children aged 0 to 2 account for the largest number of places held by children on waitlists. This is reflected in Council's data (see Figure 29), showing the average age of children placed is between 2 and 3.

The report notes that whilst services may not be operating at full occupancy overall, they have waiting lists for babies and toddlers, with national data showing that children over the age of 3 account for the majority of offered places from large providers of long day care.

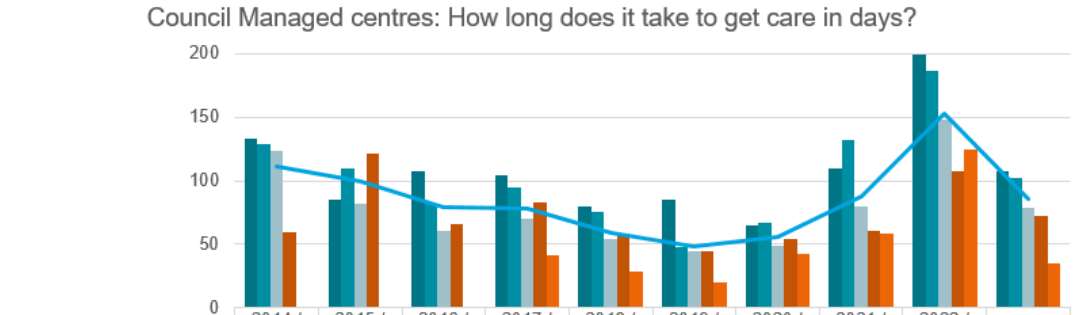
Figure 27 Average number of days on the waitlist[33]



	2014 / 2015	2015 / 2016	2016 / 2017	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020	2020 / 2021	2021 / 2022	2022 / 2023
Council-operated	112	100	85	82	66	55	58	88	161
Community-operated	149	123	85	109	77	72	69	92	196
Average	132	111	85	96	72	65	64	91	184

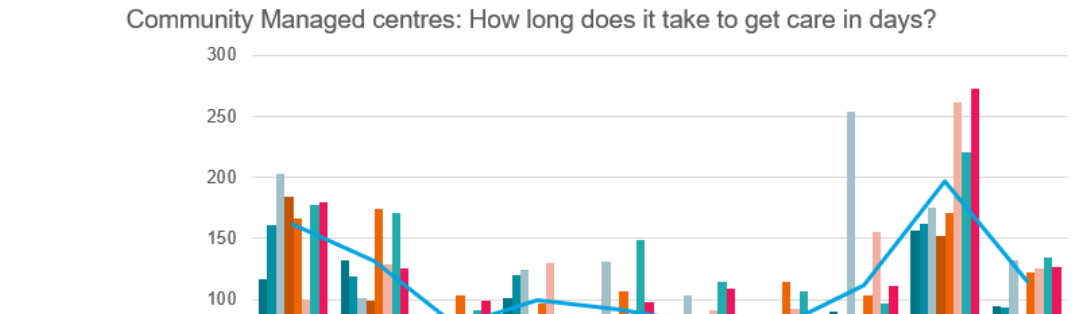
This increase in days on the waitlist has been evident across all centres but especially for Eildon Road Children's Centre, Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre and The Avenue Children's Centre.

Figure 28 How long does it take to get care in days at Council centres? [33]



	2014 / 2015	2015 / 2016	2016 / 2017	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020	2020 / 2021	2021 / 2022	2022 / 2023	Ctr Avg
Bubup Nairm CC	133	85	108	104	80	85	65	110	199	108
Coventry CC	129	110	82	95	75	48	67	132	186	103
Clark Street CC	123	82	61	70	54	45	49	80	148	79
North St Kilda CC	60	121	66	83	58	45	54	61	107	73
Barring Djinang Kinder				41	29	20	42	58	125	35
Average per year	111	100	79	79	59	49	55	88	153	86

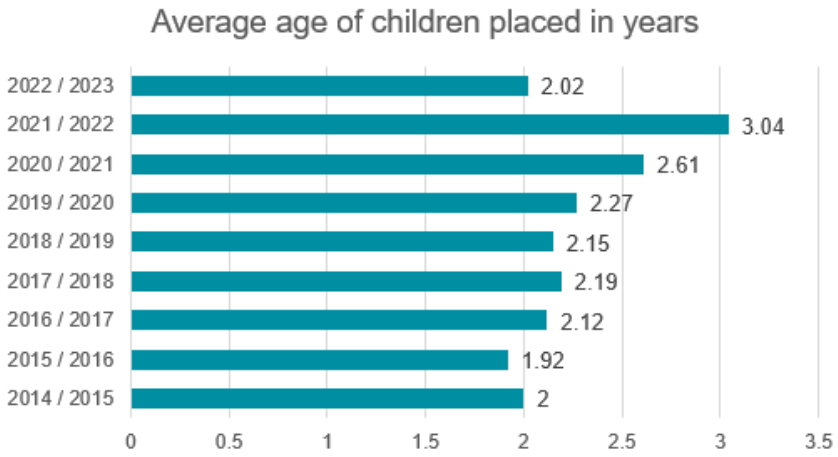
Figure 29 How long does it take to get care in days at Community Managed centres? [33]



	2014 / 2015	2015 / 2016	2016 / 2017	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020	2020 / 2021	2021 / 2022	2022 / 2023	Ctr Avg
Ada Mary A'Beckett CC	117	132	88	101	61	49	56	90	157	95
Bubup Womindjeka FCC	161	119	87	120	45	47	47	59	162	94
Clarendon CC	203	101	11	125	131	104	86	254	175	132
Eildon Road CC	184	99	64	74	61	73	51	28	152	87
Elwood CC	167	174	104	97	107	59	115	103	171	122
Poets Grove FCC	100	129	88	130	84	91	93	155	261	126
South Melbourne CC	178	171	91	82	149	115	107	97	221	135
The Avenue CC	180	126	99	68	98	109	76	111	273	127
Average per year	161	131	79	100	92	81	79	112	197	115

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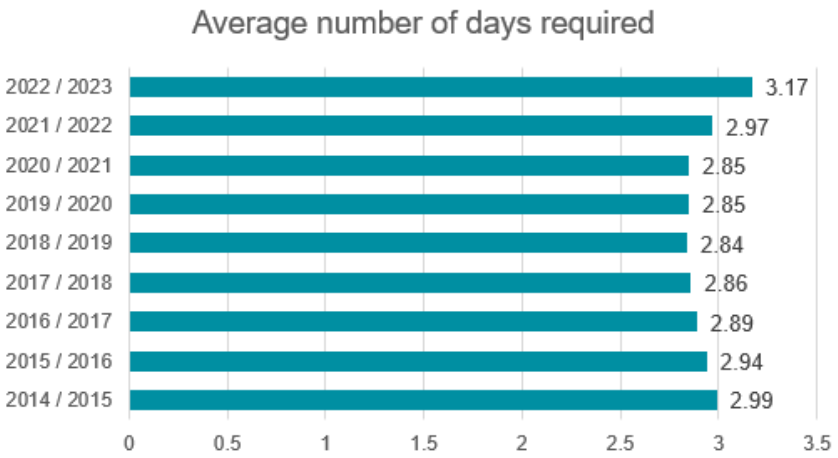
Figure 30 Average age of children placed in years[33]



The average age of children when placed had previously been trending up since 2020 (to over 3 in 2022), which aligned with the increase in number of days it took to get care in 2021/2022 across almost all services. The average age declined in 2023 to 2.02 years which indicates more available places (either low utilisation or higher turnover of families). This figure aligns with the increase in number of families placed in 2022/2023 (Figure 22). Anecdotal evidence heard from families is that they have brought activation dates forward (being the date from which they wish to start care opposed to the date of registration) due to cost of living pressures and the resultant return to both work and the office requiring earlier and sometimes more frequent care.

The average number of days of care required increased in 2023 with families requesting, on average, over three days of care a week. A reduced interest in childcare places on Mondays and Fridays continues across all services.

Figure 31 Average number of days required[33]



This average number of days is above the previous high levels seen in 2015.

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Maternal and Child Health

Universal Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Service

The MCH Service is a free universal primary health service available for all Port Phillip families with children from birth to school age. The service receives funding from the Department of Health based on enrolments, generated from birth notifications, self-referrals, and agency referrals. The MCH Service consists of three components:

- Universal MCH (UMCH) program
- Enhanced MCH (EMCH) program
- 24 hour MCH phone support (State Wide service)

The MCH Service provides a comprehensive and focused approach for the promotion, prevention and early identification of the physical, emotional and social factors affecting young children and their families. The MCH Service supports child and family health, wellbeing and safety, focusing on maternal health and parent inclusive practice as a key enabler to optimise child learning and development.

The UMCH program consists of 10 Key Age and State (KAS) consultations with a maternal and child health nurse. The KAS consultations are a schedule of contacts for all children and their families from birth to school age. They include an initial home visit, and consultations at two, four and eight weeks, and four, eight, 12 and 18 months, and at two and three and a half years of age.

The MCH Service also offers a Sleep and Settle Program to families in the community which includes group sessions for infants aged 0 to 6 months, 6 to 12 months and toddlers 1 to 2 years and an outreach component is offered to families experiencing vulnerability which provides support in the family home.

The MCH Service is provided to families through a partnership between the Department of Health and Council. A Memorandum of Understanding guides the partnership between the Department of Health and Council for the planning, funding and provision of the MCH Service.

Participation in the Maternal and Child Health service is voluntary. Regular reminders for missed visits are sent and family participation can vary between years.

Investing in high-quality programs that support optimal child, maternal and family health, wellbeing, safety, development, and learning has lifelong benefits to children's health, educational and social outcomes. This is particularly so for children with additional needs.

Enhanced MCH Program

This program is fully funded by the Department of Health and is offered to selected families as an extension of the UMCH program. The EMCH program offers flexible actions and interventions to families who would benefit from targeted support and responds assertively to the needs of children and families at risk of poor outcomes, in particular where there are multiple risk factors.

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The EMCH service is provided in addition to the components offered through the UMCH program. It provides a more intensive level of support, including short-term case coordination or management in some circumstances. Support may be provided in a variety of settings, such as the family's home, an MCH centre or another location within the community.

Family Violence Screening

MCH nurses play an important role in identifying family violence and providing information and support to mothers and their children. MCH nurses have the opportunity, through their clinical consultations, to observe women, their children and the physical environment for signs of family violence. These can include physical injury, poor emotional health and regulation, poor attachment with care givers, and developmental delays in infants and young children.

Routine Universal Screening is conducted at the four-week Key Age and Stage (KAS) consultations, where it is safe and appropriate to complete the Screening and Identification questions. Safe screening and identification take place through observation and engagement with clients to identify family violence indicators and the MARAM evidence-based risk factors of family violence, and any changes in frequency or severity over time. MCH nurses have the unique opportunity to observe the family in their own home during the first KAS home visit and these observations are built upon with future client consultations.

In addition to the KAS consultations, MCH Nurses are able to offer specific family violence consultation to a family if the MCH nurse has completed a consultation and the following occurs:

- The MCH nurse was unable to complete the family violence questions (for example, at the four-week KAS consultation) because the partner or other family members were present, or
- Family violence has been disclosed or identified and more time is required for discussion or to complete a safety plan, or
- The MCH nurse suspects the family is experiencing family violence and requires additional time for exploration and discussion, or
- The MCH nurse or family member/s require a joint consultation with a specialist family violence practitioner.

Family violence consultations are led by the MCH nurse. In some cases, the MCH nurse may choose to hold a joint consultation with a family support worker, Aboriginal health worker, and/or specialist family violence practitioner.

Bubs in Mind

The Maternal and Child Health Service runs a therapeutic playgroup called Bubs in Mind for new families who have had a baby and are struggling with adjustment to parenthood.

The aim of the group is to explore and develop the capacity of the infant to experience, express and regulate emotions, form close and secure relationships, and explore the environment and learn. The sessions allow for the parent to try and look at their own behaviour and parenting through the lens of the infant. Each session allows a space for parents to connect with their baby through sensory mediums such as baby massage, music and play. The facilitators use senses like

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sight, sound, touch, taste, movement, and smell.

This program is referral-based, providing support for parents experiencing extreme challenges such as postnatal depression and/or anxiety, traumatic birth, difficulties bonding with new baby or/and not enjoying baby, significant sleep and settling issues and other life circumstances that make coping or bonding with baby difficult, including grief and loss.

The group is facilitated by a MCH Nurse and Early Parenting Practitioner and has focused on getting to know your baby through sensory mediums such as baby massage, music and connection through play.

The group runs for six weeks and there were seven groups run in 2023 with 48 families attending throughout the year. These groups were evaluated, with 99.7% of attendees reporting that they felt the information provided was easy to understand, and 99.7% parents felt confident of implementing the strategies that they learnt.

Performance

In 2022/2023, the MCH service received 946 birth notifications and the service enrolled 963 infants into the program.

The program completed 8,017 KAS visits (of which 6 are usually undertaken in the child's first year of life and an additional 3 in the following years).

In 2022/2023, 1,479 children and mothers transferred to another service outside of the municipality and 665 children and mothers transferred into the municipality.

In 2022/2023 the MCH Service conducted 2,940 MARAM screenings (for family violence) and of these, 9 safety plans were completed, 24 referrals were made as a follow on from a family violence consult.

Department of Health funding for the EMCH program is allocated according to socioeconomic disadvantage, calculated on the number of Family Tax Benefit recipients in an LGA and rurality using the Accessibility Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA). The total service hours delivered in the EMCH program for 2022/2023 were 1,371.26 hours, 445 hours above the hours funded by the Department of Health. This was due to the high number of families in transitional accommodation, where their address listed with Centrelink is often not in Port Phillip.

In October 2023 the MCH Service conducted a client survey for families enrolled in the MCH Service. Of the 304 families surveyed:

- 90.25% responded that the MCH Service is important to them.
- 85.8% felt listened to by their MCH Nurse
- 85.9% felt comfortable discussing any issues and concerns with their MCH Nurse
- 74% felt the MCH Service is responsive to cultural needs

Table 4 MCH key metrics[34]

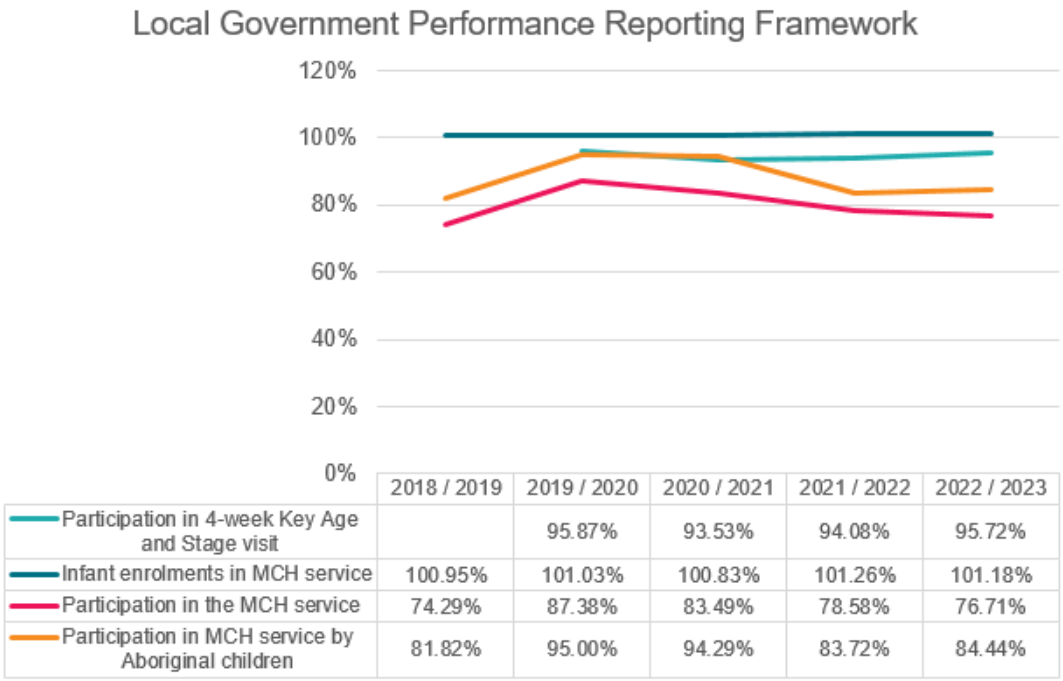
Measure	2019 / 2020	2020 / 2021	2021 / 2022	2022 / 2023
Birth Notices Received	1,216	1,216	1,130	946
Total No of Enrolments	1,147	1,195	1,151	963
Total No of KAS Consults	9,165	8,667	7,684	8,017
Total No of 3.5 KAS consults	480	411	454	467
Additional Consults	2,103	2,227	1,479	1,343
Family Violence Consults	101	88	144	101
Referrals	947	1,413	1271	1,304
Transfers In	638	1,588	665	591
Transfers Out	1,661	3,635	1479	1,365
Total Hours EMCH	Comparable data not available	1,278 hours	1278.17	1371.26
Total Hours Sleep and Settle Outreach	n/a	49.5 hours	301.41	301.41

MCH reports a number of measures via the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) showing the services consistently meet and exceed targets set for infant enrolments and participation in the 4 week KAS visits, the overall service to the community and by Aboriginal children.

[34] Data source: Child Development Information System MCH Data

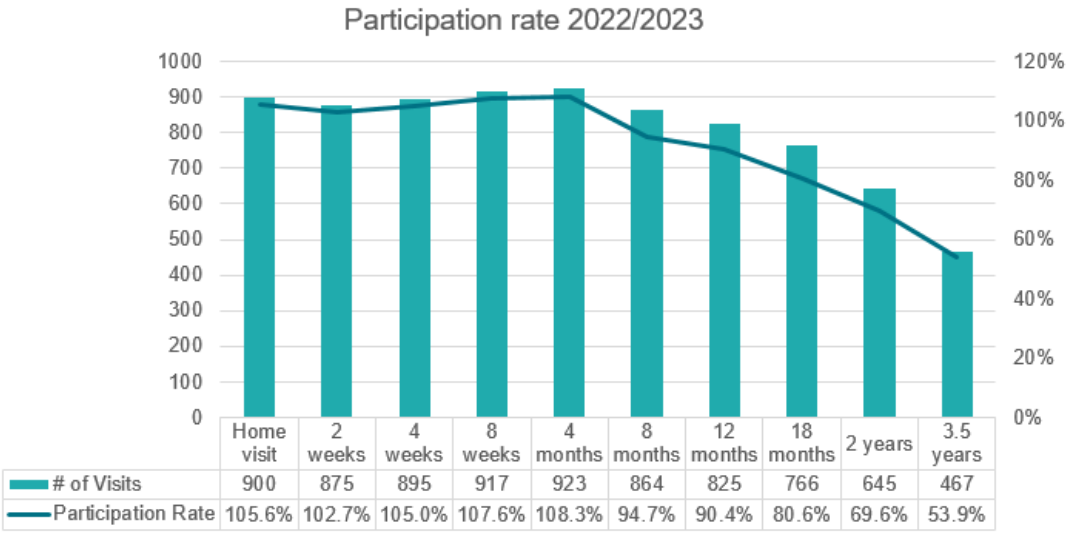
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Figure 32 MCH Local Government Performance Reporting Framework reporting[34]



	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020	2020 / 2021	2021 / 2022	2022 / 2023
Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit		95.87%	93.53%	94.08%	95.72%
Infant enrolments in MCH service	100.95%	101.03%	100.83%	101.26%	101.18%
Participation in the MCH service	74.29%	87.38%	83.49%	78.58%	76.71%
Participation in MCH service by Aboriginal children	81.82%	95.00%	94.29%	83.72%	84.44%

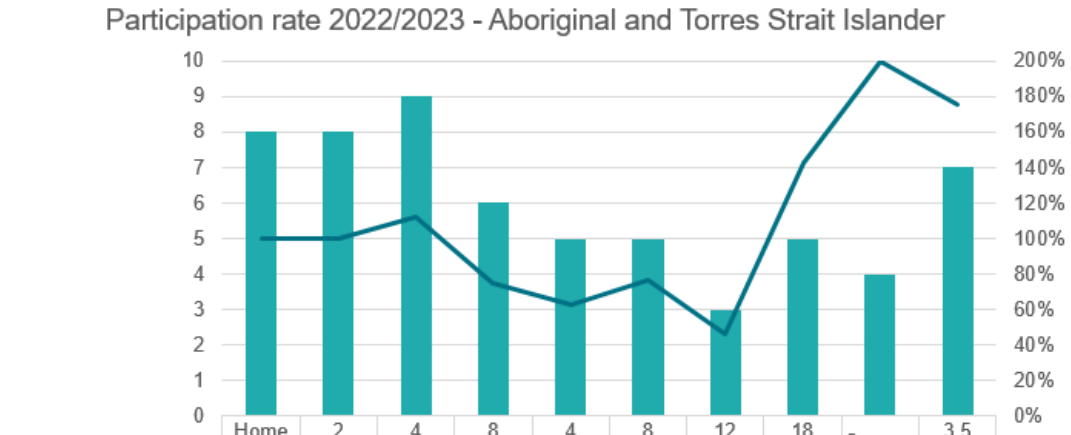
Figure 33 Participation rate 2022/2023[34]



	Home visit	2 weeks	4 weeks	8 weeks	4 months	8 months	12 months	18 months	2 years	3.5 years
# of Visits	900	875	895	917	923	864	825	766	645	467
Participation Rate	105.6%	102.7%	105.0%	107.6%	108.3%	94.7%	90.4%	80.6%	69.6%	53.9%

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Figure 34 Participation rate 2022/2023 – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander[34]



	Home visit	2 weeks	4 weeks	8 weeks	4 months	8 months	12 months	18 months	2 years	3.5 years
Visits	8	8	9	6	5	5	3	5	4	7
Participation Rate	100.0%	100.0%	112.5%	75.0%	62.5%	76.9%	46.2%	142.9%	200.0%	175.0%

Family Services

Family Support Services

Family Services support families through a range of programs, including:

- Lead Family Worker (LFW) program is a short-term early intervention program for families with children aged 0 to 8.
- Integrated Family Services (IFS) program is a case-management program funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, where families with children aged 0 to 17 can receive support from a Family Support Worker for 3 to 6 months.

The LFW program provides generalist family advice, support and referrals to families who live, work or play in the municipality and can provide advice on topics such as community connectedness, family relationships, as well as provide emotional support regarding family violence, parenting strategies and general mental and perinatal health.

Lead Family Worker Program

The LFW program has carried on with a focus on fathers and father figures in 2023. Alongside individual support the team has collaborated with childcare centres, schools and the library services team in building community engagement targeting fathers. Current projects include The Fathering Project and Storytime with Dad. The program has also seen an increase in the number of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse families experiencing financial hardship due to visa issues as well as discrimination from services, requiring advocacy and targeted referrals to services not always located in the City of Port Phillip.

One example is where the Lead Family Worker successfully advocated to a local school to have a

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primary school aged child enrolled, despite one of the child's parents refusing to sign exit papers with a previous school.

The LFW program accepted 81 referrals in 2023 and the average length of intervention was two months. This is a 25% increase compared to 2022. In addition to the 81 cases:

- 133 brief interventions were completed for brief support, advice and service navigation.
- Requests for material aid such as food, clothes and nappies increased significantly with 40 requests made in 2023 compared to seven in the previous year.
- 67 referrals came from Maternal and Child Health.
- 138 referrals were made to other services. This is one of the program's core activities in the early intervention space, acting as a navigator and providing referral pathways to families.

Integrated Family Services

In 2023 the IFS program supported 48 families and the average length of intervention was three months. This is a 45% increase on the 33 referrals in 2022. The majority of referrals to the IFS program are complex, often with family violence and child protection history, requiring an assertive outreach approach to engage with the family.

The most common reported support needs in 2023 were:

- Parenting skills (managing and understanding children's behavior, setting limits and boundaries).
- Family violence (current and historical economic, emotional, psychological, physical and youth violence perpetrated towards parent).
- Child behavior.
- Material aid.
- Housing issues (housing affordability stress, homelessness, inadequate or inappropriate housing or tenancy at risk).

St Kilda Mums

St Kilda Mums was established in 2009, starting from a mother's house in St Kilda, who decided to rehome near-new baby clothing and goods donated by parents for families who might need them. St Kilda Mums is now operating at a large warehouse in Clayton with the support of over 400 new volunteers in 2023.

In their 2022/2023 Annual Report[35], St Kilda Mums reports rehoming a total of 65,940 items valued at $7,515,788 across Melbourne. Council acquires baby clothing and items for families in need through St Kilda Mums with 54 orders in 2023, a significant increase on 2022's nine orders. This strongly indicates the importance of organisations such as St Kilda Mums to provide additional

[35] St Kilda Mums. (2024). *Annual Report 2022/23*. https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/2750/3378/files/SKMI_Annual_Report_2022_2023.pdf?v=1700704165

material and clothing for new parents and families in financial struggles. In 2023 one of our Social Workers participated in the St Kilda Mums social media campaign, sharing through video their experience of how the organisation has made a change in the lives of countless families. Council is grateful for the assistance provided by St Kilda Mums and look forward to their continued support in our community.

Early Years Assertive Outreach and Early Education Grant

The Early Years Assertive Outreach program supports Council's goal that every child in Port Phillip has access to quality early education (Policy Objective 1). The program offers a range of supports to families and services in a collaborative and capacity building approach to provide the best outcomes for families.

The number of enquiries in 2023 was similar to 2022, with the majority of support requests from families on a visa and not eligible for the Federal Government's Child Care Subsidy[36]. For this reason we began recording this data in 2023 and confirm the program supported 24 cases where the family were on a visa with no access to government support.

2023 saw the introduction of free kindergarten and it was hoped that this would increase the number of financially sustainable options for families, however the limited availability of sessional kindergarten in Port Phillip means many families are unable to secure a place in these services and are left considering a funded program in long day care which attracts additional long day care fees.

Some long day care services have a policy that children must attend a minimum of three days per week, with families further out of pocket, particularly if there are hours above which they're eligible to receive childcare subsidy. Registration fees and bonds may also be charged by services and Council's Early Years Assertive Outreach Officers have been successful in negotiating an alternative option for vulnerable families. This has included payment plans, a reduction or full coverage through the Early Years Education Grant.

Waiting lists, immunisation status, the complexity of federal funding and the differences across early education and care services (such as centre specific policies and finance systems) continue to delay access to programs, particularly when services change operators and leadership staff, which often sees families return to the Early Years Assertive Outreach team for further support.

The Early Education Grant was established in 2020 and applications for financial support to access education and care continues to grow, with Council investing further resources into the program to support more families in 2023/2024.

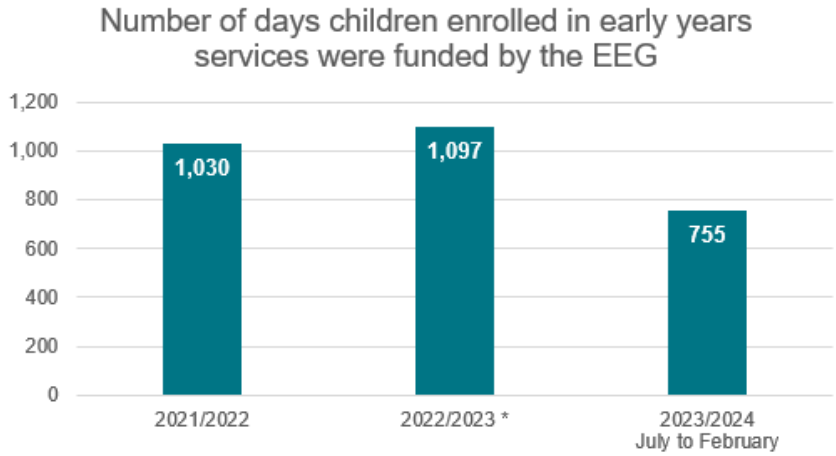
In 2022/2023, the Early Education Grant funded 1,097 days of early education and care, a slight increase on the previous year. The introduction of Free Kinder in 2023 did assist families with the cost of education and care and in the future, we hope to see the Early Education Grant used less for children to access funded kindergarten and more to access long day care. Days funded for the current financial year are on track with previous years however we are aware that insecure housing is impacting families currently on the grant and the number of days funded in Q3 2024 has

[36] Services Australia. (2023). *Child Care Subsidy*. https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy

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dropped.

Figure 35 Number of days children enrolled in early years services were funded by the EEG[37]



* An improved data collection method commenced in May 2023.

Parent Information Sessions

Council offers several free information sessions for parents and caregivers throughout the year as one strategy under the Policy to support parents, carers and families to increase their capacity and capability. The topics and delivery are based on feedback from families attending MCH and other Port Phillip family programs.

In 2023 Council ran First Aid Awareness (two sessions), Self-Care for Parents and Body Safety (two sessions). In 2024 we are exploring the delivery of sessions in partnership with other early childhood services in Port Phillip, recognising the expertise that exists in these services, including the accessibility and cultural safety that comes with early childhood settings that families recognise and have a sustained connection with.

Supported Playgroups

Supported playgroups are a free program for families with children from birth to school age, led by a qualified facilitator. The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing's (DFFH) *Supported Playgroups policy and funding guidelines* state "Research has demonstrated that participation in a supported playgroup run by a skilled and qualified facilitator and with evidence-based practice embedded, has a positive impact on parent/child interactions and on children's cognitive and social development."[38]

Facilitators of supported playgroups are funded by the DFFH and are required to deliver the

[37] Data source: Council records

[38] The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. (2021, March). *Supported Playgroups policy and funding guidelines*. https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/supported-playgroups-policy-and-funding-guidelines

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program under a framework that introduces families to parenting essentials that lead to optimal child outcomes. In-Home Support is also a part of this framework, where the facilitator visits the family at their home and provides coaching.

Delivering supported playgroup alongside a service system that connects families with other early years services and parenting supports provides opportunities for parents to learn about local services and to meet other parents for support and friendship, reducing social isolation and increasing the connection between families in their local community.

Council's supported playgroup also includes the Parent-Child Mother Goose program, an evidence-based program that strengthens attachment and interaction between parents or carers and their young children[39]. This program is now fully incorporated into Council's supported playgroup, strengthening the delivery and variation of rhymes, songs, storytelling and lullabies.

Supported playgroup is also run outdoors, exploring William Street Reserve, Hewison Reserve, St Kilda Botanical Gardens, Eastern Reserve South Playground and Skinners Adventure Playground. Getting out and about in the community provides a nature play experience for the group as well as informing carers of local areas to play.

Supported playgroup in Port Phillip is delivered in partnership with Better Health Network Paediatric Occupational Therapists and Speech Pathologists, adding value to the groups, sharing expertise and incorporating resources supporting the topics covered with parents and carers.

Council runs two supported playgroups each school term with groups held weekly, in St Kilda and South Melbourne. These locations are planned in collaboration with DFFH and the sites are chosen considering access, safety, the environment and feedback from families. In late 2023 Council trialled the delivery of in-home coaching to mothers in the Royal Women's Hospital's Cornelia Program, which provides support to pregnant women who are experiencing homelessness or insecure housing[40]. Seven sessions have taken place so far and Council will evaluate the need for this outreach approach to continue in consultation with mothers in the program and DFFH.

In the six-month period from July to December 2023:

- 70.6% of supported playgroup clients attended group sessions and 66.7% of clients attending in home sessions had a country of birth other than Australia. 20 countries other than Australia were represented at group sessions and two for in home sessions.
- 30.3% of clients attending group sessions and 0% of clients attending in home sessions had a preferred language other than English. Six languages were preferred other than English at group sessions.

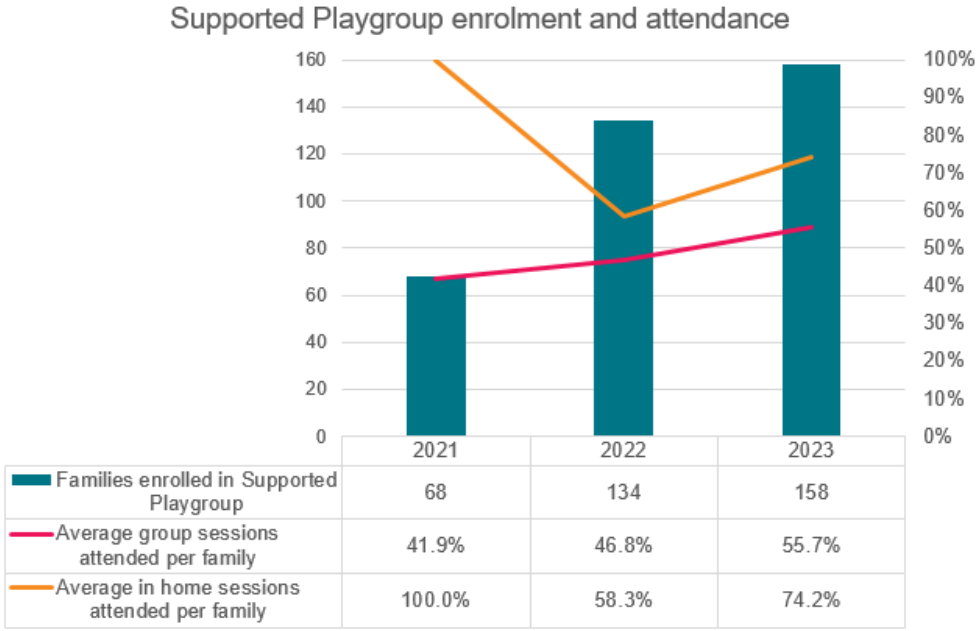
In the enrolment and attendance figures below:

- Data for 2021 terms 1 and 2 is not included due to a change to a new reporting system.

[39] Parent Child Mother Goose Australia. (2024). *Home*. https://www.parentchildmothergooseaustralia.org.au/
[40] The Royal Women's Hospital. (2024). *The Cornelia Program*. https://www.thewomens.org.au/health-professionals/maternity/the-cornelia-program

- Increased 2023 numbers may be partly due to a change to record very low attendance, for example those who only participated once in a term.
- 2022 average group sessions attended per family: no Term 2 attendance was recorded so the true figure is higher.

Figure 36 Supported Playgroup enrolment and attendance[41]



	2021	2022	2023
Families enrolled in Supported Playgroup	68	134	158
Average group sessions attended per family	41.9%	46.8%	55.7%
Average in home sessions attended per family	100.0%	58.3%	74.2%

Community Playgroups

RMIT University Centre for Urban Research's report *Relationships Matter: The Social and Economic Benefits of Community Playgroups*[42] published in 2016 notes that "40% of families surveyed in the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) participated in playgroups", highlighting the value parents and carers place on the peer support networks and relationships playgroups provide their family.

Along with the social benefits, research on playgroups has mostly focused on the developmental benefits they have for children, however new evidence provides insight into the impact they have on the informal and non-market economy.

Providing outcomes and connections commonly associated with Family Support Services and Early Childhood Education and Care sector, a "Cost benefit analysis of playgroups show that there

[41] Data source: Parent Support Program reports

[42] RMIT University Centre for Urban Research. (2016, May). *Relationships Matter: The Social and Economic Benefits of Community Playgroups*. https://cur.org.au/cms/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/playgroups-report-may-2016.pdf

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is a $3.60 return on investment for every $1.00 spent on Australian community playgroups. Over the next ten years, this suggests a $584 million net benefit to Australia"[43].

The *Relationships Matter* report discusses how economic returns of playgroups are like those of other community groups, including knowledge exchange, community fundraising and civic activities. Early formation of playgroups makes them unique in bridging informal and formal economies, as members develop skills needed to organise and lead playgroups through the range of challenges they commonly face, such as navigating group dynamics, venue, resource and financial management, communication, and negotiation with stakeholders. These skills go on to benefit other voluntary and paid work in the community.

The report highlighted several barriers community playgroups face, including securing appropriate venues, promotion, and leadership resources. Council's investment in community playgroups targets these barriers, recognising that whilst playgroups are self-organised and localised, they need support. A dedicated resource for committee members and playgroup leaders, networking, knowledge sharing and three purpose built facilities are our key strategies for ensuring playgroups are sustainable, meet the needs of families and that children have access to affordable, safe, accessible, quality services.

Council is aware of five community playgroups formally operating in Port Phillip. Council provides an up-to-date list of playgroups on its website and information for those wanting to start a new group, to help increase access and participation by families.

Toy Libraries

Four toy libraries sites operate in Port Philip, run by volunteers with paid coordinators.

- Elwood Toy Library
- Emerald Hill Toy Library, which operates from two locations:
  - Middle Park Toy Library
  - South Melbourne Toy Library
- Port Melbourne Toy Library

Council works in partnership with toy libraries through annual funding agreements, with a range of supports to contribute to the success of our shared vision for children in Port Phillip.

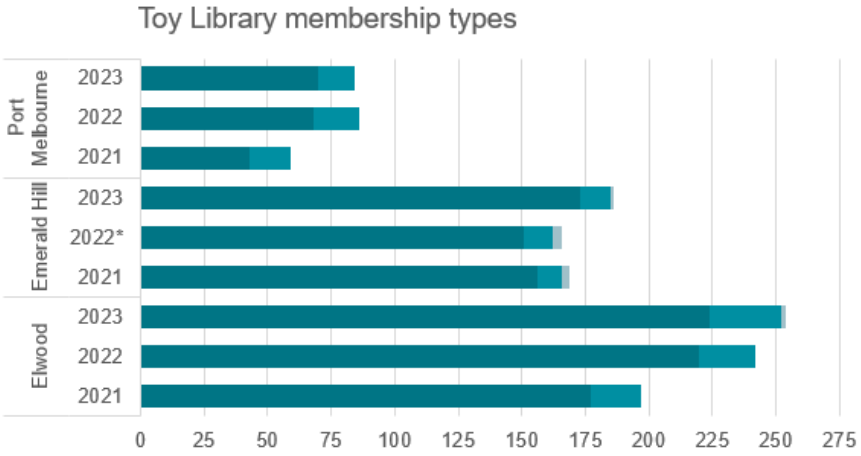
COVID-19 restrictions impacted toy library membership in 2020 and 2021 however all services have worked hard to improve their service offering to the community and welcome the return to pre-covid membership rates. New and expanded initiatives have contributed to the ever-increasing savings for families, hours of play facilitated, and kilograms of plastic saved from landfill. Activities include:

- new and refreshed social media marketing
- purchase of new party packs

[43] Playgroup Australia. (2022). *Playgroup Statement*. https://www.playgroupaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/221018_Playgroup_Statement_final.pdf

- festivals and events
- grant applications
- sustainable toy displays
- maternal and child library visits
- collaboration with partners such as Elwood Playgroup have contributed to the ever-increasing savings for families, hours of play facilitated and kilograms of plastic saved from landfill.

Figure 37 Toy Library membership types[44]



	Elwood			Emerald Hill			Port Melbourne		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022*	2023	2021	2022	2023
Regular	177	220	224	156	151	173	43	68	70
Subsidised (Health Care Card holders)	20	22	28	10	11	12	16	18	14
Outreach (no fee, costs covered by Toy Library)	0	0	2	3	4	1	0	0	0

* In 2023 Emerald Hill Toy Library made an operational change to allow members to borrow from both Middle Park Toy Library and South Melbourne Toy Library. The 2022 figures in the chart are combined totals of those two libraries' individual results which were reported to Council separately that year.

Middle Years and Youth Services (MYYS)

Supporting young people in Port Phillip

Council aims to offer a variety of free services, collaborating with other organisations, to support young people overcome challenges and build a brighter future, including a range of Middle Years and Youth Services (MYYS) programs to support young people aged 8 to 25.

[44] Data sources: Toy Library Funding Agreement acquittal reports, purchase orders

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The MYYS support program is a free program that provides short to medium-term support to young people through case management and individual youth work services, including outreach, information and referrals, counselling, and advocacy. Young people are assisted to navigate challenges in areas like mental health, housing, education, and relationships.

A realignment of roles in 2023 allowed the Middle Years and Youth team to strengthen their relationship and referral pathways with local schools, Victoria Police, and Adventure Playgrounds. The program works collaboratively with the Victoria Police's local Proactive Policing Unit (PPU), meeting regularly to identify vulnerable youth in the community and refer young people to appropriate support services. This collaboration has been particularly successful in reaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) youth who may be struggling in school or lack local support networks. Thanks to this partnership, Council receives an average of three referrals per month from the PPU team, helping prevent vulnerable youth from falling through the cracks.

The MYYS program saw a significant increase in referrals in late 2023, receiving 15 referrals in November and December, compared to a previous bimonthly average of four. This increase demonstrates the program's growing impact on identifying and supporting at-risk youth.

Adventure Playgrounds (Middle Years Services)

The Middle Years and Youth Services team host programs at Council's two Adventure Playgrounds: Skinners Playground in South Melbourne and St Kilda Adventure Playground. These programs cater both to children enrolled in the service and also out in the community to address their diverse needs through a range of engaging activities.

The Adventure Playgrounds prioritise three key objectives for enrolled children:

- **Enhancing Outdoor Play:** We create a stimulating environment that encourages active and imaginative outdoor play experiences.
- **Building Support Systems:** We connect participants with essential services and resources within the community.
- **Fostering Participation:** We offer engaging activities that promote a sense of belonging and social interaction.

The Adventure Playground programs offer a comprehensive approach to supporting young people. By providing a combination of academic support, nutritional services, safe transportation, and most importantly, ample opportunities for outdoor play, these programs contribute significantly to the well-being and development of young people.

Programs offered across the playgrounds include:

- Supervised homework club sessions to assist enrolled children.
- Evening meals to ensure participants have access to healthy food options.
- A breakfast program with a school drop-off service to facilitate a smooth morning routine.
- Dedicated programs cater to the interests and needs of both boys and girls.
- The Walking Bus program promotes safe and supervised group travel to the playgrounds.

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Equipment assessments in 2022 identified the need for immediate rectification works for Skinners Adventure Playground and $300,000 was allocated to progress these in 2022/2023. Installation of new play equipment at the Moray Street end have been completed, following consultation with children who frequent the playground, staff members, and the wider community.

Planning for the St Kilda Adventure Playground upgrade commenced in 2023, with an engagement program that places children at the heart of decision making to occur in 2024.

Student Leadership Program

The Student Leadership Program culminated in the Youth in Chambers event on 26 October 2023 at St Kilda Town Hall. Students from six local schools presented community-building initiatives they developed through the program. Mayor Cunsolo and Councillors Baxter, Nyaguy, and Martin provided feedback and insights on implementing these projects.

The student-led initiatives focused on improving healthy relationships within the City of Port Phillip. Ideas included inter-generational student buddy systems, educational seminars on neurodiversity, and anti-bullying programs. Councillors offered valuable guidance on project implementation and community outreach. Students also gained a deeper understanding of local government and their role in promoting positive change.

Youth Access Grants

The Youth Access Grants Program offers funding for accessible and inclusive recreational activities for youth aged 12 to 18 in Port Phillip. Developed through community consultation, the program addresses the lack of affordable recreational options and fosters social connections and self-esteem among participants.

In 2024 the program awarded $90,000 to six organisations with differing initiatives, including The Teen Art Workshop Project at Linden New Art Gallery. This project provides a safe space for marginalised youth to explore their creativity through engagement with contemporary artists. The weekly sessions equip participants with new skills and foster a sense of community, promoting well-being and identity development.

FReeZA Event

The FReeZA committee partnered with the Middle Years and Youth Services team to host a youth film screening at the St Kilda Film Festival. The event showcased to an audience of over 200 people ten short films by young Australian filmmakers, followed by a Q&A session with the filmmakers. In preparation, the FReeZA committee attended a public speaking workshop to develop their MC skills for the event.

The FReeZA committee and Youth Services team participated in the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) by hosting an LGBTQIA+ awareness event

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at South Melbourne Market. The event included live music and a pronoun badge making station, fostering inclusion and education.

The FReeZA Committee and Youth Services team, in collaboration with Linden New Art, successfully launched the 2023 Youth Art Exhibition with a well-received opening night celebration. This exhibition showcases the artistic talents of young people residing, working, studying, or involved in activities within the City of Port Phillip. Recognition is extended to the dedicated young volunteers who contributed to creating a safe and supportive environment for this celebration of local youth artistry.

Connecting with families through Port Phillip Libraries

Port Phillip Libraries offer a number of programs, clubs and activities to engage children in books and reading. Family Services and Maternal and Child Health staff regularly attend Storytime at the four Port Phillip Libraries to engage families and provide referral pathways into programs. The libraries team attend Maternal and Child Health new parent group sessions, promoting the library service and the importance of reading to infants.

In 2024 Council will commence Multicultural Storytime programs in Mandarin, Hindi, Arabic and Oromo, thanks to a four-year State Government grant as part of the *More Support for Mums, Dads and Babies* initiative.

Targeted at families with children aged up to five years of age, Multicultural Storytime will use storytelling to improve health literacy, provide culturally appropriate information about health services to parents/families, and support children's connection to their language and culture.

Outcomes for Children

This section highlights the work of Council-run and Council-funded services towards the three policy outcomes of the City of Port Phillip Every Child, Our Future Children's Services Policy.

Outcome 1: All children living in Port Phillip are supported to develop their full potential

Table 5 Outcome 1: All children living in Port Phillip are supported to develop their full potential

Objective	Key Actions
Policy Objective 2: Council will understand current and future needs of families in the city and influence the provision of early years	• Conducted MCH family survey to understand family's needs and inform service developments. • Families attending New Parent Groups are sent an evaluation to ensure the group is meeting the needs

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Objective	Key Actions
services to meet those needs	of the community. • Families attending the Solihull parenting program were surveyed to understand current challenges experienced by families and future needs. • Partnership with the MAV and Department of Education to implement early years reforms and local area participation in kindergarten initiatives. • KISP update expected in mid-2024 to assist future planning for the provision of three- and four-year old kindergarten. • Family Services trained as Thrive Guides, providing clients with an evidence-based model of intervention based on positive psychology and empowering families to lead more fulfilling lives. • IFS program implemented new trauma-informed best-interest practice principles, guided by DFFH. • In consultation with community managed services, planning for the Children's Services Integrated Registration Enrolment (CSIRE) scheme (due for implementation mid-2024) has focussed on improved ease of use and access to childcare and kindergarten services. • Installation of new play equipment at Skinners APG following consultation with children who frequent the playground, staff members, and the wider community. • Lead Family Worker Program evaluated to inform program improvements. • The Parenting Information Program annual survey sought feedback on information sessions previously provided and ideas for new sessions in 2024.
Policy Objective 6: Early years services will be supported by safe, accessible, contemporary, fit-for-purpose, sustainable facilities and environments	• Building Blocks agreement signed with the State Government, a commitment of $18m from Council and $12.6 million from the State to future-proof 6 existing early childhood centres and provide 364 licenced places (over 57 greater than the current total provision at these facilities). • Appointment of Senior Advisor Children's Services

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Objective	Key Actions
	Infrastructure to work closely with the 6 early childhood centres to plan and address service operational matters in the lead up and throughout the future building and construction. • Commenced the design of the 6 redevelopment sites in consultation with key stakeholders. • Adventure Playground vision and design principles used to guide Skinners rectification works and the St Kilda upgrade. • Skinners Adventure Playground rectification works completed and planning for the St Kilda upgrade commenced with the appointment of a design team. • Stage 1 renovation of Bubup Nairm Children's Centre Level 1 Playgroup playground began.

Outcome 2: Parents, carers and families are supported to increase their capacity and capability

Table 6 Outcome 2: Parents, carers and families are supported to increase their capacity and capability

Objective	Key Actions
Policy Objective 3: Early years' services will be financially sustainable and consistently aligned with relevant policies and legislation at the local, state and federal level	• Commenced consultation on the 2024 – 2027 Funding Agreements for community managed early years education and care services located in Council facilities. • Continued development of the Children's Services Integrated Registration and Enrolment System in consultation with community managed early education and care services located in Council facilities. • Implementation of a new parent portal for families currently attending Council managed services in place. • Re-rating of North St Kilda Children's Service and Coventry Children's Centre achieving Exceeding National Standard. • Implemented a performance improvement plan for

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Objective	Key Actions
	Council run facilities. • In partnership with the Department of Education and the Early Learning Association Australia, supported Albert Park Kindergarten to review and update their governance arrangements. • Joint advocacy with MAV and participation in sector relevant forums as a united voice for the investment in early years. • Participation in MAV Workforce Planning Support Program project to support recruitment and retention workforce strategies. • Two-year funding Deeds offered to Toy Libraries to support increased financially stability. • Additional one-off grant for Toy Libraries for service growth and new initiatives. • Advocacy to the Minister of Early Childhood and Pre-Prep for Toy Libraries, seeking further information on grant funding in recognition of their sustainability challenges. • Continued advocacy for the six redevelopment sites, seeking Federal Government support. • Contribution to Council's submission to the National Housing and Homelessness Plan, sharing case studies to ensure the experiences of families escaping domestic violence were well considered.
Policy Objective 4: Council will encourage collaboration across all early years services	• Consultation on the conceptual designs for the redevelopment of the 6 early education and care facilities is underway, including risk analysis and mitigation planning. • Networking for Community Playgroups and Toy Libraries entered its second year, providing increased opportunity for collaboration and an end of year celebration acknowledging the great achievements of coordinators and volunteers. • Partnership with the Department of Education Early Childhood Improvement Branch to deliver and participate in targeted professional development

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Objective	Key Actions
	opportunities across Children's Services. • Partnerships with local schools to support school transition for kindergarten children at Council managed children's services. • Partnerships with community managed children's services support the development and professional learning of Provisional Kindergarten Teachers (in Council managed centres) to obtain their Victorian Institute of Teaching registration.

Outcome 3: The effects of disadvantage on children's development are minimised

Table 7 Outcome 3: The effects of disadvantage on children's development are minimised

Objective	Key Actions
Policy Objective 1: Council will work with partners to ensure that every child, regardless of their abilities or background, will have access to affordable, safe, accessible, quality Early Years' services to support development to their full potential	• The design for the redevelopment of 6 early education and care facilities includes DDA compliance and works to increase the number of available, free kindergarten places for three- and four-year old kindergarten. • Successful transition of the Early Help Program to Better Health Network. • Collaboration with Star Health, the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, and Tweddle Child and Family Health Service to support the second year of the First 1,000 Days in Public Housing (Better Start) project. • Family Services Membership of Melbourne Magistrate Court (MMC) Stakeholder Reference Group Meeting, providing information on specialist family court operations and updates. • Family Services provided specialist liaison and advocate support on families and children and ensure best practice in Family Support provision to multiple stakeholders, internal and external. • Solihull program delivered twice in 2023, a collaborative project between MCH and Family Services, delivering positive parenting education.

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Objective	Key Actions
	• Collaboration with Royal Women's Hospital and Launch Housing to provide MCH and EMCH Service to vulnerable families in the Cornelia Program. • Families supported to access subsidies, Early Start Kindergarten, referral pathways and through debt management to ensure children were retained in Council managed children's services. • Funding agreement with Better Health Network to provide an integrated, holistic service response to pregnant women experiencing vulnerability, marginalisation, and isolation. • Funding agreement with Better Health Network to assist in the delivery of the DFFH funded Supported Playgroup, providing expertise of Paediatric Occupational Therapists and Speech Pathologists. • Funding agreement with St Kilda Gatehouse St Kilda Gatehouse for improved health and wellbeing outcomes of residents experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage through the provision of the Parent Support Program. • Successful grant application to the Department of Health to deliver four new Multicultural Storytimes across three years from 2024/2025. • Partnership with Poets Grove Primary School and Poets Grove Children's Centre to support the Fathering Project Collaborative Pilot to build and support a community of connected fathers and care givers as their children transition through the early years of education. • Outreach Supported Playgroup offered to the Cornelia Program. • Continuing to fund external organizations through the Youth Grants to provide support and opportunities for young people to thrive and develop their capacities. • Development of the CSIRE in consultation with the Early Years Education and Care Network, including a shared vision for children and families in Port Phillip.
Policy Objective 5: Families	• Expansion of the Middle Years breakfast program,

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Objective	Key Actions
will have access to the services and information they need, at the times they need it, to make choices appropriate for their needs	developed through increased engagement with the Park Towers community. • Family Services outreach to community settings, including Park Towers activities and Storytime. • MCH delivered monthly Food Information Sessions at South Melbourne Market to provide education on healthy eating options and to enable families to connect in an informal setting. • Sleep and settle sessions delivered to infants aged 0 to 6 months, 6 to 12 months and 12 months to 2 years, including outreach up to 6 hours offered to families who are experiencing vulnerability. • Therapeutic group Bubs in Mind delivered to new parents who are experiencing challenges adjusting to new parenthood. • Increased Enhanced MCH service delivery to families in transitional housing (additional 445 hours) in 2022/2023. • Family Youth and Children's services pages on Council's website refreshed to ensure families have the most up to date information on our services and community partners, noting families' preferences for a range of services to meet their needs. • Council managed Children's Services supported child and family referrals to the Orange Door, Child Protection, Star Health, St Kilda Community Group, Free Kindergarten Association (FKA), Launch Housing, Salvation Army, Family Life and VACCA. • Middle Years and Youth Services attended the St Kilda Festival engaging with over 130 young people (aged 12-25) seeking input of what matters to young people as well as issues currently faced by local young people.
Policy Objective 7: Children will have access to natural environments that allow them to learn about and experience play in nature. This includes natural environments within	• Consultation on the conceptual designs for the redevelopment of the 6 early childhood centres is underway with the advocacy for and inclusion of natural materials in the design wherever possible. • Pop Up Playgroup at the Adventure Playgrounds

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Objective	Key Actions
early years' services	during the school holidays, providing information and referral pathways for families. • Supported playgroup run outdoors, exploring William Street Reserve, Hewison Reserve, St Kilda Botanical Gardens, and Eastern Reserve South Playground and Skinners Adventure Playground. • Eco-Centre Nature Play excursion offered to Family Services families, with 8 families participating. • An imaginary Bike Repair Shop installed at Elwood Playgroup (opening early 2024), to replace old equipment and inspire sustainable play. • Council managed children's services provided learning environments, natural materials, and program experiences (e.g., gardening and cooking) that embed the principles of sustainability and nature play.

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9.2 FAIR ACCESS IN SPORT POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: **TARNYA MCKENZIE, INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER, COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND INCLUSION**

PREPARED BY: **DANA PRITCHARD, MANAGER OPEN SPACE RECREATION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

SUSAN CANNELL, COORDINATOR SPORT AND RECREATION

ALEXIS CARYDIS, SPORTS AND RECREATION GENDER EQUITY OFFICER

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To provide the final draft Fair Access in Sport Policy and Action Plan for endorsement, including outcomes from community engagement.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 In 2022, the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, in partnership with Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth, recognised the inequities experienced by women and girls in sport and the need to make change, releasing a Fair Access Roadmap (the 'Roadmap') for all Local Government Authorities to follow.

2.2 In order to be eligible for future State Government funding, Council is required to have endorsed a Fair Access in Sport Policy and Action Plan by June 2024.

2.3 Fair access is supporting gender equitable outcomes in sport and recreation participation and facility use. It means that women and girls can participate in all types of sport, have equitable access to the best sportsgrounds, courts and facilities, are consulted with timings and are afforded the same opportunities as men and boys.

2.4 There are 45 sports clubs utilising Council owned or managed facilities in the City of Port Phillip. In May 2023, Council surveyed these clubs, asking about the current participation of women and girls in sports. More than half of clubs responded. We heard that:

- There were less women and girls participating in formal sports than men and boys.
- There were low numbers of women in committee and coaching roles.
- There were no senior women's cricket teams.
- Most clubs considered 'fairness' of facility allocations for women and girls sport (e.g., sportsground, court, pitch, training nets) when planning their schedules.

2.5 The draft Fair Access in Sport Policy (**Attachment 1**) has been developed in line with the State Government template, feedback from the community, our Council priorities and our sporting community demographic.

2.6 The draft Fair Access in Sport Action Plan (**Attachment 2**) sits alongside the Policy, outlining the actions Council and sports clubs will need to undertake to meet the Policy objectives.

2.7 In March 2024, the draft Fair Access in Sport Policy and Fair Access in Sport Action Plan went out to community for engagement, including community sports clubs. The engagement report (**Attachment 3**) identifies community support for the Policy and Action Plan and has been made available on Council's Have Your Say page.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Endorses the Fair Access in Sport Policy and Fair Access in Sport Action Plan.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

Background

4.1 While many sports clubs are making improvements to provide opportunities for women and girls to participate, lead and coach in a sports club, there are changes that still need to happen to ensure equitable usage and access to sport.

4.2 In August 2022, the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, in partnership with Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth, recognised the inequities experienced by women and girls in sport and the need to make change. The Victorian Government announced the Fair Access in Sport Policy Roadmap (the 'Roadmap') to support gender equitable access and utilisation of community sports infrastructure in Victoria.

4.3 The Roadmap seeks Local Government Authorities to create a policy that will fast track equitable outcomes and support clubs in removing barriers for women and girls to provide fair access to participate in sport and recreation.

4.4 This Roadmap will require significant policy and program work over the next three years and requires local governments to take a lead in order to meet the following Fair Access targets that have been established:

- From 1 July 2024, The Victorian Government will introduce funding criteria for community sport infrastructure and will require Councils to have a gender equitable access and use policy adopted and enforced.
- From 1 October 2024, all Local Governments in Victoria will have gender equitable access and use policies (or equivalent) in place for community sports infrastructure.
- By 1 July 2027, reports of more women and girls having positive experiences in participating in community sport and equitable access to community sports infrastructure.

4.5 Further information on the Roadmap can be found on the Change Our Game website - Change Our Game: Fair Access Roadmap

Fair Access: What Does It Mean?

4.6 Fair Access means that women and girls are supported and presented with the same opportunities as men and boys in sport.

4.7 Delivery of Fair Access will result in an increase in participation, hours of use, accessibility for more teams to access the facility/ground/pitch/court. It will contribute to a change in club culture, allowing all club members to be engaged and supported, eliminating key barriers of participation, increase perceptions of safety and advancing gender equality more broadly within our municipality.

Current State

4.8 The City of Port Phillip is one of the most active municipalities in the State, with residents participating in a wide range of organised and informal sport and recreation activities.

4.9 In May 2023, data provided by Port Phillip Clubs showed that most clubs have low percentages of women and girls actively participating in sport, on committees or as coaches.

Policy

4.10 The draft Policy has been prepared in recognition of fair access for women and girls in sport, consistent with the focus of the Roadmap and the policy template, the information obtained from Port Phillip sports clubs and the 2015 Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation.

4.11 The Policy and Action Plan is based around these Principles to:

- Provide community sports infrastructure and environments that are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive.
- Ensure women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator.
- Adopt and implement gender equitable access and use practices for all community sport infrastructure.
- Ensure women and girls are equitably represented in leadership and governance roles within community sports clubs.

Action Plan

4.12 The Action Plan will drive the Policy implementation, as it details clear actions and proposed timelines to cement fair access in sport in Port Phillip.

4.13 The draft Action Plan was established with consideration of relevant Council strategies, plans and policies, in consultation with the State Government and selected members of State Sporting Associations and sports clubs to inform the realistic and measurable nature of the actions.

4.14 The Policy and Action Plan acknowledge that fair access is a shared responsibility between Council (management level) and sports clubs (operational level). The draft Action Plan includes actions for both Council and Sporting Clubs, with reference to the role and support of State Sporting Associations.

4.15 The following elements have been considered when preparing the draft Action Plan:

- Some sports clubs are more advanced in how they demonstrate, activate and celebrate gender inclusivity within their clubs.
- That clubs have limited resources, including a high number of volunteers that manage their operations.
- Some State Sporting Associations have their own gender equity requirements and action plans for clubs to align with, with varying levels of support provided to date amongst different sports.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

Stage 1 Consultation: Data Collection

(Completed May 2023)

5.1 Data to inform current state was collected via a survey provided to all sports clubs utilising Council owned facilities The data requested was in relation to the gender breakdown for club participants, committee members, volunteers and coaches.

5.2 The key stakeholders consulted to inform the draft Policy and Action Plan included: Port Phillip sporting clubs, internal Council departments, State Sporting Associations, Office for Women in Sport and Recreation and other Councils.

Stage 2 Consultation: Engagement on the draft Policy and Action Plan

(Completed March 2024)

5.3 Port Phillip sports clubs, the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation and other community stakeholders were asked for feedback on the current draft Policy and Action Plan to ensure the actions are realistic and supported and seek commitment from sports clubs to deliver.

5.4 Community engagement was undertaken online on Council's Have Your Say page, via completion of a survey, direct engagement with interested sports clubs and the opportunity to attend two online forums.

5.5 Information was collected via Have Your say from 17 survey respondents. Out of these respondents, five represented sports clubs (three that use Council owned or managed facilities).

5.6 Key findings from community engagement were in relation to:

- Funding allocations
- Affordability and access to facilities
- Suitability and availability of facilities to support women and girls' participation
- Pressure on clubs to support the Policy
- Equitable distribution of funding
- The gap in club development
- Engagement with people from marginalised communities
- Trans and gender diverse inclusion in sport

5.7 The Policy received some positive support for Council's position to support fair access in sport with comments such as: "We fully support this policy and action plan and are really excited to be a part of it for the future"; and "I think it is awesome we are considering females in all our sports and encouraging younger women to join in". Council was also asked to support clubs by providing more club development opportunities and links to community organisations (Action 1.9).

5.8 The community feedback included comments about the participation of trans women in sports clubs. As competition regulations and game day rules are determined by State Sporting Associations and leagues, this is considered out of scope of the Policy. However, Council's LGBTIQA+ Action Plan 2023-26 has been referenced in the Policy to highlight Council's view that sports clubs should be inclusive off all genders: "As per our LGBTIQA+ Action Plan 2023-26, Council supports sport clubs to be inclusive of all genders and those who are gender diverse".

5.9 Action Plan feedback shows that the community wants Council to support clubs that do not have adequate facilities for women and girl's participation in sport, and to ensure funds are being equitably allocated.

5.10 Feedback also requested that clubs based in Albert Park should be considered in the Action Plan. As these clubs are managed by Parks Victoria, action 1.5 identifies Council's role in supporting these clubs.

5.11 The full engagement report can be found in **Attachment 3.**

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Due to requirements from the State Government, if a Fair Access in Sport Policy was not developed and endorsed by Council before July 2024:

- Council would not be meeting its requirements under the Gender Equality Act 2020 to work towards achieving gender equality when delivering policies that impact the public
- Access to sport and recreation for women and girls within the Port Phillip community would continue to be inequitable, contributing to unbalanced gender norms and poorer health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Council would not be eligible to receive State Government funding for sport and recreation capital works and open space projects or delivery of health and wellbeing programs. The impacts of this would mean that Council, alongside sports clubs, would solely be reliable to budget for all upcoming major capital projects.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 The adoption of this Policy will mean that Council remains eligible for State Government funding for sport and recreation infrastructure and programs.

7.2 Once adopted the Policy and Plan will help inform and prioritise future sport related projects within the municipality, and associated budgets would be considered through the formal Council Budget process.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 The Policy and Action Plan will be implemented in consideration of minimising environmental impacts and making informed decisions to maximise use of community facilities.

8.2 The Policy aims to result in an increase of women and girls participating in sport which could result in an increase in grounds usage (and therefore maintenance), lights usage, and an increase in transport as participation increases. It could also positively impact the environment as more women and girls are active resulting in other active modes of transport such as walking, running and cycling.

8.3 In developing capital infrastructure upgrades for community sport, sustainable practices and design will be considered in line with Council's Act and Adapt Policy considering water, greening and other sustainable practices

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 The Policy and Plan will demonstrate Council's support of gender equality and advocacy for fair access in sport.

9.2 The Policy recognises the important role Council plays to deliver sport and recreation facilities for community benefit and engaging women and girls to participate in sport or active opportunities.

9.3 The community impact associated with adopting the Policy is that it will:

- Increase opportunities for women and girls to participate in sport.
- Improve the access to, and use of, community sports infrastructure for women and girls.

- Ensure all sports clubs are considering the role they play in supporting gender equality.
- Support the broader community by ensuring value is placed on women and girls and therefore playing a role in shifting negative attitudes towards women.
- Bring awareness to the inequities that exist for women and girls in sport which will bring about change and challenge social norms which can play a role in preventing gendered violence.
- Support the goal that by 2027, more women and girls in the City of Port Phillip report equitable access to community infrastructure and improved experiences participating in sport as a result of implementing the Fair Access in Sport Policy.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 The Fair Access in Sport Policy and Action Plan aligns with Strategic Direction 1 – Inclusive Port Phillip.

10.2 Specifically, these documents support the following action in the Council Plan - *We will work with sport and recreation providers to improve access and gender equality within their programs.*

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

From July 2024 onwards:

11.1.1 Implementation of the Fair Access in Sport Action Plan commences, with various timelines for each action – short term (2025), medium term (2026), long term (2027) and ongoing. Council will also work with clubs to determine specific goals for each sports club and to continue to track and monitor progress of how these actions are being addressed and achieved.

11.1.2 Council will be eligible to receive Victorian Government community sport infrastructure funding.

11.1.3 Council will continue to monitor compliance and submit Progress Reports as part of Gender Equality Act (2020) requirements

11.1.4 The Policy will be reviewed in 5 years, with ongoing monitoring and data to monitor its progress each year.

11.2 COMMUNICATION.

11.2.1 Once the Fair Access in Sport Policy and Action Plan is endorsed, community sports clubs will be informed of the outcome.

11.2.2 Council's Have Your Say page will be updated and respondents during the consultation period will receive updates

11.2.3 A Women in Sport breakfast event will be hosted mid-June 2024, this will provide an opportunity to further celebrate and share the launch of the Fair Access in Sport Policy and Action Plan.

12. OFFICER MATERIAL OR GENERAL INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. **DRAFT Fair Access in Sport Policy**
2. **DRAFT Fair Access in Sport Action Plan**
3. **DRAFT Fair Access in Sport Policy and Action Plan Engagement Report**

Fair Access in Sport Policy

Policy outcome	This policy supports Council's drive towards equitable access to sport and recreation among our growing community. This Policy aims to support positive outcomes for women and girls by building the capacity to identify and address the systemic causes of gender inequality within community sport and participation.
Responsible area	Open Space, Recreation and Community Resilience
Version	Version 1.0
Date approved/adopted	
Planned review date	This policy will be reviewed every five years, or in accordance with significant changes to legislation or aspects included in this policy that could affect the health and safety of the community and those impacted in this policy.

City of Port Phillip Fair Access in Sport Policy

1. Purpose

The City of Port Phillip (Council) values the role sport and recreation plays in shaping the culture and identity of the municipality.

The Fair Access in Sport Policy (the 'Policy') has been designed to deliver gender equitable outcomes and support sports clubs in removing barriers for women and girls to participate in sport and recreation. This Policy addresses the systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications, and delivery of services and community sports infrastructure.

1.1 Background

The City of Port Phillip is one of the most active municipalities in the state, with residents participating in a wide range of organised sport and informal recreation activities which can positively impact physical and mental health. However, when some of our community does not benefit from sport and recreation infrastructure and usage in an equitable manner, it can contribute to unequal outcomes and a wider culture of gender inequality in our community.

In August 2022, the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, in partnership with Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth, recognised the inequities experienced by women and girls in sport and the need for change. The Victorian Government announced the Fair Access in Sport Policy Roadmap to guide and support gender equitable access and utilisation of community sports infrastructure in Victoria.

The Roadmap has been used as a guide to inform this Policy and the resultant Action Plan; establishing the priority areas outlined in the Policy Statement relating to sports infrastructure and environment, participation, usage and allocations, leadership and governance.

DRAFT

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- facilities, grounds and courts managed by Council
- sports clubs who use facilities, grounds and courts managed by Council
- sports clubs or facilities seeking Council to auspice funding opportunities.

This policy does not apply to:

- facilities, grounds and courts managed by others within the municipality
- commercial recreation providers and activities
- casual bookings of sports grounds
- school use of public space and sports grounds
- use of informal recreation infrastructure e.g. fitness equipment, modified basketball courts.

3. Policy

This policy will ensure that all women and girls, of all identities, in the City of Port Phillip can fully participate in and enjoy the benefits of community sport, with fair opportunity and access to local facilities.

The Policy establishes the expectation that gender equality is considered and prioritised in all current and future planning, policy, service delivery and practice as they relate to community sports infrastructure. The Policy is aligned with the Gender Equality Act 2020, and the wider Victorian Government gender equality strategy.

This Policy is supported by the implementation of a place-based, integrated action plan that progresses gender equality in community sport.

3.1 Policy Statement:

Together with Port Phillip sports clubs, Council will:

1. Provide community sports **infrastructure and environments** that are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive.
2. Ensure women and girls can **fully participate** in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator.
3. Adopt and implement **gender equitable access and use** practices for all community sport infrastructure.
4. Ensure sports clubs in our community engage women and girls in **leadership** and **governance** roles.

3.2 Policy Outcomes:

The policy will**:**

- promote a gender-aware and gender-responsive sports culture and community
- contribute to creating gender inclusive sports clubs to support gender equity
- promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality to improve the status of all women and girls in sport and active recreation
- guide the development or review of projects, relevant strategies or policies to consider intersectionality
- support and educate sports clubs to consider the diversity amongst women and girls in their club
- guide Council process, development and ongoing management of sports facilities and clubs
- guide the development of capital works projects and maintenance of sports facilities
- inform communication and education strategies with sports clubs and users of sports infrastructure within the municipality
- be used to advocate for investment into better outcomes for sporting infrastructure and clubs
- guide our allocation of sportsgrounds and facilities.

4. Supplementary policy documents

- City of Port Phillip Fair Access in Sport Action Plan
- City of Port Phillip Council Plan 2021-2031
- City of Port Phillip Public Space Strategy 2022-2032
- City of Port Phillip Sport and Recreation Strategy 2015 – 2024

5. Related legislation and documents

- Local Government Act 2020
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act
- 2015 Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation (independent inquiry released by Victorian Government)

City of Port Phillip LGBTIQA+ Action Plan 2023-26

As per our LGBTIQA+ Action Plan 2023-26, Council supports sports clubs to be inclusive of all genders and those who are gender diverse. However, competition regulations and game day rules are governed by state sporting associations and relevant leagues. Although Council does not play a direct role in determining how clubs undertake their activities, we recognise that we play an important role in supporting club and community education to further support inclusive sports opportunities for people of all genders.

Child Safe Policy

The City of Port Phillip is a Child Safe organisation and has a legal and moral responsibility to understand and activate their role in preventing, detecting, responding and reporting any Child Safety concerns. Council has zero tolerance for child abuse and is actively committed to embedding a culture of safety, wellbeing and inclusion for children and young people.

Consideration has been given to the Child Safe Standards in the development of this policy.

Gender Equality Act 2020

Under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, Council has a positive duty to advance gender equality in our organisation and our community.

Through the development of this policy, Council have assessed any impacts for people of different genders (women/girls, men/boys and people who are gender diverse). While gender impact assessment starts with gender, it also has considered impacts of other social factors such as age, Aboriginality, race, religion, (dis)ability, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Community Sports Infrastructure	Publicly owned local, rural, regional, or state level sport and recreation infrastructure operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of facilitating community sport activities, including sports grounds, surfaces, facilities and pavilions.
Fair Access in Sport Policy Roadmap (Roadmap)	The Fair Access in Sport Policy Roadmap has been developed in partnership with local governments, the state sport and active recreation sector and other key stakeholders to improve gender equitable access and use of publicly owned community sports infrastructure across Victoria. The Roadmap links the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020 to support local governments to work together to progress gender equitable access and use of community sports infrastructure across Victoria.
Gender	Gender is part of how you understand who you are and how you interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being a man or woman. Some people understand their gender as a combination of these, or neither. A person's gender and their expression of their gender can be shown in different ways, such as through behaviour or physical appearance.
Gender equality	The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men and gender diverse people will become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on their gender.
Gender equity	The provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities based on gender. Gender equity may involve the use of temporary special measures to compensate for historical or systemic bias or discrimination. Equity ensures that women and men and girls and boys have an equal chance, not only at the starting point, but also when reaching the finishing line.
Gender Impact Assessment (GIA)	Under the Gender Equality Act 2020, Council has requirement to complete a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) on policies that have a significant impact on the community. The assessment must evaluate the effects that a policy, program or service may have on people of different genders.
Intersectionality	The ways in which different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation (such as gender, age, socioeconomic status, sexuality, nationality, etc). It is a way of acknowledging that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.
Women	Women explicitly includes not only cis women, but also trans women and female/feminine identifying people

DRAFT

City of Port Phillip Fair Access in Sport Policy

Document history

Version	Date of approval/adoption	Changes made	ECM record
Draft 1.0			

DRAFT

Fair Access in Sport Action Plan

The Fair Access in Sport Action Plan (‘*Action Plan*’) will drive the implementation of the Fair Access in Sport Policy (‘*Policy*’); to deliver gender equitable outcomes and support sports clubs in removing barriers for women and girls to participate in sport and recreation. The Action Plan specifically outlines how the Policy will be implemented by Council in partnership with sports clubs and other key stakeholders.

The Action Plan details a series of actions that are the responsibility of Council and complementary actions that are the responsibility of sports clubs. The actions align with the Policy Statements that are:

- Provide community sports **infrastructure and environments** that are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive.
- Ensure women and girls can **fully participate** in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator.
- Adopt and implement **gender equitable access and use** practices for all community sport infrastructure.
- Ensure sports clubs in our community engage women and girls in **leadership** an**d governance** roles.

The Action Plan acknowledges that different sports clubs and sporting codes are at differing levels of implementing fair access; and this Action Plan aims to guide clubs to enact change and play a role in increasing engagement of women and girls in community sports clubs. The measures of success will be determined on a club-by-club basis and developed alongside Council. The actions in this plan will guide the short- and long-term goals of each club.

1. COUNCIL ACTIONS	SHORT (2024-25)	MEDIUM (2025-26)	LONG (BY 2027)	ONGOING
Provide community sports infrastructure and environments that are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive				
1.1 Develop and implement a Sports Club Fair Access Audit tool	✓			
1.2 Deliver and facilitate access to development and education opportunities related to fair access in sport	✓			
1.3 Develop all current and future sports infrastructure to ensure it is fit for purpose and supports equitable access				✓
1.4 Apply gender sensitive design principles and recommendations from Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) in all sports infrastructure developments				✓
1.5 Advocate to State and Federal Government and other organisations for funding to support gender inclusive infrastructure upgrades and programs, including Council's opportunity to auspice those sports clubs that utilise facilities within Albert Park Reserve.				✓
Ensure women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator				
1.6 Develop a partnership with relevant State Sporting Associations (SSAs) to ensure consistent delivery of messaging and projects in relation to programs, participation and club development	✓			
1.7 Provide subsidies or funding to support women and girls' participation and inclusion programs	✓			
1.8 Support sports clubs to be more inclusive and welcoming for people of all genders and across all facets of club development and operations	✓			
1.9 Link sports clubs with relevant internal departments and other community organisations to increase access and opportunities for participation and engagement in sport for women and girls in marginalised groups (such as CALD communities, the LGBTIQA+ community and people with disability) or groups who are at risk of declining participation such as adolescent girls	✓			

Adopt and implement gender equitable access and use practices for all community sport infrastructure				
1.10 Prioritise allocations for sports clubs that have women and girls teams or participation programs and that support gender equitable usage of their facilities		✓		
1.11 Create opportunities for women to meet likeminded sporting/active women to network, collaborate or exercise together in the municipality			✓	
1.12 Collect and manage data relative to women and girl's participation in sport within the Port Phillip community				✓
1.13 Review current and develop future policies, plans and strategies relevant to sports club usage to ensure equitable access and use practices				✓
Ensure women and girls are equitably represented in leadership and governance roles within community sports clubs				
1.14 Celebrate and elevate women and girls in sport within the City of Port Phillip				✓
1.15 Provide support for sports clubs to develop women in leadership or governance roles		✓		

2. SPORTS CLUB ACTIONS	SHORT (2024-25)	MEDIUM (2025-26)	LONG (BY 2027)	ONGOING
Provide community sports infrastructure and environments that are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive				
2.1 Complete a club audit using Council's Sports Club Fair Access Audit tool	✓			
2.2 Implement safety protocols so everyone can access the venue safely	✓			
Ensure women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator				
2.3 Improve access and opportunities for participation and engagement in sport for women and girls in marginalised groups (such as CALD communities, the LGBTIQA+ community and people with disability) or groups who are at risk of declining participation such as adolescent girls		✓		
2.4 Create opportunities for women and girls to meet likeminded women to network, collaborate or participate in sport together		✓		
Adopt and implement gender equitable access and use practices for all community sport infrastructure				
2.5 Ensure women and girls have equitable usage of sports club facilities, including sports grounds, courts or pavilions	✓			
2.6 Develop a club specific 'Gender Equity Action Plan' (or equivalent) in line with Council's Fair Access Policy		✓		
2.7 Provide data pertaining to women and girls as requested by City of Port Phillip				✓
Ensure women and girls are equitably represented in leadership and governance roles within community sports clubs				
2.8 Have representation of both women and men in any public facing club activities, such as club presentation nights or website images	✓			
2.9 Increase of women in coaching, leadership or governance roles		✓		

Specific to this action plan, the following definitions apply:

The **Sports Club Fair Access Audit** is a benchmarking tool for clubs that encapsulates considerations relating to infrastructure, usage and allocations, participation, governance. Clubs can use the audit to assess their operations and programs against various criteria; to determine a plan to progress gender equity and remove barriers within their club; and ensure welcoming environments for women and girls. The Club Audit is an ongoing assessment tool to monitor the progress of embedded actions and check the club is continuing to determine ways to meet the actions and goals.

Equity or equitable accounts for the use of temporary special measures to compensate for historical or systemic bias or discrimination. Equity ensures that women and men and girls and boys have an equal chance, not only at the starting point, but also when reaching the finishing line and considers the preferences and respective needs of each gender.

Facilities throughout this document refers to all space and amenities that the club has access to as part of their allocation, license agreement or lease. Facilities include sportsgrounds/courts/pitches, training nets, sportsground lighting, pavilions/clubrooms and associated infrastructure.

Gender sensitive design recognises that people experience public spaces differently based on their gender, sex and sexuality and designing solutions that consider place-based approaches and whether the interventions or solutions are likely to increase feelings of safety and whether there is evidence to support their impact on crime reduction.

Fair Access in Sport Policy and Action Plan

Engagement Report

April 2024



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Engagement Report

Introduction

Project background

There are 45 sports clubs utilising Council owned or managed facilities in the City of Port Phillip, in a variety of sports ranging from sailing to football.

In early 2024, we created a draft Fair Access in Sport Policy and Action Plan to support women and girls' participation in sport. This Plan was created in response to the Fair Access in Sport Policy 'Roadmap' developed by the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, in partnership with Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth.

What's happened so far?

In May 2023, we sent a survey to sports clubs in our City, asking about the current participation of women and girls in sports. More than half of clubs responded. We heard that:

- There were less women and girls participating in formal sports than men and boys.
- There were low numbers of women in committee and coaching roles.
- There were no senior women's cricket teams.
- Most clubs considered 'fairness' of facility allocations for women and girls sport (e.g., sportsground, court, pitch, training nets) when planning their schedules.

In early 2024, we used the information we gathered from the survey to guide the development of the draft Fair Access in Sport Policy and draft Fair Access in Sport Action Plan. These documents had a focus on:

- Providing community sports infrastructure and environments that are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive
- Ensuring women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer or spectator

- Adopting and implementing gender equitable access and use practices for all community sport infrastructure
- Ensuring sports clubs in our community engage women and girls in leadership and governance roles

We will also use the survey results to track future changes that happen because of the Policy and Action Plan

What we set out to achieve

The purpose of the engagement project was:

1. To inform sports clubs and community members about the draft Fair Access in Sport Policy.
2. To inform sports clubs and community members about the draft Fair Access in Sport Action Plan, including actions that Council are responsible for and actions that community/clubs are responsible for.
3. To seek feedback from sports clubs and community members about the draft Fair Access in Sport Policy and draft Fair Access in Sport Action Plan.
4. To build connections between Council, clubs and community members with regard to supporting women and girls in sport.

About this report

We have developed this report to inform sports clubs and community members in Port Phillip about our community engagement process to date for the draft Fair Access in Sport Policy and draft Fair Access in Sport Action Plan. This includes:

- What engagement and communications activities we undertook
- Who we heard from
- What we heard
- Next steps for this project

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Engagement Report

Before reading this report

The following should be considered in reading this report:

- The information in this report is based on qualitative research and does not necessarily reflect the views of a statistically representative sample of the community and clubs in Port Phillip.
- We strive to include diverse voices in our engagement activities. We acknowledge however that some people are likely to have experienced barriers to participation in the activities that are outlined in this report.
- The information and views presented in this report are a summary of the opinions, perceptions and feedback heard from across all the engagement activities. The feedback has not been independently validated. As such, some information maybe factually incorrect, unfeasible, or outside of the scope of this project.
- This report summarises key feedback from participants and does not preclude the project team from considering community feedback in its original format.
- The report summarises the feedback from engagement activities. While every effort is made to include the full breadth of feedback provided, not all comments, views or advice is shown in the findings of this report. Where appropriate, a mix of quotes, themes and metrics are used to convey community feedback.
- We acknowledge that, while efforts are taken to manage duplication, there is potential for double counting where participants have attended multiple events, and/or completed online activities via the Have Your Say website.

What we did

Engagement activities

Between Friday 9 February and Sunday 24 March 2024 we undertook an online survey with clubs and community members through our 'Have Your Say' web portal.

We focused primarily on encouraging participation from sports clubs in Port Phillip, while also providing the opportunity for interested community members to participate. Clubs and community members could request a hard copy of the survey to be posted to them.

Communication activities

We undertook a range of communications activities to inform clubs and community members about the project and survey. This included:

- Three emails to 45 sports clubs in Port Phillip on 12 February and 20 March
- Two email alerts on 12 February and 5 March 2024 to five existing 'followers' of the pre-existing 'Gender Equity in Sport' engagement webpage
- An email to our existing inclusion, diversity, youth, and school networks for distribution on 14 February
- An email to Better Health Network and Women's Health in the South East (WHISE) on 14 February 2024
- 28 printed posters put up at club facilities around Port Phillip on 15–20 February with a link to the online survey
- Attendance at a community 'Sport in Port' event on 15 February 2024 (spoke with approx. 7 people/clubs about the project)
- Articles in our online 'Have Your Say' newsletters on 16 February (3380 recipients) and 19 March 2024 (3417 recipients)

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- Two online information sessions for clubs and community members on Thursday 22 February and 13 March 2024, from 6-7.30pm. (Note that both information sessions were cancelled due to a lack of registrations, however conversations were held with individuals who had showed interest in attending)



Image above: Participants at the community 'Port Sport for Girls' event on 15 February 2024.

Who we heard from

Between 9 February and 24 March 2024, we heard from 17 clubs and community members through our online survey.

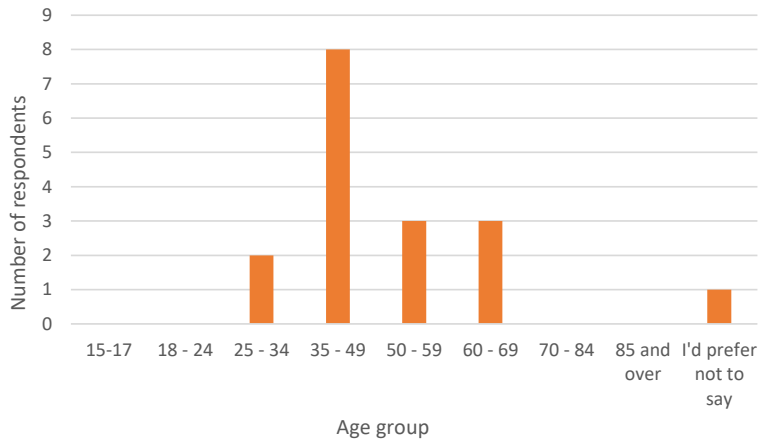
Although we recognise that this is a small number of respondents, many efforts were made to encourage clubs and community to participate (outlined on pages 6 and 7 of this report).

Demographics

People who responded to our online survey were required to answer questions relating to their age, residential suburb, gender identity and some other demographic identifiers, as well as whether they had provided feedback on a Council project in the past 12 months. Below is a summary of these responses.

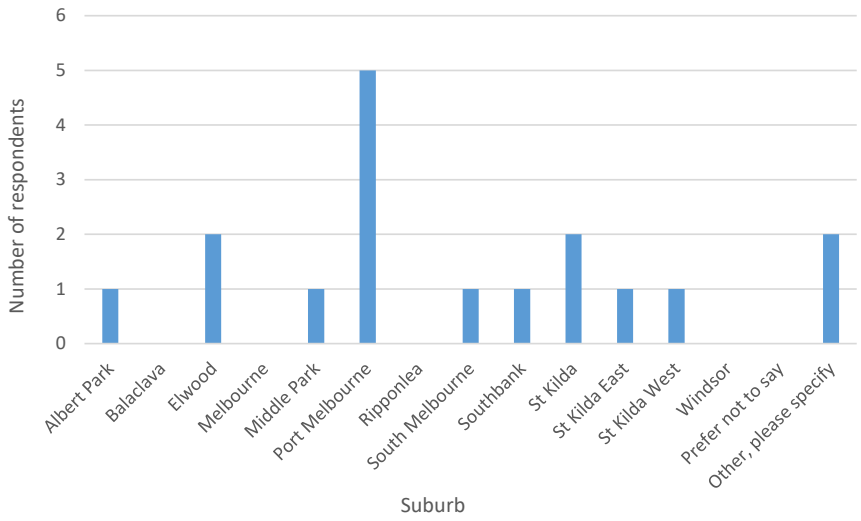
Age group

16 of the 17 survey respondents said they were aged between 25 and 69, with almost half of all respondents aged 35-49. Nobody under the age of 25 or over the age of 70 responded to the survey. One respondent said they would prefer not to disclose their age group.



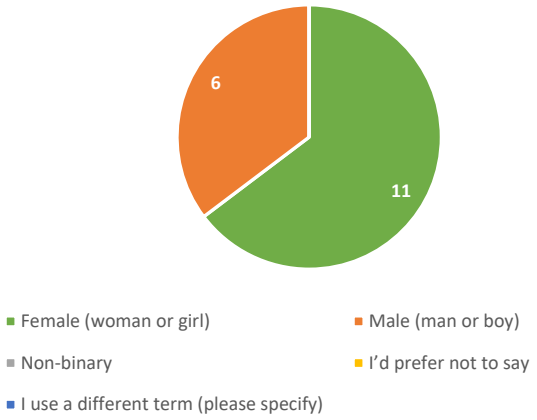
Residential suburb

15 of the 17 survey respondents said they lived in the City of Port Phillip, with the largest number of these people saying they lived in Port Melbourne. Other suburbs of residence for Port Phillip respondents included Albert Park, Elwood, Middle Park, South Melbourne, South Bank, St Kilda, St Kilda East, and St Kilda West. The suburbs of residence identified by those living outside of Port Phillip were Mill Park and McKinnon.



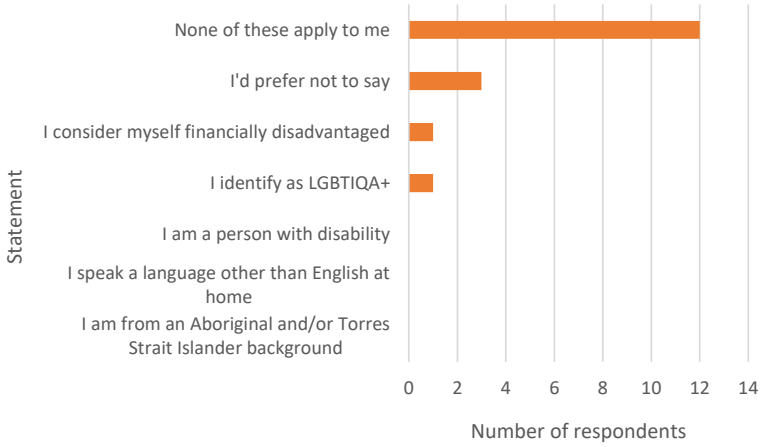
Gender identity

11 of the 17 survey respondents identified as female (woman or girl) and six as male (man or boy). No respondents identified as non-binary or used other terms to describe their gender identity.



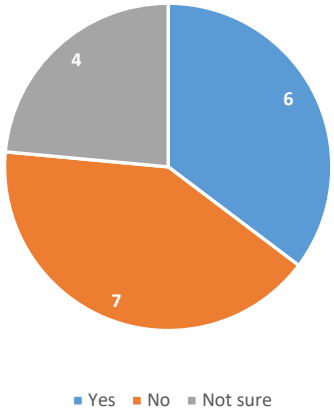
Other demographic identifiers

A range of other demographic identifiers were asked, with one survey respondent identifying as LGBTIQA+ and one survey respondent considering themselves to be financially disadvantaged. No-one identified as being from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, a person with disability or speaking a language other than English at home. 12 of the 17 respondents said that none of the statements apply to them, and three said they would prefer not to say.



Previous feedback

Seven of the 17 survey respondents said they had not provided feedback on a Council project in the past 12 months. Six said they had, and seven said they were not sure.



Targeted groups

Sports clubs

There are 45 sports clubs currently using Council owned or managed facilities in the City of Port Phillip, which we specifically targeted in our engagement. Parks Victoria who manage sports clubs at Albert Park Reserve were also invited to respond.

In the online survey, respondents were offered the opportunity to say whether they represented a sports club in Port Phillip. (Note this was not a mandatory question.)

Out of the six survey respondents who answered this question, football, sailing, gaelic football, rugby and netball were represented.

What we heard

We asked community members a series of questions via the online survey, including:

- Do you have any feedback on the draft Fair Access in Sport **Policy**?
- Do you have any feedback on the draft Fair Access in Sport **Action Plan**?
- What **support** could we (Council) provide to sports clubs to assist with these actions?

Answers to these questions are summarised in this section under themes of 'Feedback about the draft policy, 'Feedback about the draft action plan' and 'Feedback about Council support'. An additional section has been included for 'Feedback that is outside of scope'.

Some community members' comments have been included to illustrate the feedback we received. Please note that the comments provided are only some of those received and are not intended to represent all feedback. The number of comments is included for each theme/topic, however please note that some of these comments may have come from the same respondents.

Feedback about the draft policy

Topic	Summary of feedback
General support	Three of the comments received showed support for the draft policy. *"We fully support this policy and action plan and are really excited to be a part of it for the future."* *"I think it is awesome we are considering females in all our sports and encouraging younger women to join in."*
Funding allocations	Two comments related to concern about how we will ensure and support gender equity in funding and funding allocation. *"This policy seems like it will drive funding towards the same clubs / facilities"*

Please consider the environment before printing.

	"I am concerned that the policy does not consider gender funding equity. Does it work to remove entrenched funding allocations?"

Feedback about the draft Action Plan

Topic	Summary of feedback
Affordability	Three comments related to making spaces available to make it accessible to everyone. *"Ensure affordable/free options for low-income families so that these spaces are not just accessible to financially privileged communities."*
Inadequate facilities	One comment identified that some clubs do not have adequate facilities to be able to support women and girls' participation. *"Some fields require pavilions be built which are welcoming, safe, and inclusive as there are none in place."*
Pressure on clubs	One comment suggested that the actions put increased pressure on clubs. *"It requires the clubs to take … to do something that may be of little or no value to the club"*
Distribution of funding	One comment asked Council to include information about distribution of sports-related funding for different genders. *"The action plan should include measurements that indicate the distribution of funding between genders."*

Feedback about Council support

Topic	Summary of comments
Albert Park	Three comments related to the inclusion of clubs that utilise Albert Park within the policy and action plan.

	"Include Albert Park in your plan to provide fair access to facilities as there is a high number of sports clubs that operate within Albert Park."
Club development	Three comments related to the need for club development activities, as well as opportunities for clubs to connect through shared learning opportunities. *"There are currently no club development activities being run by Council, no support for governance or activities to support committees"* *"[we want] advice and guidance on engagement"* *"Links to other clubs, we don't have to all reinvent the wheel if others are doing it well"*
Equitable funding allocation	Three comments related to ensuring that Council's funding distribution was fair and equitable. *"[the responder] would like to know that the council rates are being equally shared by boys and girls in our community, and that we don't have an entrenched and discriminatory funding model"* *"[Council should] not discriminate against sporting clubs who have lost female members as a direct result of the lack of council action"*
Support to engage potentially marginalised community members	Two comments related to supporting clubs to engage potentially marginalised community members. *"we'd love to reach marginalised communities, like recently arrived migrants but how do we find them, and what's the best way to engage?* *"Links to other council departments or groups that work closely with marginalised groups"*
Infrastructure	One comment suggested Council provide funding to construct new pavilions.

All of the feedback that has been provided as part of the scope of the Policy and Action Plan has been considered and any changes that have been made will be presented to Council.

Please consider the environment before printing.

Feedback that is outside of scope

Some of the feedback we received was outside of the scope of this project, meaning that at this time it could not inform the the final Fair Access in Sport Policy or final Fair Access in Sport Action Plan. This feedback is summarised below, as well as a brief explanation as to why it cannot be considered as part of this project.

Participation of transgender community

Throughout engagement, there were comments relating to the participation of transgender women in women and girls' sport, mostly addressing a lack of clarity in terms of whether transgender women can participate in womens'/girls' sports.

"The rights of women and girls are confusing in the draft. Can trans-gender females compete in women's /girl's sport by the definitions?"

"In making sport inclusive for women and girls, please don't forget to include transgender women and girls as well as non-binary/gender diverse people, who often face even greater barriers to access."

In response to these comments, and as per our LGBTIQA+ Action Plan 2023-26, we support clubs to be inclusive of all genders and those who are gender diverse. However, competition regulations and game day rules are governed by state sporting associations and/or leagues and are therefore out of our scope. Although Council does not play a direct role in determining how clubs undertake their activities, we recognise that we play an important role in supporting club and community education to support inclusive sports opportunities.

Previous work of Council

We received two comments related to disappointment in Council's history in supporting gender equity in sport.

"I played soccer .....for 3 years and during this time the council did nothing but discourage the participation of women in sport"

Although it is considered important in recognising the history of the issue, this feedback does not inform changes to the draft policy.

Scope of project

One person suggested the scope was too large and that Council needed to focus on clubs that have already identified issues.

"Reduce the scope of your initiative to sports or clubs that have an issue and work with them to solve the issue".

This feedback was deemed outside of scope as the action plan will assist in identifying the level of support required for each sports club

Umpire allocation

One comment related to the skill level of umpires that are allocated to women's games.

"It needs to include fair access to umpires. Many girls and women's AFL and Soccer matches get the inexperience umpires and in some cased no umpires at all."

We recognize that although umpire allocation is somewhat outside of scope of this project, we can play a role in supporting club education which supports women and girls in roles such as umpiring and respectful behaviours.

Please consider the environment before printing.

Next steps

This report will be available for the community to read in April 2024, through Council's 'Have Your Say' web portal.

We will use the feedback outlined in this report to inform changes to the draft Policy & Action Plan.

The final Policy and Action Plan will go to Council Meeting for adoption on 5 June 2024, along with an explanation of how feedback was utilised to inform the final documents.

Community feedback that was identified as being outside of the scope of this project will be addressed in one or more of the following ways:

- addressed separately with clubs
- passed along to the relevant departments of Council
- kept for future reference.

Contact us

Do you have questions about this project or report? Contact the Recreation Team at the City of Port Phillip.

Phone: 03 9209 6777

Email: recreation@portphillip.vic.gov.au

Translating & Interpreting Service: 131 450

National Relay Service: 133 677 and ask for (03) 9209 6777

10. LIVEABLE PORT PHILLIP

Nil

11. SUSTAINABLE PORT PHILLIP

11.1 Draft Urban Forest Strategy - for Engagement 150
11.2 Community Electric Vehicle(EV) Program 326

11.1 DRAFT URBAN FOREST STRATEGY - FOR ENGAGEMENT

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: **TARNYA MCKENZIE, INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER, COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND INCLUSION**

PREPARED BY: **JENNIFER WITHERIDGE, URBAN FOREST PLANNER**
DANA PRITCHARD, MANAGER OPEN SPACE RECREATION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To present the draft Urban Forest Strategy to Council for endorsement to go out for community engagement.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 We are developing a new Urban Forest Strategy, which will replace the *Greening Port Phillip: An Urban Forest* Approach Strategy 2010. **Attachment 1: Draft Urban Forest Strategy (UFS)**

2.2 The new UFS will build on the achievements of the existing strategy and incorporate more advanced urban greening practices. It will set a vision to 2040, a direction to work towards, and a set of shared principles, to guide the decisions and actions we take to achieve the vision.

2.3 The new UFS will be delivered through a set of five-year action plans, to achieve the longer-term goals. A monitoring and review process and new action setting is structured into each five-year period.

2.4 The objectives, measures, and action plan have been developed through benchmarking, research and community feedback.

2.5 The strategy includes the following objectives:

Increased canopy cover on public and private land for a liveable, sustainable and vibrant city

Cooler and greener city which is more climate ready (or resilient) to face more extreme weather and changes in rainfall.

Our community is engaged, and trees and plants are valued and we build partnerships to green our urban environment across all land types.

A well-managed forest, including healthy trees and tree quality, pest and disease management and succession planning for iconic species and locations

A biodiverse urban forest with diverse species, healthy ecosystems, and habitat

2.6 Targets are set for canopy cover on streets and in parks and reserves, tree health and diversity, community initiatives, interventions for permeability including in heat vulnerability hotspots and for biodiversity. Other targets including canopy on private land and overall canopy cover will be set following certainty with the ESD Planning Scheme Amendment is achieved.

2.7 The actions in this draft strategy are developed to target areas of urban forest growth, management and maintenance that are essential to achieve our 2040 vision and objectives.

2.8 For year one the action plan will be delivered within the current budget envelopes, including capital projects, maintenance and operational. Further funding will be considered in year two through the Council Plan and Budget development process.

2.9 In year one the focus will be on enhancing current planting and establishing programs for future years. Including targeting infill programs and improving greening outcomes in capital programs.

2.10 It is expected that will we plant 1,500 trees and 50,000 biodiverse vegetation annually as part of the delivery of this strategy. This includes greening in capital projects.

2.11 Significant community engagement has been undertaken in the development of the strategy to this point, with feedback being largely very positive.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Releases the draft Urban Forest Strategy for community consultation.

3.2 Authorises the CEO, or their delegate, to make amendments to the draft Urban Forest Strategy to reflect any changes through this resolution and to make minor editorial adjustments to prepare the document for consultation.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

Background

4.1 The City of Port Phillip was one of the first Councils to develop its existing *Greening Port Phillip: An Urban Forest* Approach Strategy 2010 (GPP).

4.2 Since that time, urban forestry and urban greening have been recognised globally as a means to manage Urban Heat Island (UHI), water quality, improve health outcomes and as an important contributor for biodiversity, ecosystems and habitat.

4.3 We are now developing a new Urban Forest Strategy (UFS).

4.4 The new UFS will deliver an integrated, long-term framework to guide the planning, provision, protection, integration, and management of the urban forest across Port Phillip. The new UFS will have a timeframe out to 2040 with regular review and evaluation periods.

4.5 The UFS is being developed in three stages:

- Stage 1: Current State *(complete)*
- Stage 2: Strategic Directions *(complete)*
- Stage 3: Policy Development (in progress).

4.6 On 1 November 2023 Council adopted the following Strategic Directions, which have formed the basis for the UFS development.

Our 2040 Vision

In the City of Port Phillip, urban greening is healthy and abundant, biodiversity is valued and supported, and nature connects community.

Our shared principles

Collectively with Council, community, and industry partners:

1. We retain first, respecting established character, and adapt by adding more **resilient** plant species where they are most needed to reduce heat and flood vulnerabilities.
2. We invest in thriving **integrated** urban greening in streetscapes, buildings, parks, and gardens.
3. We work **together** to value, protect, grow and care for healthy and sustainable greening in streets, parks, gardens and private land.
4. We prioritise **biodiversity**, supporting healthy ecosystems and creating habitat.
5. We value the urban forest as a long-term asset that is critical to the health and wellbeing of our community and to our City's character and function, through **quality** design, construction and maintenance.

4.7 A number of reports were commissioned to inform this work including benchmarking, vegetation, tree and biodiversity reports. They can all be found on the document library on the project's Have Your Say page - Urban Forest Strategy - Background Reports.

4.8 The Urban Forest Strategy 2040 Background and Benchmarking Report has been updated and will be released with the Draft Urban Forest Strategy for the community engagement. **Attachment 2: Urban Forest Strategy Background and Benchmarking Report – June 2024 Update.**

Delivery Plan

4.9 The strategy will be delivered with long-term outcomes and short-term action plans. The short-term action plans will be delivered in five-year intervals, to recognise that the sooner green assets are planted the sooner they will grow and lead to outcomes.

4.10 At the five year point a new action plan will be developed to continue to progress towards the long-term targets. This will mean we can build on what we have achieved and include any new industry best practice in the next action plan.

4.11 Guided by our principles, the measures and actions in the strategy are developed to target areas of urban forest growth, and management and maintenance that are essential to achieve our 2040 vision and objectives.

4.12 This Strategy builds on existing work and ongoing activities across Council divisions crucial to current success that need to continue (e.g., annual planting, depaving program, community greening activities).

4.13 There are also crucial elements, such as sustainability, asset and public space management, which are directed by other strategic documents.

Measures, Baselines, Targets and Actions

4.14 Each of our objectives are partnered with measures, baselines, targets and actions.

4.15 The following were considered when developing Strategy measures and targets:

- Our tree canopy baseline data is from 2022, and heat island baseline data is from 2018, and is contingent on DEECA review periods.
- Initial canopy growth is slow as new trees take time to establish and grow. This will mean that in five years when we measure our targets there may not be much canopy increase. However, if we plant enough trees over the next five years the canopy is expected to reach the long-term targets on streets and public space.

- It is difficult to set a 2040 overall canopy target without a better understanding of what is happening on private land (which makes up 49% of our municipality) and non-council managed public space (such as Albert Park Lake). A big influence on private canopy cover will come through the ESD Planning Scheme amendment, a favourable outcome will give improved certainty to be able to model canopy cover of private land. Due to this the overall canopy target and private land canopy cover target has not been included at this point and will be developed as the information becomes available. As private land canopy cover varies between neighbourhoods, the overall/private land canopy cover targets will be developed as urban forest precinct plans are developed.
- Some long-term targets will also be set once the precinct plans are developed, and biodiversity mapping has occurred. These plans will identify all planting locations/opportunities and areas where trees/vegetation cannot be planted (middle of roads, sports grounds, over services, under powerlines, near street corners etc).
- There are also some gaps in data, without which a baseline cannot be set, this includes the overall health of our trees and survival rate of new trees. While we work towards the baseline data for these areas, we are able to set the target of where we need to be in 2029 (85% healthy and surviving).

4.16 The draft strategy includes actions underway and new actions. It also recognises that continuing to deliver our everyday operational programs of work are essential to building a greener city.

4.17 Actions are a combination of direct on-ground greening actions (e.g. expand habitat corridors), enabling (support for planting on private land), advocacy (aerial powerline bundling), policy, supportive (e.g. review & improve establishment process of new vegetation planting) and strategic (e.g. develop precinct plans which will improve outcome of an existing core function street tree planting).

Key Greening Challenges

While developing the strategy the following key issues were identified:

4.18 **Increasing canopy cover** can provide the highest benefits for the urban forest. We aim to achieve this through maximising our opportunities with additional street tree planting, filling empty tree plots, good succession planning and additional planting in parks and reserves, and improved green outcomes in our capital works programs.

4.19 **Planting for the future**: Recognising that the sooner green assets are planted, the sooner the benefits will be realised. The strategy includes actions for better identification of sites through - improvements to the infill planting program; delivery of the new Street Tree Planting Program; delivery of the new Foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan (FHVMP) and development of Precinct Greening Plans.

4.20 There are also some gaps in the **distribution of greening** across our City, and we aim to achieve improved tree canopy in each neighbourhood and where we need it most. This may not look the same everywhere.

4.21 **Social justice** is also a critical greening issue because higher levels of disadvantage are generally correlated with lower levels of greening and higher levels of urban heat. We can provide greater equity by focusing on high heat vulnerable areas and in key

pedestrian areas, to make walking, cycling, and catching public transport comfortable and to ensure our parks are cool and shady.

4.22 The importance of **advocacy, education and planning controls** as over 49% of land in the municipality is not managed by Council (private residences, Albert Park Lake, Transport corridors, and Schools), and regulations around infrastructure restricts planting. Many of these spaces have decreasing canopy cover.

4.23 Increasing planting and canopy on **private property** is a key challenge for the strategy. The potential amendments to the ESD Planning Scheme will assist. The amendment includes: **Green infrastructure** – which involves the implementation of green infrastructure design measures, including tree canopy retention, amelioration and plating of appropriate species, to positively contribute towards the ecological value, biodiversity, health, and public realm amenity of a development, as well as, societal and communal impacts.

Budget

4.24 The annual Greening Port Phillip capital program and Parks operational budgets will focus on funding the delivery of the strategy.

4.25 However, there are a number of programs that will significantly fund greening across the municipality. These include:

- Capital Works Projects – including Shrine to Sea; Gasworks Arts Park Upgrade; Lagoon Reserve; Pakington Street expansion; Johnson Street Park; Danks Street; Elwood Foreshore Masterplan and the conversion of the Australia Post Site.
- Minor Capital Works – dune fencing etc.
- Footpath Renewals – which will include funding for depaving and new nature strips
- Transport Projects – Inkerman Street and Bank Street
- Sustainability Projects will also deliver projects which will enhance greening outcomes and integrated water management.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 Extensive community engagement has been undertaken in the development of this Strategy and Action Plan. Including:

- Have Your Say Surveys
- Precinct Community Workshops
- Mayors Round Table
- Neighbourhood conversations
- On-Site Pop Ups
- The Bunurong Land Council

5.2 Engagement reports can be found on the Have Your Say Page - Urban Forest Strategy Engagement

5.3 The final round of community engagement is scheduled in June and will continue into July. Engagement activities will include opportunities to give feedback on the draft

strategy, and general information and education about our urban forest. Planned activities include:

- Information on the HYS page,
- A feedback form on the HYS page,
- In person booked sessions
- Social media campaign to advertise the engagement.
- Posters advertising the strategy engagement at key locations throughout the City
- Option for a community planting event (subject to timing and resources)

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No significant legal implications identified.

6.2 The UFS will include measurable outcomes and timeframes for Council to monitor the progress of the delivery of each action in the strategy.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 Most actions can be delivered within current budget envelopes including – Greening Port Phillip Capital Program, Parks, Maintenance, Minor Capital works and Urban Forest Planning Team.

7.2 The current actions are developed for a 5-year time frame with a review period and new action development.

7.3 As precinct plans and further targets are developed it is expected that further funding may be required.

7.4 In year four (4) program funding will be focused on the next round of mapping and data collection to test our progress and set a new action plan for years six (6) to 10.

7.5 There is an option to increase funding from year two/three to enhance planting in those years as the precinct plans start to be developed. This would increase canopy, vegetation and biodiversity sooner to enhance our current urban forest and therefore improving outcomes for our future urban forest.

7.6 Any requests for additional funding will be considered through future annual budget processes and will be linked to any future targets set.

7.7 The implementation of this strategy will increase tree numbers and areas of vegetation which will likely require increases in maintenance budgets over time.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 The UFS aims to:

- Increase canopy cover on streets to 30%
- Plant 1500 trees annually
- Plant 50,000 biodiverse vegetation per annum that support biodiversity
- De-pave 19,000sqm of non-permeable surfaces

8.2 Habitat loss and fragmentation is a main factor in the decline and disappearance of many species in Port Phillip and throughout Australia. Protecting and enhancing the

biodiversity throughout Port Phillip benefits local plants and wildlife and encourages our urban forest to become more balanced, resilient and vibrant. The UFS will ensure that Council can protect and enhance our urban forest in the face of these challenges.

8.3 In Port Phillip, our urban forest is made up of all the trees and plants on public and private land and this is vital to maintaining comfortable urban environments for humans and non-humans alike. The UFS will ensure that Port Phillip has an urban forest that provides shade and cooling benefits, helping to mitigate the Urban Heat Island effect; supports biodiversity and wildlife with a diverse range of vegetation that helps support local wildlife and maintain our local ecosystems; and cleans our air and waterways.

8.4 The shared principles will ensure that the UFS has positive environmental impacts for Port Phillip, by protecting established trees, strengthening our City's climate resilience, strengthening food security, encouraging a variety of plant species and reclaiming space for greening.

8.5 The new UFS will build upon the positive environmental impacts that Greening Port Phillip (GPP) has achieved, including an increase in tree canopy on public land, a decrease in loss of tree canopy on private land and the expansion of the concept of the 'urban forest' to include all vegetation on public and private land.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 The Urban Forest Strategy aims to create benefits across the community including:

- Reduction in Urban Heat Island Effect (cooling communities)
- Improving biodiversity and ecosystems
- Greening outcomes to mitigate against flooding
- Education programs to improve greening and outcomes for plants, birds, animals and insects
- Improve amenity, sense of place and opportunities for community connections
- Improved health and wellbeing outcomes
- Increased opportunities for community-led greening

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 Council Plan 2021-31

Sustainable Port Phillip - Port Phillip has a sustainable future, where our environmentally aware and active community benefits from living in a bayside city that is greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient.

We will provide - Urban forests to increase tree canopy, vegetation, greening and biodiversity and reduce urban heat, in line with Council's Greening Port Phillip and Act and Adapt Strategies prioritised within available budgets each year

10.2 Delivery of the UFS is a short-term action within the *Places for People Public Space Strategy 2022-32*.

10.3 The UFS aligns with the *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028 (A&A)*. Council have recently reviewed the *A&A and to* ensure that there are matching targets in each strategy, the UFS targets will be added to A&A post adoption.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

11.1.1 Make final changes post engagement and bring Urban Forest Strategy for formal adoption in August 2024.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

11.2.1 The results of the engagement will be posted on the project's Have your Say web page.

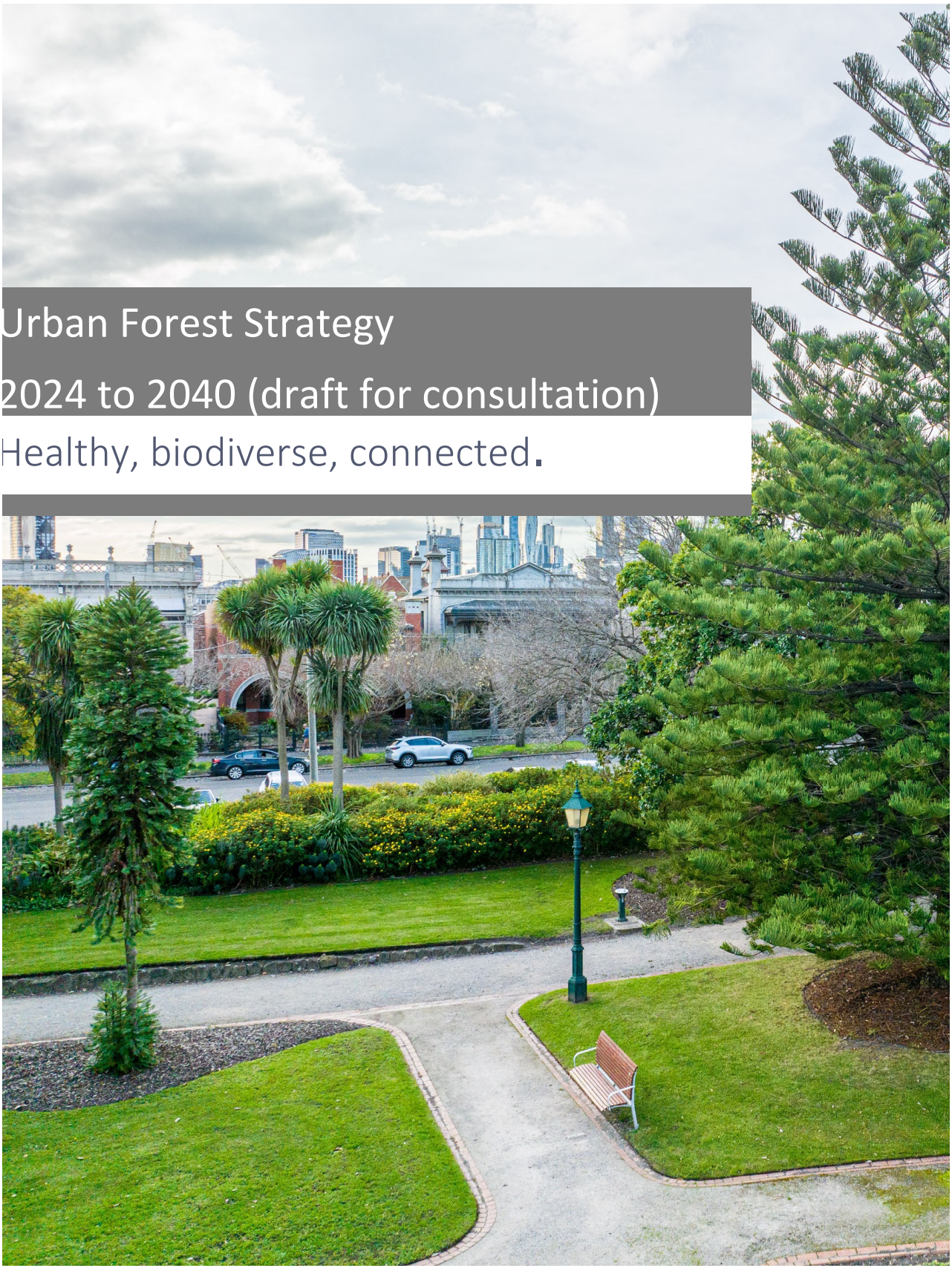
11.2.2 The draft budget will be brought to an open Council meeting for adoption in August 2024.

12. OFFICER MATERIAL OR GENERAL INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. **Draft Urban Forest Strategy**
2. **Urban Forest Strategy - Background and Benchmarking Report - June 2024 Update**



Urban Forest Strategy

2024 to 2040 (draft for consultation)

Healthy, biodiverse, connected.

Acknowledgement of Country

Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

DRAFT



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Executive Summary

Council's vision

In the City of Port Phillip, urban greening is healthy and abundant, biodiversity is valued and supported, and nature connects community.

Our Urban Forest contributes to Council's vision of a **Sustainable Port Phillip**. Our environmentally aware and active community benefits from living in a bayside city that is greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient.

A variety of green spaces contribute to the sustainability and livability of our City including heritage parks, Botanical Gardens, tree lined streets, biodiversity areas, community gardens, private gardens and foreshore hinterlands.

This Urban Forest Strategy will ensure we have an integrated, long-term framework, to guide the planning, provision, protection, integration, and management of the urban forest across Port Phillip so it can grow and thrive into the future.

The key challenges for the urban forest in our municipality are climate change, population growth and higher density living, constrained spaces, forest heath and biodiversity loss. We need to understand the challenges facing our forest and work to minimise their impacts.

The Strategy, developed with our community, is our long-term vision and includes short-term actions to recognise that the sooner green assets are planted the sooner they will grow and lead to outcomes.

This strategy includes essential priority actions which include increasing canopy, enhancing biodiversity, identifying ways to protect and build the urban forest, and to continue community involvement through actions on private and public property.

We want to protect the urban forest we have, help it thrive, and take practical action to expand our urban forest within the complexities of our urban environment.

What is the urban forest and why is it important

Collectively, all trees and plants on public and private land make up our urban forest. This includes trees, shrubs, and groundcovers in home gardens, on green roofs, walls and facades, on nature strips, medians and roundabouts, in parks and reserves, along the foreshore, and in shopping strips, car parks and industrial areas.

Cities with ample greening are more resilient, prosperous, and enjoyable places to live.

Cities with more trees and plants promote greater happiness, health, physical activity, and community connectedness among their residents. Urban forests assist in climate change mitigation, urban heat and flood risks are reduced, stormwater management costs are lowered, and air quality is improved. Soil becomes more productive, and locally sourced food is produced. House prices increase, energy and infrastructure costs are lowered, local businesses thrive, and jobs are created. Biodiversity is supported through the provision of habitat. Carbon is sequestered, greenhouse gas emissions are reduced.

What is the focus of this this strategy?

Collectively with Council, community and industry partners:

1. We retain trees first, respecting established character, and adapt by adding more **resilient** plant species where they are most needed to reduce heat and flood vulnerabilities.
2. We work **together** to value, protect, grow and care for healthy and sustainable greening everywhere.
3. We prioritise **biodiversity**, supporting healthy ecosystems and creating habitat.
4. We invest in thriving **integrated** urban greening in streetscapes, buildings, parks and gardens.
5. We value the urban forest as a long-term asset that is critical to the health and wellbeing of our community and to our City's character and function, through **quality** design, construction and maintenance.

How do we prioritise our efforts to achieve these outcomes?

Our Objectives:

Increased canopy cover on public and private land for a liveable, sustainable and vibrant city

Cooler and greener city which is more climate ready (or resilient) to face more extreme weather and changes in rainfall.

Our community is engaged, and trees and plants are valued and we build partnerships to green our urban environment across all land types.

A well-managed forest, including healthy trees and tree quality, pest and disease management and succession planning for iconic species and locations

A biodiverse urban forest with diverse species, healthy ecosystems, and habitat

What types of actions are proposed?

The objectives and subsequent actions in Section 9 of this strategy will drive the future growth, protection, and management of the urban forest in our City.

Guided by our principles, the actions in this strategy are developed to target areas of urban forest growth, management and maintenance that are essential to achieve our 2040 vision and objectives. The types of actions include:

- Continuously identifying new places to plant trees
- Leveraging existing council programs and works to deliver more greening and biodiversity
- Support for residents and community groups to green public and private spaces

- Resources to ensure tree species diversity and climate resilience
- Future proofing the urban forest with succession planning in neighbourhoods, streets, parks and for key species
- Planning and delivering greening in Fishermans Bend
- Developing planning tools and guides to enhance tree canopy and biodiversity on private land
- Expand biodiverse and habitat corridor planting with focus on locally indigenous selections
- Integrated water management, de-paving and increasing permeability
- Advocacy and partnerships
- Contribute to research projects, planting trials, citizen science projects and other new initiatives.
- Collecting urban forest, biodiversity and urban heat data for monitoring
- Continuing active auditing and monitoring of tree stock
- Keeping vegetation management guidelines updated

Timeframes

This strategy builds on existing work and ongoing activities across Council divisions crucial to current and future success and includes a range of new actions to be completed by 2030. The actions will be reviewed every 5 years to ensure that they continue to align with our vision.

DRAFT

1. Introduction

Since 2010, the City of Port Phillip has had an Urban Forest Strategy which has led the delivery of greening actions, investment, research and planning to integrate greening into Council plans and operations. Given that the Urban Forest Strategy is now 14 years old, this new draft Strategy has been developed to ensure that we are responding to the current context of key challenges and opportunities and implementing best practice.

Since that time, urban forestry and urban greening has blossomed and been recognised globally as a means to manage Urban Heat Island (UHI), water and water quality, improve health and wellbeing outcomes and as an important contributor for biodiversity, ecosystems and habitat. There has been an increased focus on biodiversity and bio-links, more understorey plantings, engineered solutions for passive watering, increased soil volume for trees, greening on buildings, community-led projects and nature strip gardening.

Collectively, all trees and plants on public and private land make up our urban forest.

The urban forest offers a multitude of benefits to people, economies, and nature in cities. In greener cities, happiness, health, physical activity, and community connectedness are improved. Water use, stormwater management costs and flood risks are reduced. Air quality is better, and neighbourhoods are cooler. Soil productivity, local food security, and biodiversity improve. Urban forests sequester carbon, reduce emissions, and mitigate climate change risks.

We work in an urban context, and Port Phillip has an established urban forest. This comes with its own challenges - growing population, higher density housing, powerlines, pollution, large vehicle movement, urban heat island, heat radiation, hard surfaces and shrinking backyards. All these things make it more difficult to grow an urban forest.



Protecting existing vegetation is just as critical as efforts to plant more. We have wonderful assets to build on, with established street canopy, passive watering, biodiverse corridors, nature strip and productive gardens, and significant community passion and involvement.

There are opportunies as we plant more trees and vegetation to make improvements to biodiverstity, to address the effects of climate change including urban heat, to limit flooding and to grow the canopy of our trees.

Informed by the Port Phillip community, this new draft Strategy has set a shared vision for what we want to achieve for the urban forest in our City by 2040, and the principles, objectives and actions that will guide the work and decision-making of the City of Port Phillip for next five years to 2030.

In recent years, our **community has consistently raised greening as a major priority** for the City. Strong collaboration between Council, community, State Government and other stakeholders will be essential for success and greening on private land will need to play a greater role in increasing the urban forest.

By delivering this plan together, we will work towards a healthy, biodiverse and connected urban forest. **There is still room to grow, and we will need to work together to green the City**.

We encourage you to read this Draft Urban Forest Strategy and share your views and insights with us. Your feedback will assist in the preparation of the final Urban Forest Strategy.

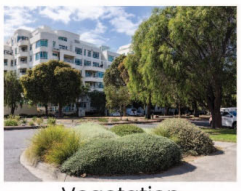
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2. What is the urban forest

Collectively, all trees and plants on public and private land make up our urban forest. This includes trees, shrubs, and groundcovers in home gardens, on green roofs, walls and facades, on nature strips, medians and roundabouts, in parks and reserves, and in shopping strips, car parks, and industrial areas.

Taken together, these green spaces provide an essential balance to the highly urbanised environment of the City of Port Phillip and contribute to the liveability of the city in the long-term for residents and visitors alike.


Trees


Vegetation


Biodiverse planting


Green infrastructure - roofs, walls, WSUD

Urban forest management enables a united approach to our green spaces by considering the role of public and private trees and vegetation in our urban city. It recognises that vegetation (especially trees) are critical infrastructure, providing a range of services in the same way as grey infrastructure, like buildings, roads, foot and bike paths, utilities, open spaces and activity centres.

The urban forest is the responsibility of the whole community. Council takes the lead in our municipality, while other stakeholders have an important role to play including residents, schools, community groups, developers, businesses, industry and State and Federal Governments. Working together we will get the best result for our urban forest's future.

We want to protect the greening we already have, help it thrive, and take practical action to expand our urban forest within the complexities of our urban environment.

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3. Why is the urban forest important?

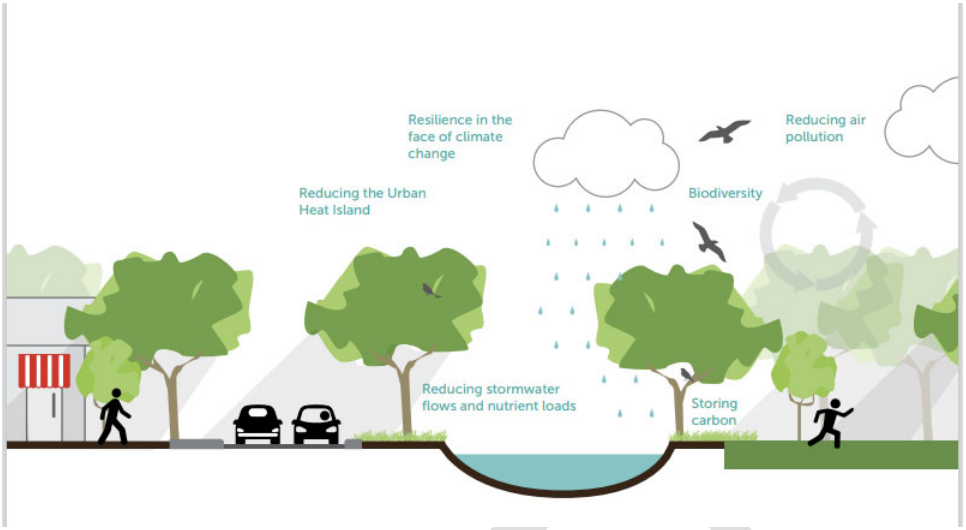
Our diverse range of green spaces form an urban forest that provides an essential balance to our highly urbanised environment and has a direct impact on the liveability of the city now and into the future. There is now a well-established body of evidence confirming that urban greening offers a multitude of benefits to people, economies, and nature in cities.

Green cities promote greater happiness, health, physical activity, and community connectedness. Water is used as a valuable resource, and stormwater management costs and flood risks are reduced. Air quality is improved, urban heat is reduced, and there are more comfortable microclimates. Soil becomes more productive, and locally sourced food is produced. House prices increase, energy, and infrastructure costs are lowered, local businesses thrive, and jobs are created. Biodiversity is supported through the provision of habitat. Carbon is sequestered, greenhouse gas emissions are reduced, and climate change risks are mitigated.

Cities with ample greening are more resilient, prosperous, and enjoyable places to live.







Images: Benefit of urban forests

Importantly, urban forests have been recognised as the most cost-effective way to mitigate against localised risks from climate change.

The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report found that urban greening has been effective in reducing flood risks and urban heat. Urban areas are hotter than surrounding rural areas because hard surfaces that are exposed to the sun absorb and radiate more heat. This 'urban heat island effect' exacerbates heat-related costs and mortality.

In Melbourne, the State Government has developed a heat vulnerability index (HVI) that indicates how vulnerable specific populations are to extreme heat events. The index, developed in 2018, comprises of heat exposure, sensitivity to heat due to land cover, population density and age and adaptive capacity (for example, socioeconomic advantage or disadvantage). The index rates areas according to low vulnerability (a score of 1) to high vulnerability (a score of 5). The image below shows the index for Port Phillip.

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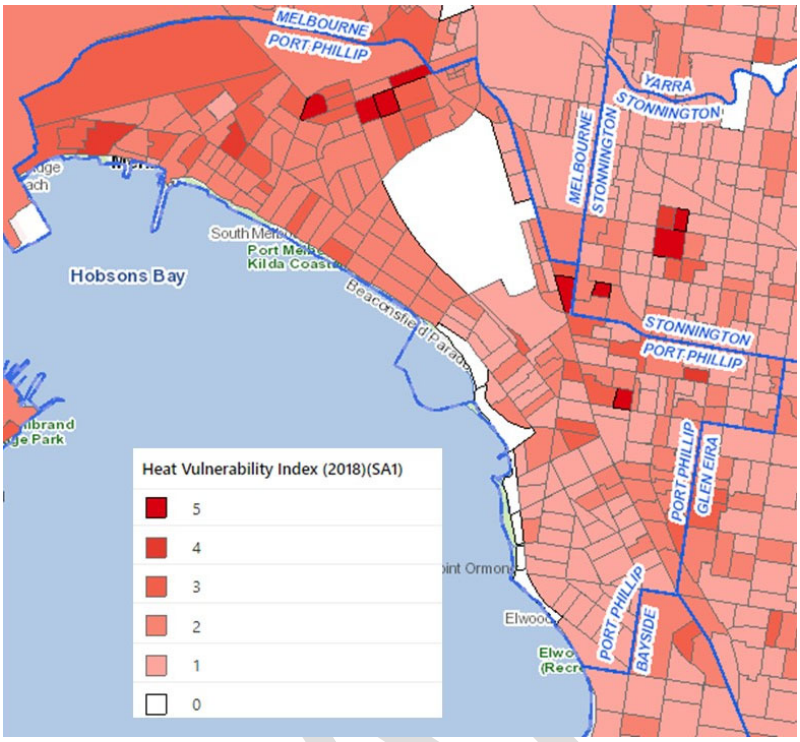


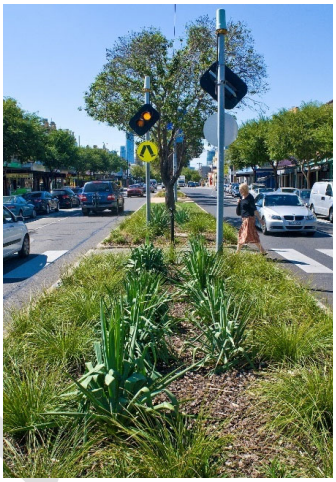
Image – Heat Vulnerability Index, 2018 SA1 level. 5= higher vulnerability, 0= lower vulnerability (source: Department of Transport and Planning)

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4. Urban Forest Strategy

4.1. What is an Urban Forest Strategy and why do we need it?

The Urban Forest Strategy 2024-2040 provides the strategic framework and policy context for the development and management of all greening across the municipality.



The Urban Forest Strategy is our vision and blueprint for enhancing our urban forest and addressing and protecting against the challenges it is currently facing. The strategy will inform ongoing planning and investment for the growth and longevity of our city's urban forest.

It is underpinned by Council's sustainability objectives in the Council Plan and has strong links to the *Places for People Public Space Strategy 2022-2032, Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2023-28* and the *Places to Live: Port Phillip Housing Strategy.*

The strategy will be delivered over 15yrs, through five (5) year action plans as follows:

2024- 29	2030	2030-5	2035	2035-40	2040
Current Actions	Rebaseline	New Actions	Rebaseline	New actions	Review Strategy

4.2. Strategic context

Urban greening has become well-integrated in local, regional, state, and global strategies and policies. These strategies include the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the Victorian Government's Climate Change Act (2017), Biodiversity 2037 (2017), Open Space for Everyone (2021) and Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 and the City of Port Philip's Council Plan 2021-31, Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32, Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-28, and Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-2028. They all seek to maximise the positive impact of urban greening through coordinated and strategic planning and management.

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5. Current State of Our Urban Forest

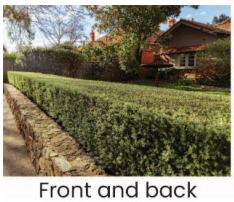
A variety of green spaces contribute to the sustainability and livability of our City including heritage parks, Botanical Gardens, tree lined streets, biodiversity areas, community gardens, private gardens and foreshore hinterlands.

Our urban forest changes across the municipality, with leafy green boulevard of Plane trees in Elwood and Middle Park, the conversion of the industrial setting of Fishermans Bend, the smaller street trees of Balaclava, the iconic heritage parks of St Kilda, the significant biolink in South Melbourne and the palm trees of the foreshore.

Private gardens make up half of our urban forest and are an essential part of our urban forest, contributing tree canopy and biodiversity and providing amenity to individual homes and the surrounding neighbourhoods and to the urban forest as a whole.

We have an active community interested in our urban forest including many environmental groups, naturalists and gardeners. These groups and individual community members are an important part of developing and maintaining the urban forest in Port Phillip.

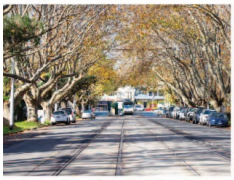
Our urban forest is made up of:


Front and back gardens


Balconies, green roofs and walls


Community gardens and plots


Street trees


Boulevards

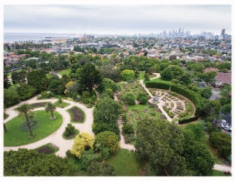

Trees in parks and reserves


Activity centres


Biodiversity links


Street gardening


Cultural sites


Heritage sites


Iconic planting


Foreshore and hinterland


Schools


State Government land (rail, roads etc)


New developments

5.1. Evidence base

To guide our urban forest of the future it is important to understand the current state and better practice. The following reports and engagement have been used to inform the development of the draft strategy measures and targets:

- *Background and Benchmarking Report 2023* - A detailed evidence base and context for our urban forest, including a summary of relevant research. Includes the strategic and policy context, community values, benefits of urban greening, a description of Port Phillip's urban forest, benchmarking against recent urban forest strategies, identification of best practice and emerging focus areas, and guidance on urban forest indicators and targets.
- *Canopy Mapping & Analysis 2012-2022* - Technology utilising artificial intelligence image processing has been used to map canopy now and establish a foundation for monitoring and improvement in future.
- *Vegetation in the Private Realm Report 2022*
- *Biodiversity Study and Action Plan Background Research Paper 2020*
- *Community engagement – Working directly with key community stakeholders and advisory groups and the broader community*
- *Traditional owner conversations with the Bunurong Land Council.*

5.2. Canopy

A common high-level indicator of the urban forest is tree canopy cover. Canopy cover creates benefits including improved amenity, urban cooling, carbon capture, stormwater benefits, and improved air quality.

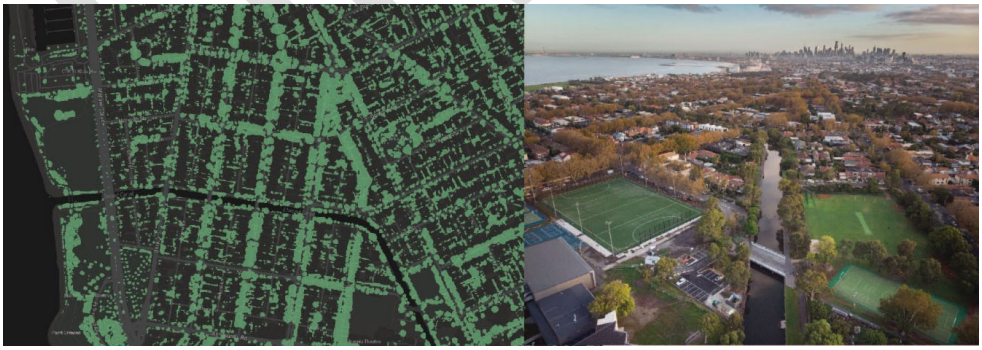


Image: Canopy Cover in Port Phillip, across Elwood. Left: Tree Ledger 2022 Canopy map. Right: Bird's eye photograph

Data

In 2023, the City of Port Phillip commissioned an assessment of both the existing and historic tree canopy on private and public land from 2012 to 2022. The analysis measured tree canopy cover on roads, public land (parks and reserves managed by Port Phillip), and private land. Tree canopy in

Albert park was also measured and is recorded separately to parks and reserves managed by Port Phillip.

The study showed in the ten-year period of 2012 to 2022:

- a slight decline in canopy cover of 0.69%.
- roads have a canopy cover of about 26%, well above the average for inner city Melbourne
- Most canopy gain was the growth of existing street trees
- Canopy in parks did not significantly change
- Tree removals on private land decreased the canopy cover by -1.09%
- More than half the canopy on private land was from new plantings.

Total land area in Port Philip:

- Roads – 27%
- Private Property – 49%
- Public space – 17% (12% not including Albert Park)

Other land including Railway reserves makes up the remainder of space in Port Phillip.

Australian researchers have found in numerous studies that a canopy cover of at least 30% resulted in higher health benefits.

Canopy data in City of Port Phillip in 2022

Overall tree canopy cover of the City of Port Phillip was 17.17% (down from 17.9% in 2012)

  - public space 17%,
  - streets 25%,
  - private land 12%, and
  - Albert Park 16%.
- Canopy cover is not evenly distributed across neighbourhoods or land types
- The neighbourhood of Elwood/Ripponlea has the highest overall canopy cover at 25%
- Sandridge/Wirraway and Montague both have 8% canopy cover.

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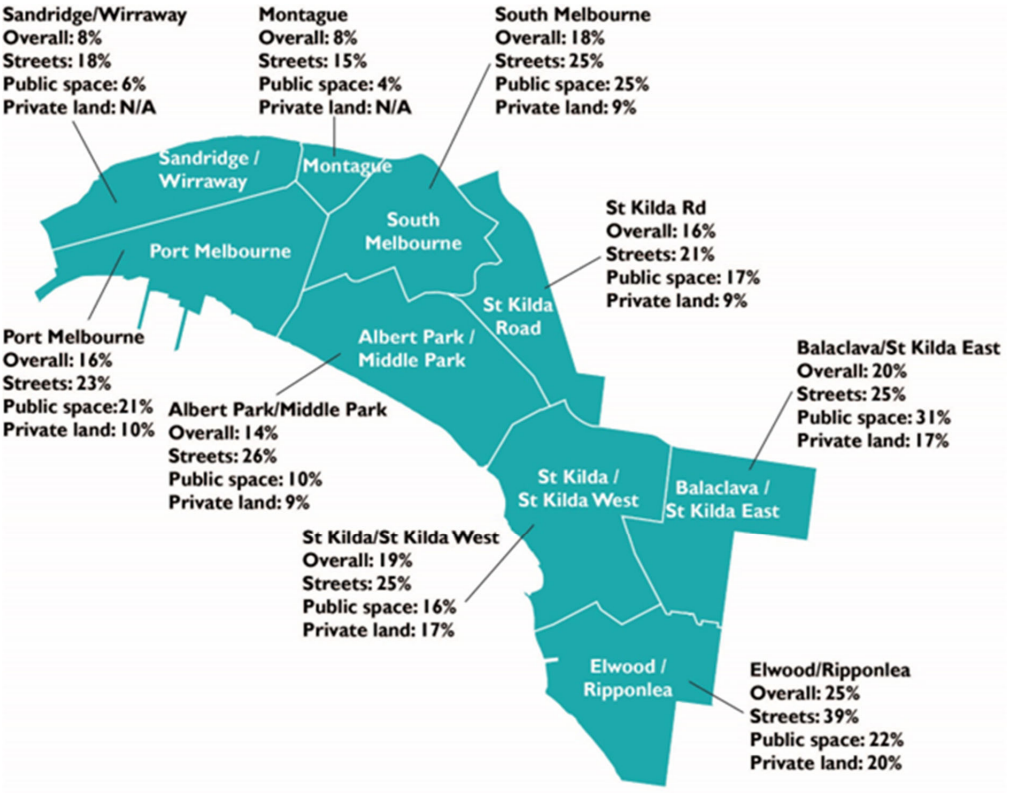


Image: Canopy cover distribution across the city of Port Phillip, 2022

5.3. Species Diversity

In the public realm, the City of Port Phillip manages approximately 46,000 trees, 75% of which are street trees.

Having diverse tree species is important for a resilient urban forest. High diversity provides functional habitat and limits large loss of plants due to pest, diseases, or climate change. Urban forest health and survival can be at risk long-term if trees are not managed for 'defensive diversity' through a good mix of species and other factors.

Urban street trees planted in avenues are particularly susceptible to pest and diseases but are valued highly for their uniform look.

Getting the species diversity mix right is a balance between future proofing our urban forest, maintaining existing healthy trees, respecting heritage, and retaining a pleasant look and feel to the city.

The US Forest Service provides a recommended rating system to distinguish between 'fair' and 'good' species diversity:

- Fair diversity: No more than 10% of a single species, 20% of a single genus and 30% of a single family. (10/20/30).
- Good diversity: No more than 5% of a single species, 10% of a single genus and 15% of a single family. (5/10/15).

The US Forest Service recommends a 'good-fair' diversity range of no more than 5-10% of a single species, 10-20% of a single genus and 15-30% of a single family.

Species diversity in City of Port Phillip in 2022:

- **species and genus diversity in the public tree population is generally good**,
- with only one species, the London Plane (*Platanus x acerifolia*), above 5% of the total population.
- There are **34 native vegetation sites** (including bio-links)
- **There are six remnant indigenous flora sites** in the City.

London Plane Trees (Platanus X acerifolia) dominate the public realm, making up 9% of street and park trees. The next three most common species are the Queensland Brush Box (Lophostemon confertus), Coastal Banksia (Banksia integrifolia), and Drooping Sheoak (Allocasuarina verticillata) (4% each).

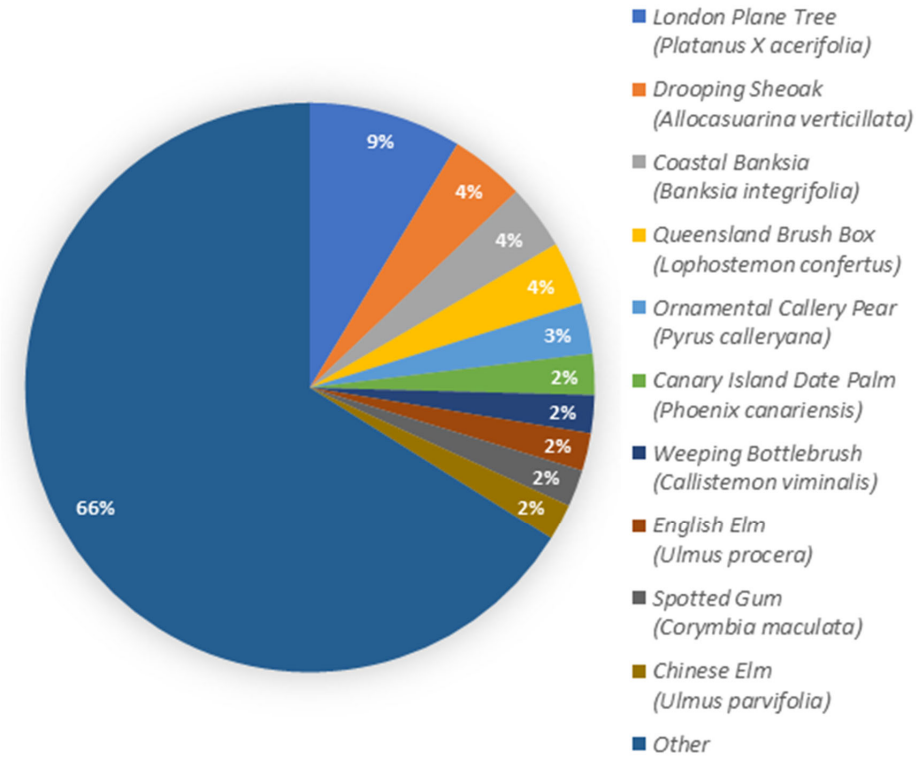


Image: Diversity of tree species in the City of Port Phillip, 2022 (Source City of Port Phillip).

5.4. Ecosystems and biodiversity

Biodiversity is the variety of all plants, animals and microorganisms, their genes, and the ecosystems they live in across our land, rivers, and coast.

Biodiversity values within the City of Port Phillip are significant, albeit highly modified through urban development. Within the highly urbanised environment there is remnant native vegetation persisting, primarily restricted to the foreshore and a small number of parks and reserves. In these areas the biodiversity values remaining are quite significant and warrant protection and enhancement for future generations.

There are 34 sites with native and Indigenous vegetation across Port Phillip. In addition, there are eight sites with high value vegetation classed as Coastal Dune Scrub and Grassy Woodland Plains:

- Sandridge Beach, Port Melbourne
- West Beach, St Kilda
- HR Johnson Reserve
- St Kilda Botanic Gardens, St Kilda
- Canterbury Road, Middle Park
- Point Ormond Reserve, Elwood*
- Elwood Foreshore
- Tea Tree Reserve, Elwood

*Point Ormond Reserve is particularly significant as one of the last surviving indigenous remnants in urban Melbourne.

Biodiversity provides several benefits to the municipality including health benefits, water purification, flood protection, coastal protections, carbon sequestration, habitat, productive soils, natural pest control, and improved amenity.

A biodiverse urban forest plays an important ecological function such as pollination, feeding resources, habitat (roosts, sand dune stability, microclimate, etc.).

This draft strategy aims to improve biodiversity values across the municipality, reversing the long-term downward trajectory.

The Biodiversity Study in 2020 compiled all the available biodiversity records for the City. It found that the biodiversity values remaining in the City are significant and require protection and enhancement for future generations. The study identified:

- 1,059 flora species comprising 102 algae (most of which are marine macroalgae), 32 bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) and 920 vascular plants.
- 1,090 fauna species comprising:
    - 464 vertebrate species including 276 birds, 115 fish, nine frogs, 34 mammal (17 marine mammals) and 30 reptiles
    - 626 invertebrate species, including 23 crustaceans, 424 invertebrates (spiders, insects, worms etc.), 52 marine invertebrates (jellyfish, worms, starfish, tunicates etc.), and 127 molluscs
    - 113 fungal species, including seven lichens
    - 2 protist species of slime mould.

- Rare or threatened species including:
    - Three flora and 30 fauna species listed under the Australian Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
    - Eight flora and 44 fauna species listed under the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
    - 20 flora and 74 fauna species classified as rare or threatened in Victoria by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

The study recognises the importance of keystone species in providing important ecological functions like pollination, feeding resources, habitat, sand dune stability, microclimate, etc.

Potential threats to biodiversity noted in the study include pet dogs and cats along with climate change (especially for foreshore and estuarine habitats).



Image Biodiverse sites across municipality

5.5. Community

Perceptions on urban greening can have a large impact on the quality and quantity of the urban forest. Communities who value trees and actively engage in greening are likely to retain trees and increase greening, whereas, in communities where trees are not valued, they may not be well-funded or prioritised in capital works. Fears and concerns, both real and perceived, all threaten the urban forest.

When it comes to urban greening, the Port Phillip community is passionate, well-informed, highly engaged, and active on-ground. It is clear that, since Greening Port Phillip was released in 2010, parts of the community have increased their support for and expectations of urban greening and have a high level of ambition to green the City. They also highly value the ability to proactively engage in improving the public realm through greening. They are a strength of the City and offer an opportunity for community partnerships to deliver common goals.

Community engagement included a range of community workshops in May and October 2023, and a broad engagement in July and August 2023. Participants contributed to workshops developing the

draft Vision and Principles and actions and shared a range of issues, ideas, and opinions through online and in person surveys and mapping.

Key themes raised in consultation as community priorities include:

- Increasing permeability and becoming a **water sensitive city**
- Mitigating **urban heat**, using more shade trees
- Providing **more trees and vegetation**, including tree-lined streets, maximising greening in existing public space, and setting aside more land for public green space
- Enhancing **biodiversity**
- Increasing Council influence on **private realm** greening, including ensuring that housing provides for nature and gardening
- Balancing **on-street car parking provision** with tree planting
- Supporting **community stewardship** or 'mobilisation' (including tree planting events, community gardens and nature strip gardening).

There are diverse views and experiences of urban greening. In some cases, people feel differently about greening depending on its context – whether it is in their yard, the local park, or on their street.

During consultations, concerns regarding greening were also raised including:

- Impacts of roots – entering broken pipes or lifting footpaths
- Shading of solar panels
- Impacts of debris – fruits, flowers, leaves and pollen
- Risk of branch drop
- Impacts on views
- Differing feelings on aesthetics
- Tree and Vegetation Vandalism
- Impacts of greening on carparks, footpaths and bike lanes

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6. The challenges we face

Port Phillip's urban forest is diverse, and there is variation in canopy cover and biodiversity between neighbourhoods. The vision of a healthy and abundant urban forest requires action to improve the canopy cover, increasing cover in some areas and maintaining excellent cover in others, and increasing biodiversity. There are some core challenges to overcome to ensure our urban forest flourishes everywhere and that all residents and visitors have access to the benefits the urban forest provides. The challenges our urban forest is facing fall under five themes:

- Climate change
- Population growth and higher density living
- Constrained space
- Forest health
- Biodiversity Loss

These themes are explored below.

6.1. Climate change

The City of Port Phillip declared a climate emergency in 2019, recognising that everyone must play their part in addressing this global challenge. The City is already experiencing the impacts of climate change, and projections show increased risk of flooding, storm damage, foreshore inundation, water supply issues, and extreme heat. As the climate continues to change, cities are getting hotter. These effects interact with existing urban stresses such as air pollution, soil compaction and heat island effects.

Greening is an important tool to prepare our communities for these changed conditions, especially through urban cooling and flood risk reduction. Greening also plays a crucial role as a climate solution, by drawing down greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, providing comfortable streets to make walking and public transport use more enjoyable.

Urban Heat Island

It is hotter in metropolitan areas than in surrounding rural areas, this condition is called the urban heat island effect (UHI). UHI is greatly influenced by impermeable surfaces such as concrete, brick and asphalt that are exposed to the sun for extended periods, absorbing large amounts of heat. This can lead to higher temperatures (day and night), higher air pollution levels, increased electricity costs (e.g., air-conditioning) and heat related illnesses.

Urban areas are about 4 degrees (C) hotter than rural areas.

In the City of Port Phillip, the UHI effect is felt more in areas where there is limited tree canopy, large areas of impermeable surfaces, less vegetation and minimal chance of cooling breezes from the Bay. This applies to both the public realm and private property, with increased development also increasing the UHI.

Flooding & Permeability

As a coastal municipality, Port Phillip is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of coastal inundation and flooding because of climate change. The rising sea levels, coupled with intensified rainfall and greater frequency of storm surges could have a substantial impact on the future development of Port Phillip. This particularly affects low-lying urban renewal areas like Fishermans Bend and

established regions like South Melbourne, Port Melbourne, Albert Park, Middle Park, St Kilda, Balaclava, and Elwood.

Susceptibility to climate change

Environmental changes will affect the ability of species to adapt and evolve, reside within ecosystems and migrate to more suitable environments. It is suspected that the drying climate will be challenging for the survival of some canopy tree species, others will be impacted by rising sea levels (above and below ground) through inundation and greater salinity in groundwater.

As foreshore habitats become too hot or inundated with flooding some fauna may not survive as they will be unlikely to be able to re-establish further inland due to the presence of existing buildings and infrastructure.

Trees are long-lived assets, so tree populations need to be diverse and well-managed to resist extreme heat, drought, pests and diseases. As climate change intensifies, young trees and plants may take longer to reach maturity and trees and vegetation may become increasingly stressed, stressed trees will require more care. Managing tree health is critical, and Port Phillip will continue to develop climate ready species selection and management practices in response.

Water Management

A key element in the success of tree growth Is the amount of water the tree receives in its first few years of establishment. After that, the tree should have well developed roots and be self-sufficient. Trees can also require supplementary water in prolonged droughts or if stressed, for example with a disease outbreak.

Other vegetation types including shrub beds and turf have higher water requirements, and many indigenous plants to the Port Phillip require more water as the city used to have significant floodplains prior to urban settlement.

Water management includes strategies to reduce water use, use recycled and non-potable water where possible and prioritise water where it is needed.

6.2. Population growth and higher density living

The City of Port Phillip continues to the be the most densely populated local area in Victoria with a population density of 5,029 people per square km. High density apartments, with 3 or more storeys, make up 55.5 per cent of our housing stock, 4 times that of greater Melbourne. 35.5 per cent of our housing stock is medium density semi-detached, row or terrace houses, town houses and 1-2 storey flats or apartments. Separate houses make up just 7.7 per cent of the housing stock. Approvals for new dwellings has been relatively consistent over the past 6 years (to 2023) at between 1,000 and 1,300 approvals each year. Almost all (99 per cent) of housing approved in 2021 were for new apartments. Recent permit data indicates that 92.51 per cent of new major residential development (with 10 dwellings or more) is located outside Port Phillip's Activity Centres with concentrations distributed through St Kilda, Elwood, Port Melbourne, South Melbourne, Melbourne and in Fishermans Bend[1].

Significant housing growth and change is expected, and by 2036 we expect our population to grow by another 43,510 people. It is projected that apartments will continue to be the main housing products delivered by the market in Port Phillip. As more people live in apartments, parks are

replacing backyards, and public spaces are becoming the 'living rooms' where people meet and interact. Streets and parks will increasingly become central to the City's identity and character, with increased demand for opportunities for relaxation, recreation, social connections, and individual connections with nature. Streets and public spaces need to be accessible for all people of all abilities, and green spaces will need to work harder and be maintained more frequently (including nature strips and community gardens), increasing maintenance costs.

Over the past 10 years, as the city has continued to grow and densify, tree canopy cover on private land has decreased by about 1%, while the canopy cover in the public realm has slightly increased. This loss can be partly attributed to development pressure and the lack of vegetation protection overlays and orders within Port Phillip's Planning Scheme[2].

Tree canopy loss can occur on public and private land due to housing development. On private land, trees can be removed to make space for housing, trees that have yet to reach the defined size for a significant tree (150cm trunk circumference, 1m above ground) are particularly at risk.

Powerlines and other infrastructure located in the street may need be upgraded to supply higher density housing developments, and these upgrades can additionally affect trees. For example, if additional powerlines are required, the volume of space for tree canopy on streets is reduced and existing street trees need to be pruned or removed accordingly.

Many of Port Phillip's biodiverse areas are along the coastline. Port Phillip's coastal environment with wind, salt and exposure make it more difficult to establish vegetation on the foreshore. Trees and greening along the foreshore are also more likely to be opposed by residents, as they block views to the Bay. Trees along the foreshore are subjected to vandalism more than in any other area within the municipality. Urban development and aesthetic preferences have direct impacts to biodiversity with vegetation removal and habitat modification. Biodiversity can be further damaged by indirect impacts associated with pressures from human activities (e.g. trampling of dune vegetation), wildlife disturbance and predation by pet dogs and cats, weed and pest animal invasions (notably foxes) and litter including dog litter.

Many residents recognise greenery as the defining visual character of their neighbourhoods and see the great environmental benefits from trees and vegetation, from ground level gardens to green walls and roof top gardens and want to support improvements to biodiversity. Trees and plants need soil, water, nutrients, space, air and light to grow and thrive. These can be hard to get in a dense inner urban environment.

6.3. Constrained urban spaces

Port Phillip has some of the most extensive heritage areas in Melbourne, with some of the earliest European settlement patterns and development. Our heritage and neighbourhood character are highly valued by our community and contributes to our sense of place. As an older municipality, a lot of streets in Port Phillip are narrow, have narrow footpaths, have no nature strip or narrow nature strips. The constrained space in some Port Phillip streets, particularly in St Kilda, East St Kilda and Balaclava are challenging to retrofit and trees, nature strips, accessible footpaths, adequate road space, car parking and bike lanes **cannot** always be accommodated with smart streetscape design.

Planting trees in streets presents a variety of challenges. Given the varied development patterns throughout the City of Port Phillip a site specific approach is required to deliver successful planting.

Site-specific challenges include:

- **Powerlines and tram lines:** Over half of Port Phillip's street trees are pruned around above ground power and communication cables. Council has legislative clearance requirements for trees around powerlines. Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2005 (Energy Safe Victoria). This requires regular clearance pruning to attain required clearance distances.
- **Tree root management:** The conflict between tree roots and infrastructure and building foundations is pervasive in urban areas. A range of strategies need to be considered such as species selection and site assessment, root pruning and barrier placement to avoid or manage tree root conflicts with infrastructure.
- **Compacted, contaminated and poor soils:** Compacted and low-quality soils common within the urban environment, can severely impact tree growth. Much of the soil in Port Phillip is contaminated and poor quality due to imported fill as the area was developed. A range of treatments can be used to improve soils, manage contamination, and protect soils from future compaction.
- **Carparking and Narrow Streets** – in many urban streets it is not possible to increase planting without removing carparking. Sometimes on-road planting between car spaces is possible by locating trees in areas such as no standing zones and adjacent to crossovers. Any planting in streets needs to consider road safety and protection from vehicles.
- **Accessible footpaths:** The Australian Disability Discrimination Act 1992 requires all public spaces to be accessible. Street trees can impact on accessibility where there is fruit drop, narrow footpaths, and where roots become invasive and interfere with footpaths.
- **Street safety:** Street trees are managed for safety and are pruned to ensure people can walk, drive and ride on streets safely. In addition, in line with the Local Law, residents are responsible for ensuring that pedestrian access to paths and traffic sight lines are not blocked by trees and vegetation on private property.
- **Underground Utilities:** Underground utilities beneath roads, footpaths and parks include electrical, water and gas lines, communications cabling and drains, and electric vehicle charging stations. Trees can interfere with underground utilities and various regulations require offset distances between new tree planting and lines and service pits.



Image: Common constraints for trees in the City of Port Phillip.

6.4. Forest and tree health

Urban forests need proactive management including good design, species selection, site and soil preparation, passive irrigation, young tree care, health audits, pest treatments, risk management, and other ongoing maintenance. Ensuring a mixture of species, age, sizes and functions, called 'defensive diversity' is also critical for urban forests to thrive as the mix means the forest is less susceptible to disease and climate threats and tree replacement is gradual when trees come to the end of their useful life expectancy.

Tree diversity in Port Phillip is generally good, but there are a few areas which are a risk.

Tree life spans

As living infrastructure, trees take a long time to grow, and benefits peak once trees mature. Most of the costs are incurred early in the tree's life, and when it reaches the end of its life. A healthy forest has trees of all ages and spreads out costs and management activities so they don't all need to happen at once. While a key principle is to retain trees first wherever possible, mature tree replacement is an unavoidable part of managing living infrastructure. Succession planning for trees approaching the end of their useful life expectancy is prioritised to maintain and replace trees and the canopy cover they provide in streets, parks, and public space.

Tree Management

Tree management is one of the key issues within public space from both an ecological / landscape perspective and from a public safety standpoint ensuring that reasonable care is taken to manage the risks associated with hazardous trees. A tree risk management program provides a systematic process for scheduling and inspecting trees, enables the prioritisation of works based on perceived risk, and allows judicial use of community resources.

Threats to specific tree species

Various threats pose risks to some of Port Phillip's most iconic species. As the climate changes to warmer conditions, some species, like the English Elms planted in some parks, may struggle to cope and go into decline. Other species, including Canary Island Palm trees and London Plane trees that contribute significantly to the character of Port Phillip's neighbourhoods have more specific threats.

Canary Island Palms line Beaconsfield Parade and the St Kilda foreshore and feature in Catani Gardens, areas loved as Melbourne's playground hosting local residents and visitors.

Plane trees provide a green, leafy character, lining most streets in Elwood, and other some other avenues in the city including along St Kilda Road, Brighton Road, Williamstown Road, Richardson Street, Raglan Street and Barkly Street.

Serious management challenges exist for both species, and it is timely to consider how we manage their population to retain the iconic character and benefits these trees bring to our neighbourhoods. The challenges include disease, drought stress, infrastructure damage from tree roots and electric line clearances impacting on the longevity of trees and integrity of avenue plantings. The future of these iconic species is linked strongly to the character of several neighbourhoods, and we will work with those local communities to find a way forward for these iconic trees and avenues.

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6.5. Biodiversity loss

The City of Port Phillip is heavily urbanised, with remnant native vegetation and biodiversity gardens now largely restricted to foreshore and a few parks and reserves. The State Government's *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2*037 report recognises that 'all Victorians enjoy the benefits of biodiversity, relatively few are fully aware of its importance, or are prepared to share the cost of – and responsibility for – sustaining it'. Biodiversity loss happens over time and therefore can be difficult to notice. The immediate cost of removing vegetation, like loss of species and habitat, is often hidden and the impacts are often thought to be a future concern. Climate change and population growth are realities in Port Phillip and are expected to exacerbate existing threats and bring new challenges for biodiversity.

Climate Change

Climate change threatens Port Phillip's biodiversity in several ways:

- Rising sea levels, coastal inundation, flooding, and erosion will cause challenges for biodiverse coastal areas and rising ground water with increased salinity will impact on plant establishment and growth.
- Harsher environments with more warmer days and heat waves, more storm events and different rainfall patterns will affect trees and vegetation and will result in more time and cost to establish and maintain plants (especially trees).
- Climate change will continue to affect native insects and fauna with changes to habitat and food sources, disease outbreaks and stresses from extreme weather events.

Human impact

Humans are responsible for biodiversity loss. Port Phillip has only six small remnant vegetation areas remaining and most of the city is highly modified from the floodplains, woodlands and coastal dune systems that existed prior to colonisation. Urbanisation results in novel urban ecosystems with indigenous, native and exotic plants, animals, insects and fungi and other microorganisms. Urban environments can be rich in biodiversity, but some challenges persist including:

- Significant soil modification and contamination throughout Port Phillip resulting in pockets with poorer soil health affecting vegetation growth and management.
- Population growth and increased density reduce space for private gardens and larger trees, public space is highly used and space for larger biodiverse areas is constrained. This reduces biodiversity corridors and links, make it harder for insects and fauna to move between habitats. In addition, higher dog populations can impact on wildlife and dog litter can affect soils and spread disease.
- Urban coastal environments are highly modified and affect biodiversity on land and in the bay. Increased development and vegetation removal, tree vandalism to improve bay views, and formal monoculture planting styles reduce habitat opportunities, and coastal development and stormwater runoff can impact the marine environment.
- Exotic plants and animals can reduce biodiversity. While some weedy flowing plants can provide food and shelter supplementing indigenous and native plants, but they can become invasive. Cats, foxes and Indian myna birds additionally pose wildlife problems in Port Phillip.
- Pollution including car exhaust, noise and light pollution, and soil and groundwater contamination impacts plants, insects and animals and prevent them from thriving.

7. Council's vision

Informed by the Port Phillip community, this draft strategy has a shared vision and five principles that guide our direction and inform priorities for urban forest projects that address our key challenges.

Long term goals are easier to plan for in smaller 5-year blocks. Therefore, nested under the vision and principles we have developed objectives and actions to guide efforts from 2024-2029. This approach also creates natural review points to keep our work on track towards our 2040 vision. Short- and long-term targets and measures track our progress to achieve our long term 2040 vision.

7.1. Our 2040 vision

In the City of Port Phillip, urban greening is healthy and abundant, biodiversity is valued and supported, and nature connects community.

7.2. Our shared principles

Collectively with Council, community and industry partners:

1. We retain first, respecting established character, and adapt by adding more **resilient** plant species where they are most needed to reduce heat and flood vulnerabilities.
2. We work **together** to value, protect, grow and care for healthy and sustainable greening everywhere.
3. We prioritise **biodiversity**, supporting healthy ecosystems and creating habitat.
4. We invest in thriving **integrated** urban greening in streetscapes, buildings, parks and gardens.
5. We value the urban forest as a long-term asset that is critical to the health and wellbeing of our community and to our City's character and function, through **quality** design, construction and maintenance.

7.3. Objectives

The objectives align to the key challenges facing our city to focus our actions to instigate change and achieve our targets.

Each objective has measures, target(s) and series of existing and new actions. Elements of urban forest management are intrinsically linked and there is overlap between the objective areas, however these classify the work into manageable sections to focus our efforts.

Our Objectives:

Increased canopy cover on public and private land for a liveable, sustainable and vibrant city

Cooler and greener city which is more climate ready (or resilient) to face more extreme weather and changes in rainfall.

Our community is engaged, and trees and plants are valued and we build partnerships to green our urban environment across all land types.

A well-managed forest, including healthy trees and tree quality, pest and disease management and succession planning for iconic species and locations

A biodiverse urban forest with diverse species, healthy ecosystems, and habitat



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8. Actions for growing our urban forest

Excellence in urban forest management requires a range of actions contributing to the same. This chapter details the actions that will be taken against each of the objectives, with measures and targets identified, linked to key principles and challenges that the actions are designed to address.

The actions in this draft strategy are developed to target areas of urban forest growth, management and maintenance that are essential to achieve our 2040 vision and objectives.

The draft strategy includes actions underway and new actions, to be completed between 2024 to 2030 financial years that will assist in Council achieving the vision and targets. The actions will be reviewed every 5 years to ensure that they continue to be the right actions taken to deliver our 2040 vision.

Actions are a combination of direct on-ground greening actions (eg expand habitat corridors), enabling (incentives for planting on private land), advocacy (aerial powerline bundling), policy, supportive (eg review & improve establishment process of new vegetation planting) and strategic (eg develop precinct plans which will improve outcome of an existing core function street tree planting).

This draft strategy builds on existing work and ongoing activities across Council divisions crucial to current success that need to continue to achieve the vision (eg annual planting, de-paving program, supporting citizen science research and watering young plants are all “business as usual” and while not a focus for new actions are vital to achieving the vision and targets). There are also crucial elements, such as water asset and public space management, which are directed by other strategic documents.

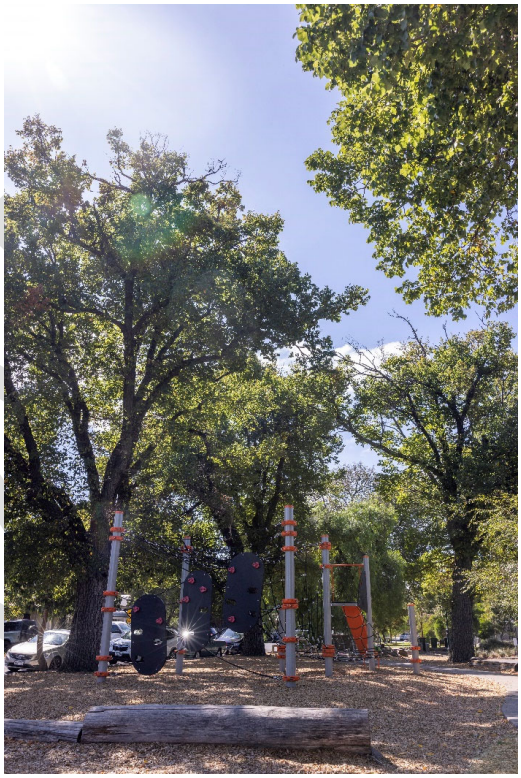
All action actions are summarised in the Implementation Plan in section 10.

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8.1. Increase canopy cover

Increased canopy cover on public and private land for a liveable, sustainable, and vibrant city

Strategic principles in planning for increased canopy cover		
Integrated	Resilient	Together



A common high-level indicator of the urban forest is tree canopy cover. Canopy cover creates benefits including improved amenity, urban cooling, carbon capture, stormwater benefits, and improved air quality.

Detailed canopy analysis was undertaken in 2023, using 2022 high-definition aerial photography. In 2022, 17.17% of Port Phillip was covered by canopy from trees that are greater than 3 metres in height. Tree canopy cover is not evenly spread across the city. There is a general north west to south east transition from 8% through to 25%

As outlined in Section 5.2, from 2012 to 2022 there has been a slight decline in canopy cover from around 17.9 percent to 17.2 percent.

We acknowledge there are gaps in the distribution of greening across our City, and we aim to achieve improved tree canopy in each neighbourhood and where we need it most. This may not look the same everywhere. Greening approaches need to respond to different street spaces, soils, microclimates, and neighbourhood character to ensure long-term survival and optimised benefits from new plantings. In addition, we must work with developers on private land and other land holders to ensure canopy cover is improved throughout our city.

Due to influences outside the full control of Council and the need for more data, we are not in a position to set a specific target for overall canopy cover at this stage. However, we are targeting a canopy cover increase in each key measurement period on streets, public land and private land (around every 5 years).

Private land

The decline in canopy cover from 2012 was largely driven through a 1.1 per cent reduction in canopy cover on private land which comprises around 49% of total land area in the municipality. The data showed now there are sections of private space above 20% current cover. Efforts to increase coverage on public land were not sufficient to offset this.

On private land, building envelopes, built form and lot size will influence the availability of space to plant trees. Port Phillip has a prevalence of small lots, small garden areas and apartment buildings which restrict space for tree planting.

Arresting this decline through better protection of existing trees and encouraging new planting on private land is a key focus area. Some initiatives already in train include entering into a memorandum of understanding with the City of Melbourne to use their Green Factor Tool to guide the use of, and requirements for green roofs and walls in private developments where tree planting is not feasible and joining the My Smart Garden program to deliver a series of gardening workshops for residents.

Streets

Overall, streets in Port Phillip have a canopy cover of about 26%, well above the average for inner city Melbourne, making street trees a fantastic asset of the city. Roads in Port Phillip make up about 27% of the total land area and contribute about 44% of total canopy cover.

When investigating targets for canopy cover, we need to consider how many trees we need to plant to reach a canopy target, and where there is space for additional tree planting. When planting on streets, considerations need to be given for driveways, narrow road reserves and footpaths and infrastructure. Powerlines also provide a barrier to protection of existing canopy and growth of canopy particularly given Electrical Line Clearance requirements.

Through smart planning and advocacy there is opportunity to grow canopy cover on our streets, including those managed by the State, through reducing the number of empty street plots and identifying opportunities for new planting.

To increase tree canopy cover on streets we need to plant more trees than we remove and ensure our trees have good early maintenance and remain healthy. We have set an aspirational target of to grow our canopy cover on roads to 30% per cent – this requires further testing of feasibility which will be completed over the next 12 months.

Public space

Port Phillip has excellent canopy cover in many parks and reserves. While the overall canopy coverage of parks and reserves sits at 17.22%, that calculation includes sports fields and areas of open space that cannot be planted. When sports fields and other functional wide-open spaces like areas along the foreshore are excluded as they cannot support trees, canopy cover of public open space is 29%, with many public spaces exceeding 40% canopy coverage.

However, there are opportunities to grow canopy cover on non-sports field public space including:

- new tree planting in parks and reserves and planning for tree removals and replacements
- as part of regeneration and renewal of existing public spaces
- on State controlled public spaces such as Albert Park Lake
- the smart development of new public spaces as part of our Public Space Acquisition Plan.

State Government Managed Land

There are large areas of State Government managed land that plays a role in enhancing canopy and greening across the municipality. This includes Albert Park Lake, Transport corridors (including Brighton Road, Beaconsfield Pde, tram and trainlines), Schools and the transformation of Fishermans Bend. This can be achieved through education, advocacy, policy, guidance, engagement initiatives and partnerships.

8.1.1. Measures, baselines, and targets

Canopy measurement is planned to take place around every five years (with the next conducted in 2028) to inform development of each new five-year action plan. Annual reporting of lead measures such as number of new canopy trees planted will supplement canopy mapping.

Measure	**Baseline (2022)**	**Target Short-term (2028)**	**Target Long-term (2038)**
Percentage canopy cover - overall	17.17%	18%^	TBC #
Percentage canopy cover - streets (27% of all land)	25.53%	26%^	30%
Percentage canopy - private land (49% of all land)	12.45%	No reduction	No reduction
Percentage canopy cover - public space (17% of all land)	29.0%	30%^	40% canopy cover, no net loss of canopy at any individual park or reserve.
Percentage of neighbourhoods with improved canopy cover	From 2022 baseline	Increased from Baseline	Increased from 2033
Number of new canopy trees planted by Council per annum (annual measure)	800	1500*	TBC #
Number of street tree plots that are vacant (annual measure)	Establish in 2024 and set targets	Decreased from Baseline	Decreased from 2033

^ Initial canopy growth is slow as new trees take time to establish and grow.

*Tree planting numbers to be tested for potential extension after yr2.

Targets will be set alongside the development of the Urban Forest Precinct Plans.

8.1.2. Actions

Actions to achieve targets and objectives

	Action	Status
1	Improve delivery of Council's street tree replacement and infill tree planting program to better protect and increase canopy cover	Underway

2	Improve and increase Council's annual additional tree planting program to increase canopy cover [subject to $]	Underway
3	Develop urban forest precinct plans for all neighbourhoods within the municipality to increase canopy and biodiversity (2-3 per annum)	New
4	Update Council's street tree planting guide to identify new planting locations prioritising heat vulnerability, areas with lower canopy coverage, key pedestrian and bike links, access to schools, public transport, and activity centres, in line with the Public Space Strategy. Incorporate sites into urban forest precinct plans and annual tree planting program	Underway
5	Continue implementation of Council's Tree Canopy Protection Program including engineered solutions such cable bundling in response to Electrical Line Clearance regulations	Underway
6	Advocate to the Victorian Government to ensure appropriate consideration of canopy cover in Electrical Line Clearance Regulations and for funding to support engineered solutions that address safety while reducing negative impacts on canopy coverage	Underway
7	Advocate to Victorian Government and Parks Victoria to increase canopy coverage and biodiversity in Albert Park	New
8	Advocate to Victorian Government, the Department of Transport, and other agencies to increase maintenance, canopy coverage and biodiversity on state managed land in the municipality	New
9	Work with the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne to develop and fund a greening strategy for Fishermans Bend	New
10	Undertake a spatial canopy and tree inventory analysis to measure canopy and identify areas of low canopy and underperforming tree stock, to be repeated every 5 years. In line with Act and Adapt Strategy	New
11	Undertake feasibility study to set a research-based canopy target to achieve on streets by 2040, with 30% canopy the ideal.	New
12	Prioritise greening, biodiversity and canopy trees in the development of newly acquired public space.	New
13	Develop processes to improve planning advice for trees and vegetation on development applications in accordance with statutory requirements.	New
14	Protect and enhance tree canopy, vegetation and permeability on private land by developing locally specific planning tools and aligning Local Laws. In line with the Draft Housing Strategy and Act and Adapt	New

Case Study

Street Tree Program

Between 2017 and 2022 over 5000 new trees were planted in areas with low canopy cover.

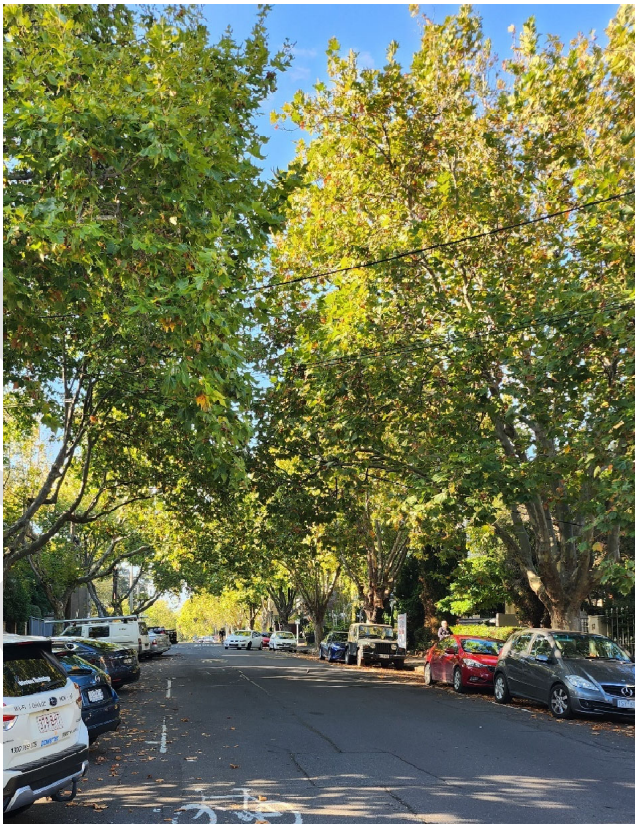


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8.2. Cooler and greener city

Cooler and greener city which is more climate ready (or resilient) to face more extreme weather and changes in rainfall.

Strategic principles in planning for a cooler and greener city		
Resilient	Biodiverse	Quality



By greening and cooling our municipality we are working to reduce the impacts of heat, protect and enhance biodiversity and improve the enjoyment of our open spaces. All this leads to a more liveable city.

Port Phillip is already experiencing the impacts of climate change, and projections show increased risk of flooding, storm damage, foreshore inundation, water supply issues, and extreme heat. Focusing on the interrelationships between greening, water and temperature will help us to achieve a cooler, greener city where greening is equitable and is included where we need it most.

Urban Heat Island

In 2018 the State Government undertook heat mapping across the wider Melbourne region. This mapping shows that Port Phillip has nine areas which are rated in the two highest categories on the 'heat vulnerability index'. To mitigate urban heat, greening and cooling should be prioritised in areas where it will address the key factors of surface temperature (heat exposure), more vulnerable members of society (vulnerability to heat), and areas with high pedestrian activity (behavioural exposure).

Social justice is a critical greening issue because higher levels of disadvantage are generally correlated with lower levels of greening and higher levels of urban heat. As tree canopy mapping has improved, Councils have increasingly been overlaying social vulnerability and urban heat data on canopy data to better understand the priority areas to target more greening. In Port Phillip, our hotspots are generally around our public and social housing estates. We can provide greater equity by focusing on key pedestrian areas, to make walking, cycling, and catching public transport comfortable and to ensure our parks are cool and shady.

For targets, we want to focus on streets and parks as they are the areas where Council has most control and improve greater equity by:

- Focusing our tree canopy on key pedestrian areas so people can walk with comfort, particularly people who rely on public transport, who use community transport and for children along key school walking routes.
- Ensuring our neighbourhoods have cool, shady areas in parks and reserves. With good management including tree and vegetation planting, irrigation, and access to drinking water, these areas have the potential to become cool refuges during hot weather.
- Providing targeted interventions in areas with high heat vulnerability. Interventions need to be tailored to the area and could include additional street trees, rain gardens or introducing more permeable surfaces and planting.

Prioritising tree canopy and biodiversity

Implementing our actions under the Tree Canopy and Health and Biodiverse Urban Forest objectives will assist with addressing urban heat Island and supporting a cooler and greener city. However, there is an opportunity to amplify this through targeting initiatives towards integrated water management, increasing areas of green public open space and maintaining urban heat data.

Water and irrigation management

Water is a valuable resource and essential to the growth and health of an urban forest. An urban forest also plays an important part in managing storm water, filtering out pollution and reducing flooding risks.

Trees require regular watering to establish well. After their initial establishment trees should be self-sufficient and only rarely require supplementary watering, for example when under stress or during prolonged drought periods. Increasing the use of non-potable water, using passive irrigation in design and developing a new irrigation strategy are critical to ensuring Council's long term water management towards zero water targets.

Permeability

Permeable surfaces allow water to infiltrate into the soil, reduces the amount of pollutants and runoff into the bay and waterways, reduces the flood risk and improves soil moisture critical for plant health and urban cooling.

Port Phillip is highly urbanised and as a result has a lot of impermeable surfaces both on public and private land. We can improve permeability by investigating areas where roads and footpaths can be reduced to include more permeable surfaces and greening. For example, by building on current footpath renewal programs to decrease asphalt and concrete and introduce new nature strips, The community is an important partner in this process, as they become custodians of these spaces.

Capital Projects

Every year the annual open space and recreation capital works program designs and delivers upgrades to playgrounds, parks, recreation reserves and other public space. Adopting an integrated approach where urban greening is embedded into our capital works programs across open space and recreation and other projects where applicable offers opportunities to improve the quality and quantity of open space, to improve biodiversity and canopy cover and to save costs through combined project management and construction.

8.2.1. Measures, Baselines and targets

We use heat mapping and a heat vulnerability index developed by the Victorian Government to track and assess urban heat within our municipality. This data provides a standardised dataset for all of Melbourne. Our measures are focused on taking action and tracking interventions we can make to alleviate the broader effects of urban heat using greening solutions.

Measure	**Baseline**	**Target Short-term (2029)**	**Target Long-term (2039)**
% of high heat vulnerability SA1 areas with cooling and greening interventions	Port Philip has 9 high heat vulnerability (level 4 and 5) SA1 areas	100% of high heat vulnerability areas have an intervention	Re-baseline in 2029
Deliver permeable surfaces through Council's (capital/ footpath) program (report annually)	Record meters squared for future target development	De-pave 19,000sqm of non-permeable surfaces	To be set in line with Act & Adapt

8.2.2. Actions

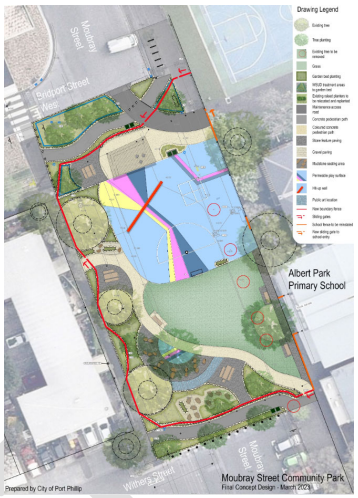
Actions to achieve targets and objectives

	Action	Status
15	Investigate locations where roads can be repurposed to increase greening, particularly in areas with lower canopy cover and where there are gaps in the public space network in line with the **Public Space Strategy**	Underway
16	Develop a new irrigation strategy to guide decision making on optimising potable water use for irrigation in parks, gardens, reserves, and for trees. In line with the **Public Space Strategy** and **Act and Adapt**	New
17	Plan for integrated water management and deliver projects that increase use of non-potable water, in line with the **Public Space Strategy**	Underway
18	Work towards improving permeability through capital projects; leveraging footpath renewal program to increase nature strip planting (including developing standard designs and processes) and enlarge street tree plots; and developing permeable targets in line with Act and Adapt.	Underway
19	Maintain heat mapping and solar analysis data in line with **Act and Adapt.**	New
20	Consider the delivery of urban forest outcomes in the scope and budget for all open space and recreation outdoor capital works programs, especially provision for nature play, planting around playgrounds, near seating and BBQ areas. Action to include the development of associated project target and tracking tools.	New

Case Study

Moubray Street Community Park

This community park was once a road. First established 2013 this popular park is now being transformed into a permanent reserve. The new park includes an additional 855m²of permeable surfaces and 14 new trees which when grown will achieve 33% canopy cover. The park will provide greening, cooling and amenity for the community.



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8.3. Engaged Community

Our community is engaged, and trees and plants are valued and we build partnerships to green our urban environment across all land types.

Strategic principles in our engaged community		
Together	Resilient	Biodiverse

Greening can be complex in urban environments, and combined, coordinated and innovative approaches will facilitate better outcomes.

Residents and landholders play a critical role in greening neighbourhoods in Port Phillip through actions to green their own gardens, balconies, and nature strips. Local environmental advocates and groups care for green spaces and contribute to maintaining our coastal ecosystems for the benefit of the whole community. A range of Friends of groups, community gardens and groups planting in public spaces undertake valuable roles in promoting, improving, maintaining, and monitoring our urban green spaces. Partnerships with volunteers, groups, and organisations are critical in achieving our shared urban forest vision.



Gardening in Lyall Iffla Reserve (source CoPP)

Supporting community action and providing public data assists with having an active engaged community who can participate in climate action through various means including citizen science, advocacy and activism, maintaining private gardens and balconies and participating in greening public space.

Partnerships with developers and other stakeholders to support greening, biodiversity and permeability will lead to better urban forest outcomes on public and private land. In addition, joining research collaborations help ensure we are tapping into current best practice, and enabling us to contribute to the development of better green outcomes in Port Phillip and beyond.

Together we can build a healthy, biodiverse, and more connected city.

8.3.1. Measures, Baselines and Targets

Measure	Baseline	Target Short-term (2029)	Target Medium-term (2034)	Target Long-term (2039)
Case studies of urban forest initiatives by residential home owners, developers, and community groups	Develop case studies	Continue to report	Continue to report	Continue to report
Number of community greening activities supported by Council.	Set baseline in 2024	Continue to report	Continue to report	Continue to report

8.3.2. Actions

Actions to achieve targets and objectives

	Action	Status
21	Support the community to implement the Nature Strip Guidelines (2022) and Community Gardens Assessment Guidelines (2021) and continue to provide community gardening support to promote sustainable gardening and biodiversity in public spaces.	Underway
22	Deliver annual community activities to educate, build greening capacity and improve the urban forest including My Smart Garden membership.	Underway
23	Provide resources to educate residents and provide guidance to developers on planting, biodiversity, and sustainable gardens to enhance the urban forest on private property	Underway
24	Partner with developers to support greening, permeability, biodiversity and stormwater detention in public and private spaces in line with **Act and Adapt** and the **Public Space Strategy.**	Underway
25	Provide information on the website about the urban forest and climate change, tree species, tree removal, maintenance, retention, replanting and challenges such as allergies, solar panel shading and leaf drop.	Underway
26	Investigate the feasibility of a public facing portal with tree and vegetation data including tree species, health and lifespan, new tree planting, tree removals and maintenance schedules	New
27	Partner with urban forest industry specialists and researchers on research projects, planting trials, citizen science projects and other new initiatives.	Underway

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Case Study

Community gardens and plots in open space.

There are many types of community gardens across City of Port Phillip including 5 formally managed community gardens, raised planter boxes in 7 parks and reserves for communal use and other community spaces where residents can engage in gardening.

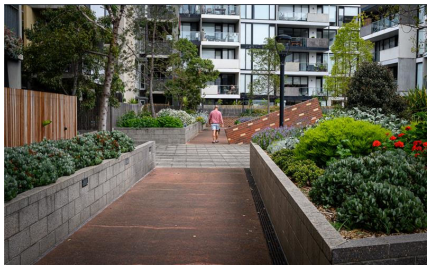


Case Study

Greening on private land.

Public and private partnerships achieve excellent greening outcomes for private space. Inkerman Oasis, Greeves St, St Kilda demonstrates how vegetation is incorporated amongst of 240 private and community dwellings including a large basement car park. Developed in 2005, the development shows the resulting established vegetation in a high-density development.

More recently 10 Patterson St, South Melbourne by Mills Gorman Architects and Clancy Constructions demonstrates the use of green roof, green wall and balcony planters on a site with minimal setbacks. Developed in 2022 the green infrastructure is establishing well.





8.4. A well-managed forest

A well-managed forest, including tree quality, pest and disease management and succession planning for iconic species and locations.

Strategic principles in planning for a well managed forest	
Resilient	Quality



Tree health is a suitable indicator for overall quality of urban forest maintenance and management. The health, structure and useful life expectancy of trees in our forest provides crucial information so we can best manage our urban forest.

Healthy urban forests support local cooling, absorb stormwater, improve amenity and provide health and wellbeing benefits. Healthy forests are also safer, greener and require less maintenance.

There are currently over 46,000 trees within the municipality. These trees and all vegetation in the municipality are inspected and maintained through various programs and contracts. Previous data demonstrates we can expect poor health and short life expectancy in some of our trees, likely around 10-12%.

Urban environmental factors have ongoing impacts on the health of our urban forest with some of the key challenges are contaminated soil, higher density development and constrained urban spaces and damage including vandalism. A diverse forest with a range of tree species ensures forest resilience, so that overall the forest can withstand pest and disease outbreaks, heatwaves and flood events. Our forward planning and maintenance programs are the main tools we have to combat these challenges.

Diversity

Urban forests need good mixture of species, age classes, structural sizes, species suitability and functional diversity (eg. habitat, shade, flowering) for overall forest health. Diversity in the urban forest reduces risks from pests, diseases and climate change.

Diversity of tree species is an important contributor to the health and longevity of an urban forest.

High diversity is recommended to avoid the large loss of any species or close related group of trees due to pest or diseases, reduce the spread of pest and disease and limit the impact of any one species due to climate change.

Many urban streets, especially boulevards, are lined with single species, often all planted at the same time. These kinds of tree populations are most at risk, especially when the species is not suited to the changing climate.

Overall, current tree diversity in Port Phillip is good. Tree species diversity is generally good. Only one species, the London Plane, is above 5% of the total tree population (at 9%).

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Various threats pose risks to some of Port Phillip's most iconic species. As the climate changes to warmer conditions, some species, like the English Elms planted in some parks, may struggle to cope and go into decline. Other species, including Canary Island Palm trees and London Plane trees that contribute significantly to the character of Port Phillip's neighbourhoods have more specific threats.

Canary Island Palms line Beaconsfield Parade and the St Kilda foreshore and feature in Catani Gardens, areas loved as Melbourne's playground hosting local residents and visitors.

Plane trees provide a green, leafy character, lining most streets in Elwood, and other some other avenues in the city including along St Kilda Road, Brighton Road, Williamstown Road, Richardson Street, Raglan Street and Barkly Street.

Serious management challenges exist for these species, and it is timely to consider how we manage their population to retain the iconic character and benefits these trees bring to our neighbourhoods.

Challenges for tree health include disease, drought stress, infrastructure damage from tree roots and electric line clearances impacting on the longevity of trees and integrity of avenue plantings. Future-proofing our forest by forward planning for when trees come to the end of their lifespans in parks, reserves and streets and developing species specific management plans will ensure we can maintain the integrity of our urban forest and address these challenges. The future of these iconic species is linked strongly to the character of several neighbourhoods, and we will work with those local communities to find a way forward for these iconic trees and avenues.

Maintenance and Management

Trees are long lived assets and have different needs throughout their lifecycle. Management and maintenance considerations include soil health, plant selection, site preparation, proper planting techniques, establishment and young tree care, integrated water management, regular inspections, risk management, pest treatments, and ongoing care.

A focus on forest management means we ensure our trees have the best start and are managed to perform for the urban environment in streets, parks and foreshore areas, for the character of our neighbourhoods, amenity, urban cooling and biodiversity.

Other actions which will improve the health of our urban forest include annual health audits, forward planning (including succession planting, decision making tools to inform 'which tree where'), clear responses to vadalism and the development databases for pests/dieseases. Improvements to data collection and maintenance programs will also assist.

8.4.1. Measures, Baselines and Targets

These measures and targets track the health of our urban forest.

Measure	Baseline (2022)	Target Short-term (2029)	Target Long-term (2039)
Public tree species diversity rating	Good to Fair	Good to Fair	Good
Percentage of Council trees assessed as healthy	To be established 2024	Minimum 85%*	90% healthy*
Percentage survival rate of new Council tree plantings at 2 years old	To be established 2024	Minimum 85% survival rate	90% survival rate

Percentage of Palm Tree Management Plan actions completed or on-track (annual)	New	90%	90%

*Targets subject to initial benchmarking

8.4.2. Actions

Actions to achieve targets and objectives

No	Action	Status
28	Conduct annual tree audits to assess health and condition of Council owned trees and implement refinements to guidelines and practices to improve health.	Underway
29	Future proof the urban forest through forward planning for when trees come to the end of their lifespans in parks, reserves, and streets. Consider heritage trees and aligning with conservation management plans where they exist	Underway
30	Develop and implement a Plane Tree Management Plan with our community including issues of species dominance, succession planning, and disease management.	New
31	Refine and implement our Palm Tree Management Plan to respond to the presence and spread of disease focusing first on key boulevards and foreshore reserves.	Underway
32	Develop a tree palette and planting matrix to ensure species diversity and climate resilience for tree species selection	Underway
33	Develop a pest and disease database matched to Port Phillip's tree species to evaluate the risk to the current urban forest and evaluate future planting and management practices.	New
34	Address soil contamination, managing soil on site where possible and using plants and other sustainable methods to remediate contaminated soil, in line with the **Public Space Strategy**	Underway
35	Update the response to greening vandalism including inspections, incident response and developing community education programs	New
36	Review the establishment and maintenance programs for trees and vegetation to improve tree health and canopy cover	New
37	Review and update processes and IT systems to improve data collection, reporting and work programs to optimise forest management. Including the monitoring of significant trees.	New

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Case Study

Cruikshank Stret. Port Melbourne

Several years ago sunflowers were used on this street to address contamination in the soil. Sunflowers have been used on this street to address contamination in the soil. Since the sunflowers were planted, remediating the soil, trees have been established and a succession of bulbs and other understory plants have thrived.



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8.5. A biodiverse urban forest

A biodiverse urban forest with diverse species, healthy ecosystems, and habitat

Strategic principles in planning for a biodiverse urban forest		
Biodiverse	Resilient	Together



Biodiversity is the variety of all plants, animals and microorganisms, their genes, and the ecosystems they live in across our land, rivers, and coast.

While few areas of remnant vegetation remain in Port Phillip, the biodiversity values within the city are still significant in their highly modified forms. Biodiversity is valuable in and of itself and it provides additional benefits mitigating against effects of climate change, ecological functions, improved amenity and connection with nature.

A biodiversity study of the municipality in 2020 showed that there are over 2000 flora and fauna species and 34 native vegetation sites. While these sites are protected, they are under pressure from population growth, constant and increasing development, pets and climate change (particularly on the foreshore).

As our municipality becomes more urbanised biodiversity becomes more difficult to maintain and therefore it is important to have specific actions established to identify, protect, and grow these areas.

The Foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan (2023-2028) has been developed to manage our native and indigenous vegetation areas. These sites are managed for their ecological and habitat values and are surveyed every five years.

Fragmentation of vegetation is one of the main contributors to biodiversity decline in urban areas. Linking biodiverse landscapes creates corridors or connections for safe movement and refuge for resident wildlife and helps maintain species richness with the movement of seeds and pollinators. Equally residents fostering biodiversity at home will strengthen biodiversity corridors and support ecological values within our city.

Mapping our current and future biodiversity corridors will assist in ensuring we protect our current ecosystems and consistently improve them and assist in developing urban forest precinct plans. We can do this by engaging with Traditional Owners, addressing habitat gaps, including biodiverse planting in new projects, weed and pest management, vegetation maintenance practices, and through partnerships with local environmental groups, neighbouring councils and supporting our engaged community.

8.5.1. Measures, Baselines and Targets

Measure	Baseline (2022)	Target Short-term (2029)	Target Long-term (2039)
Average Number of plantings per annum that support biodiversity (annual)	32,000	50,000	TBC
Area of native vegetation sites	261,997m²	8200m²	TBC #
Number of remnant indigenous flora sites	6	6	6

this target will be set as biodiversity and habitat corridor mapping occurs

8.5.2. Actions

Actions to achieve targets and objectives

No	Action	Status
38	Implement the Foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan (2023-2028) to maintain and improve key native and indigenous vegetation sites, in line with the **Act and Adapt Strategy**	Underway
39	Undertake a biodiversity study every five years (2030) to monitor progress and identify new opportunities to expand biodiversity and habitat, in line with the **Act and Adapt Strategy**	New
40	Revise and enhance weed and nuisance plant species management practices to improve urban forest health, biodiversity and maintain amenity	New
41	Map, protect and expand biodiverse and habitat corridors with focus on planting locally indigenous selections, reviewing land management practices, and linking key biodiversity corridors. This work will be done with the involvement of the Traditional Owners of the land of Port Phillip, in line with the **Public Space Strategy**	New

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Biodiverse streets

In 2022, works commenced on the Bothwell St Biolink. Large patches of grass were replaced with indigenous plantings in a diverse woody meadow. A community planting day in October 2022 encouraged local residents to join in, with signs continuing to raise awareness about the benefits.



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9. Implementation Plan

The accountability for implementing this strategy is assigned across the City of Port Phillips resources. The primary responsibility sits with the Open Space, Recreation and Community Resilience division through Council's Annual Business Plan and Budget over the next five years. Collaborative partnering projects with other sections of Council, relevant organisations and community groups will be actively sourced.

		Action	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Team
canopy	1	Street tree replacement and infill tree planting program						P, OS
	2	Improve and increase Council's annual additional tree planting program						P, OS
	3	Develop urban forest precinct plans for all neighbourhoods						OS
	4	Update and deliver Council's street tree planting guide						OS
	5	Continue implementation of Council's Tree Canopy Protection Program in response to ELC						P, PM
	6	Advocate for consideration of canopy cover in Electrical Line Clearance Regulations						Ad, OS
	7	Advocate to increase canopy coverage and biodiversity in Albert Park						Ad, P, OS
	8	Advocate to increase maintenance, canopy coverage and biodiversity on state managed land						Ad, P, OS
	9	Work with State Govt to develop and fund a greening strategy for Fishermans Bend						Ad, OS, StP
	10	Canopy and tree inventory analysis 5 years						OS
	11	Undertake feasibility for canopy target to achieve on streets by 2040, aiming for 30%						OS
	12	Prioritise greening, biodiversity and canopy trees in newly acquired public space						OS, PM
	13	Improve planning advice for trees and vegetation on development applications						P, SP, CD
	14	Develop locally specific planning tools for tree protection and greening private land						StP, OS
co	15	Investigate locations where roads can be repurposed to increase greening						T, S, OS, PM

	16	Develop a new irrigation strategy						S, P, OS
	17	Plan for integrated water management						S, P, OS
	18	Work towards improving permeability through capital projects including footpath renewal						A, PM, CD,
	19	Maintain heat mapping and solar analysis data						DTS, S
	20	Consider the delivery of urban forest outcomes for all open space and outdoor capital works programs						PM
community	21	Implement the Nature Strip Guidelines and Community Gardens Assessment Guidelines and other community greening support						OS
	22	Deliver annual community activities including My Smart Garden membership.						OS, S
	23	Provide resources to educate residents and provide guidance to developers						SP, OS, CD, P
	24	Partner with developers to support greening in public and private spaces						SP, CD, StP, OS, P
	25	Provide information on the website about the urban forest and climate change						OS, S, P
	26	Investigate the feasibility of a public facing portal with tree and vegetation data						DTS, A
	27	Partner on research projects, planting trials, citizen science projects and other new initiatives.						PM, OS
well-managed	28	Conduct annual tree audits						P
	29	Forward planning for trees in parks, reserves, and streets.						P, OS
	30	Develop and implement a Plane Tree Management Plan						OS, P
	31	Refine and implement a Palm Tree Management Plan						P, OS
	32	Develop a tree palette and planting matrix to ensure species diversity and climate resilience for tree species selection						OS
	33	Develop a pest and disease database matched to Port Phillip's tree species						P
	34	Address soil contamination, managing soil on site where possible						PM, P
	35	Update the response to greening vandalism including inspections, incident response and developing community education programs						LL
	36	Review the establishment and maintenance programs for trees and vegetation						P
	37	Review and update processes and IT systems to improve data collection, reporting and work programs						DTS, A
biodiverse	38	Implement the Foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan						P
	39	Undertake a biodiversity study every five years						OS
	40	Revise and enhance weed and nuisance plant species management practices						P

	41	Map, protect and expand biodiverse and habitat corridors	M					OS, P, PM

Teams: OS=Open Space Recreation and Community Resilience, P=Parks, StP=Strategic Planning, SP= Statutory Planning, A=Assets, DTS= Digital and Technology Services, CD=City Design, LL=Local Laws, CP=City Permits, PM=Project Management, Ad=Advocacy, T=Transport, Sustainability=S

Table: Implementation Plan for new actions by Year

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10. Monitoring

Objectives, measures, targets, and actions are crucial to track progress towards our vision, to support adaptive management, and demonstrate commitment to improving our urban forest. The City of Port Phillip is committed to and evidence based approach to urban forest management and has developed a number of measures and targets to track success over time.

2040 is a long term vision well suited to urban forests with long lived and slow growing trees. For practical delivery, the strategy has been focused on a 5-year action plan to align with Council planning cycles. For adaptive management every five years there will be a detailed review of progress and update for the next five years of actions and targets to match the ongoing commitment to 2040. This cyclic, stepped process will include 5 yearly monitoring updates of canopy cover change detection and biodiversity monitoring. Actions required for this monitoring and reporting have been included within the action and implementation plan.

Data from a range of sources was gathered, analysed and tested to create practical, evidence-based targets covering both quantity (eg. canopy cover) and quality (eg. tree health).

Baseline data ensures we can set realistic stretch targets and measure progress from an agreed starting point. In a couple of instances there is no baseline data available, so a target estimation is set, and baseline gathering is either underway or an early action in 2024/2025. As improvements are made to data collection, auditing and asset management functionality our ability to track our progress and set new targets will progress.

In between this five yearly tracking of progress towards our vision and long-term outcomes, we will produce an annual implementation to Council and the Community on delivery of actions and annual measures to give an indication of progress (eg number of trees planted).

In combination this creates a time stepped approach to monitoring as set out in figure below:

To be inserted – once draft actions are approved.

To be inserted

Figure: Monitoring process

10.1. Outcomes, Measures, Baselines and Targets

Our goals and measures and targets have been nested to align with the five strategic principles, enabling us to track the quantity and quality of progress towards our vision.

Environmental systems are complex and many of the actions provide direct or indirect contributions towards multiple targets. Below is a matrix table of actions against targets to show this relationship.

Table: Outcomes, Measures and Targets alignment with Strategic Principles

To be completed once draft actions are approved		

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11. Glossary

Biodiversity / biodiverse
The variety of all plants, animals and microorganisms, their genes, and the ecosystems they live in.

Baselines and Measures

Measures related to our outcomes have been developed for monitoring and to keep the focus of resources on action implementation. Baseline data from 2023 provides a point to track measures and targets against. Baseline data is included in section 8.

Canopy
The upper level of a tree or trees. In cities this is typically measured for trees tall enough to provide functional shade for people (3m+).

Ecosystem
A community of living organisms interacting with each other in their habitat.

Green space
Vegetated land or water in an urban area including parks, gardens, sporting ovals, bike and walking paths, and urban landscaping.

Green Infrastructure
Natural and designed greening urban elements like parks, trees, garden beds, sand dunes, watercourses, raingardens, hedges, green walls and green roofs.

Grey Infrastructure
Human-engineered structures like roads, buildings, footpaths, carparks and drainage systems.

Habitat
Food, water, shelter and space that supports plant or animal life.

Impervious surface
A hard surface (such as a road or building) that prevents infiltration of water into the ground, causing water to run off the surface.

Integrated water management

Collaborative planning and management of stormwater, wastewater and fresh water to deliver water security, public and environmental health, and urban amenity.

Objectives

Statement of the outcome that we are aiming to achieve in order to fulfil the Greening Port Phillip vision, linked to key principles and challenges it will address.

Sustainable
Responsibly managing our current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This includes social, financial and environmental resources.

Statistical areas level 1 (SA1)

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has statistical geographical boundaries designed so that each statistical area remains as consistent as possible over time. The Statistical areas level 1 (SA1) include areas of population between 200 and 800 people and are designed to maximise geographic detail available for Census of Population and Housing data while maintaining confidentiality[3].

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Targets

Targets are included to track our progress against, and to set measurable aims to achieve our 2040 vision.

Resilient
Able to survive, adapt and thrive no matter what kind of chronic stresses and acute shocks are experienced.

Urban forest / greening
All trees and plants on public and private land.

Urban heat island
The effect of metropolitan areas being hotter than rural areas due to heat absorption and retention in hard surfaces (eg. buildings and pavement).

Understorey
Small and young trees, shrubs and low plantings between the tree canopy and the ground.

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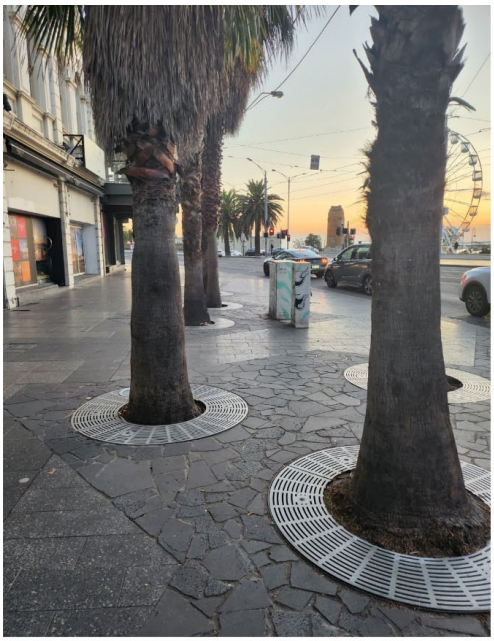
12. End Notes

[1] City of Port Phillip (2024) Places to Live: City of Port Phillip Housing Strategy (draft for consultation)
[2] City of Port Phillip, 2022, Protecting Vegetation in the private realm Discussion Paper and Options.
[3] Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022) Census geography glossary (Census geography glossary | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au))

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Urban Forest Strategy 2040
Background and Benchmarking Report

June 2024 update
Prepared for the City of Port Phillip by St Jack & Co









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June 2023/April 2024

Prepared by St Jack & Co and Climate Cavalry for the City of Port Phillip.

Cover Images: Top Left: St Kilda Esplanade, Top Right: Bothwell Street Woody Meadow,
Bottom Left: Danks Street Reserve, Bottom Right: Acland Street. Source: Kat Ryan

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1. Executive Summary

The City of Port Phillip is developing a new Urban Forest Strategy to plan for increased urban greening over the coming decades. Knowledge and practice of urban greening has evolved significantly since the City of Port Phillip adopted its first greening strategy, Greening Port Phillip, in 2010 (GPP 2010). This Background & Benchmarking Report synthesises the current strategic context, knowledge and best practice, to provide a cohesive evidence base for the new strategy.

Collectively, all trees and plants on public and private land make up our urban forest. This includes trees, shrubs and groundcovers in home gardens, on green roofs, walls and facades, on nature strips, medians and roundabouts, in parks and reserves, and in shopping strips, car parks and industrial areas.

Port Phillip has an established heritage of parks, public and private gardens, and tree-lined streets that contribute to mature canopy and greening across most neighbourhoods. From boulevards of Plane Trees to thriving indigenous plantings in biolinks, from Canary Island Date Palms along the foreshore to backyards and community gardens – our urban forest is an integral part of the Port Phillip identity.

We want to protect the greening we already have, help it thrive, and take practical action to expand our urban forest within the complexities of our urban environment.

1.1. Background

The evidence is comprehensive and clear – the urban forest offers a multitude of benefits to people, economies and nature in cities. Greener cities promote happiness, health, physical activity, and community connectedness. Water use, stormwater management costs and flood risks reduce. Air quality is better, and neighbourhoods are cooler. Soil productivity, local food security, private and biodiversity improve. House prices rise and commercial strips thrive. Urban forests also sequester carbon, reduce emissions, and mitigate climate change risks. There are risks to manage too, with diverse views on aesthetics, solar panel shading, debris and limb drop, vandalism, and grey infrastructure conflicts.

Urban forestry is also well-supported in terms of strategic and community alignment. In recent years, the Port Phillip **community has consistently raised greening as a major priority** for the City. Over the last decade, **urban forestry has become well-integrated in local, regional, state and global strategies and policy** – from global goals to reach nature-positive and net zero, to local strategies like the *Council Plan 2021-2031*, *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy* and *Places for People: Public Space Strategy*. Council has set a range of indicators and targets relating to the urban forest, including direct measures of increased greening (eg. canopy cover, trees planted), and indirect measures of greening benefits (eg. pollutants removed, reduction in hotspots).

In the public realm, the **City of Port Phillip manages approximately 46,000 trees**, 75% of which are street trees. Tree species and genus diversity in the tree population is generally good, with only one species, the London Plane, above 5% of the total tree population. Biodiversity values remaining in the City are significant, and require protection and enhancement for future generations.

Since 2010, **the City of Port Phillip has delivered substantial greening action, investment, research and planning to integrate greening into Council plans and operations**. There has been an increased focus on biodiversity and biolinks, more understorey plantings, engineered solutions for passive watering, increased soil volume and greening on buildings, and community-led produce and verge gardening.

There is still room to grow, and strong collaboration between Council, community, State Government and other stakeholders will be essential for success.

Tree canopy cover of the City of Port Phillip was **17.17% in 2022, down from 17.86% in 2012**. The City has increased its overall canopy cover on roads and public land (+0.39%), but not enough to outpace the overall loss on private land (-1.09%). With about half of the City area being privately owned, it is clear that **greening on private land will need to play a greater role in increasing the urban forest**.

1.2. Benchmarking

Port Phillip is not alone in its efforts to expand and improve its urban forest. Ten neighbouring and peer Councils with urban forest or greening strategies have been benchmarked alongside Greening Port Phillip 2010 to identify common themes, individual highlights, and opportunities for Port Phillip to improve. Alongside the benchmarking is a review of global and local urban forestry guidance, the latest research, and other contemporary tree strategies and case studies. The key findings on common themes, emerging evidence-based best practice, and how to measure success, are outlined below.

There is **widespread agreement on the importance of increasing tree canopy cover**, creating new green spaces, and establishing green corridors to connect and enhance existing green spaces. Councils most commonly cited the benefits of urban cooling, carbon capture, stormwater benefits and improved air quality. Councils also emphasise the need for community engagement, partnerships, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure the success and sustainability of urban greening initiatives. Most strategies had around a 20-year lifespan. A long-term strategic outlook is typical because trees are often slow growing, with decades needed to measure success against absolute canopy cover targets. For practicality, shorter-term action plans and regular monitoring can complement long-term goals.

The most commonly cited challenges for urban forestry cover four key themes:

- ***Climate change*** – Trees are long-lived assets, so tree populations need to be diverse and well-managed to resist extreme heat, drought, pests and diseases. Greening is an important tool to prepare our communities for these changed conditions, especially through carbon capture, urban cooling and flood risk reduction.
- ***Contested urban spaces*** – Plants need soil, water, nutrients, space, air and light to grow and thrive. New development, utilities and infrastructure, limited water access, compacted soils, pollution, heat, and direct damage all threaten greening. Public space is scarce, with trade-offs and smart design needed to address all desired objectives.

- ***(un)Healthy tree populations*** – Urban forests can be at risk long-term without 'defensive diversity' through a mixture of species, age, sizes and functions. They need proactive management including good design, site and soil preparation, passive irrigation, young tree care, health audits, pest treatments, risk management, and other ongoing maintenance.
- ***Community values*** – Perceptions on urban greening can have a large impact on the quality and quantity of the urban forest. For example, communities who value trees and actively engage in greening are likely to retain trees and increase greening, whereas, in communities where trees are not valued, they may not be well-funded or prioritised in capital works. Fears and concerns, both real and perceived, all threaten the urban forest.

It is now widely accepted that all cities should have an urban forestry or greening strategy. At a minimum, these should include actions to protect existing trees, increase tree canopy against a target, manage and maintain healthy tree populations, and collect data on Council's urban forest and canopy.

For Councils going beyond the baseline, best practice and emerging strategic themes are listed below.

These themes are discussed in this report, supported by case studies.

- Spatially prioritised greening for climate adaptation and social equity
- Outcome-oriented targets, with proactive monitoring and promotion of progress
- Strengthened tree protections
- Defensive diversity and biodiversity sensitive urban design (BSUD)
- Engineered solutions to recover space and support thriving trees
- Community education, stewardship and engagement
- Greening on private land
- Manage trees as assets, reflecting their true economic value
- Systematic integration of greening across Council and beyond
- Proactive innovation, including R&D partnerships.

Well-considered monitoring can support adaptive management, bolster high-level support, and minimise unexpected costs, waste and distractions from on-ground delivery. Greening targets are commonly used to set a specific ambition. The most commonly used targets are for percentage canopy cover and number of trees planted, but there is a growing global trend towards targets that are outcome-based (eg. equal access, health & wellbeing, active transport) or specific to land use types (residential, commercial, industrial) or tenures (public and private).

2. Growing a greener Port Phillip

Port Phillip was an early adopter of urban forestry, being one of the first Australian Councils to develop an Urban Forest Strategy in 2010, called Greening Port Phillip. This document recognised that a healthy and diverse urban forest enhances the community's daily experience, generating environmental, economic, cultural and social benefits, both now and into the future.

The policy-driven Greening Port Phillip helped to change the way public trees were managed in the City, and it sparked community recognition of the importance of greening for liveability, prosperity and sustainability. The associated Street Tree Planting Program 2017-2022 set canopy increase targets for each neighbourhood, and identified priority streets to increase street tree planting.

A number of key shifts have occurred since 2010:

- Increased community awareness, interest and advocacy for urban greening
- Stronger evidence of the many benefits of greening, especially for public health and wellbeing
- Recognising that most vegetation is on private land, contemporary urban forestry now addresses all vegetation, and is not restricted to street trees
- Accelerated canopy loss on private property due to redevelopment, densification and lifestyle preferences
- There is an increasing focus on electrical line clearance compliance
- Large canopy trees have been lost due to their age and other health factors
- COVID lockdowns have led to more people enjoying green spaces, with a rise in community-led greening, including nature strip gardening and depaving
- More sophisticated spatial data and smart technology have changed the way urban greening is measured, monitored and managed.

It is now time for a new Urban Forest Strategy to be developed, to build on the achievements so far and incorporate contemporary best practice. Port Phillip is well-placed to lead in urban greening. Good planning in the past has left a legacy of green historic parks, public and private gardens, and tree-lined streets that contribute to mature canopy and greening across most neighbourhoods.

In recent years, the Port Phillip community has consistently raised greening as a major priority for the City, including in consultation on the Council Plan 2022-2031 and other Council strategies and initiatives[1]. The community has said that trees and greening are central to their desire for beautiful public spaces, parks and streetscapes, for supporting biodiversity, cooling neighbourhoods, and mitigating against the impacts of a changing climate. The underlying message is to protect what greening we already have, and to plant more.

Importantly, Council cannot green Port Phillip alone. All landowners play an important role in greening our neighbourhoods, as do the many local environmental advocates and groups, who partner with Council to care for and green spaces for the benefit of the whole community.

[1] Including CoPP (2018) *Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-2028*, CoPP (2018) *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028*, CoPP (2022) *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32*, CoPP (2021) *South Melbourne Structure Plan*, and CoPP (2022) *Nature Strip and Street Gardening Guidelines*.

2.1. Summary of Greening Port Phillip 2010

Greening Port Phillip – An urban forest approach 2010 (GPP 2010) is a key document guiding the creation of a sustainable, resilient and biodiverse City.

The two objectives of GPP 2010 are:

1. Enhancing liveability – Creating a sense of place, shaping the future of Port Phillip and caring for our natural environment
2. Adapting and sustaining – Preparing the Port Phillip's community and council assets for a different climatic future.

Many of the principles of GPP 2010 still stand up with contemporary urban forest practice. These include urban cooling, equitable access to trees, biodiversity and wildlife corridors, healthy and sustainable tree populations, amenity and urban character, 'alternative greening' (eg. nature strips, WSUD, depaving), and integrating greening with urban planning and capital works.

The key components of Greening Port Phillip's integrated approach are:

- A Tree Policy (see below)
- A Street Tree Planting Guide (see below)
- Tree Management Guidelines (not formally adopted, see below)
- Strategic/Master Plans (external urban planning mechanism).

GPP 2010 did not set a canopy target, because at the time, no data was available to determine the baseline tree canopy cover[2]. However, it did set five indicators to measure success (see below).

Table 1. Indicators to measure success, from Greening Port Phillip 2010.

Indicator	Desired outcome	Measure – reported every 5 years
Number of hot spots*	A reduction in the total number of hot spots contributing to the heat island effect	Total % reduction in hot spots and % increase in cooling and temperature control in treated hot spot areas
Tree canopy cover	An increase in the total area of tree canopy cover in the City of Port Phillip	Total tree canopy cover
Number of trees	An increase in the number of trees in streets and parks in the City of Port Phillip	Total number of trees in streets Total number of trees in parks
Alternative greening activity	New greening initiatives undertaken where trees are not an option	Number of alternative greening activities undertaken in streets that cannot be planted with trees
Community satisfaction with trees	The City of Port Phillip community are satisfied with the action being undertaken by council to maintain the urban forest	Levels of satisfaction with council action being taken

*Hot spots - sites that show up as hotter than surrounding areas using thermal imaging.

[2] Multiple measurements of canopy cover have been taken since. In 2023, the City of Port Phillip has commissioned new canopy mapping to document the status of Port Phillip's canopy and to develop a Tree Ledger database for further targeted analysis.

2.1.1. Tree Policy

The Tree Policy is integrated in Greening Port Phillip. It is divided into eight key policy areas:

1. Tree protection
2. Tree planting and selection
3. Tree removal and replacement
4. Climate change adaptation
5. Tree root management
6. Tree asset management
7. Trees and the urban character
8. Community consultation and involvement.

Having been largely converted to business as usual[3], many of the policies and ongoing actions could be retained in a separate tree policy, to ensure they are not lost when the new strategy is created.

2.1.2. Street Tree Planting Program 2017-2022

The Street Tree Planting Program 2017-2022 (mentioned in GPP 2010 as a 'Guide') brought a systematic, neighbourhood-based approach to prioritising street tree replacement and upgrade works in the annual capital works budget.

The Program's four objectives are to: improve amenity, increase biodiversity, reduce the Urban Heat Island effect, and increase canopy cover.

The Program's four strategies are to:

- Maintain a balance of young, semi mature and mature trees across the municipality
- Undertake planting to replace street trees that have died or been removed
- Increase the overall number and canopy cover of trees in the municipality
- Maximise the use of street trees to enhance the character of areas experiencing urban renewal and development intensification.

The Program outlines the street tree population in each neighbourhood, including canopy cover targets, current species and age mix of the street tree population. It prioritises each street for planting, based on the extent they are covered by tree canopy[4]. The document also recommends a palette of species for each precinct, but does not prescribe where and what each tree will be[5].

2.1.3. Tree Management Guidelines

The Tree Management Guidelines referred to in GPP 2010 were intended to detail all the tree planting and management processes used by the City of Port Phillip, with all activities by Council staff and contractors to be undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines. However, these were never formally adopted. There is a one-page Tree Protection Guideline[6], which applies to street trees in the vicinity of construction sites.

2.1.4. Nature Strip and Street Gardening Guidelines

These Guidelines (2022) set out how to plan, plant and maintain the nature strip or street garden outside a home or business. Approvals or permits are not required for residents gardening in accordance with the guidelines. An action under the *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32*, the Guidelines are an important step in enabling community-led greening.

[3] CoPP (2017) *Greening Port Phillip: Summary of Actions*, January 2017, accessed at: https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/1k1je4tb/e87946_17_attach_1_key_policy_summary_of_implementation_actions.pdf

[4] Prioritisation is based on an independent assessment of the status and condition of trees in each street, undertaken in 2009 by TreeLogic. Only streets with sufficient space for trees are prioritised.

[5] Final location and species-specific decisions are the subject of further detailed assessment.

[6] CoPP (2008), *Tree Protection Guidelines*, accessed at: https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/3kogbd40/tree-protection-guidelines.pdf

3. Greening highlights since 2010

3.1. Recent on-ground and investment highlights

Council has delivered substantial greening action and investment since 2010. For example, Council has:

- Increased public tree canopy coverage by 0.39%.
- Allocated almost $3.2 million in 2022/23 alone for greening-related investment via the Council Plan 2021-2031[7].
- Achieved goals of increasing tree canopy cover and the number of trees in public areas, including by:
    - Shifting everyday tree management towards best practice
    - Using tree species more suited to hotter and drier climates
    - Improving soil conditions for street trees
    - Managing the quality of new tree stock purchases.
- Collected improved data for improved tree asset management, with trees now visually inspected at least once a year.
- Planted more trees in park construction projects, as a result of improved collaboration within Council.
- Partnered with the University of Melbourne in a 4-year research program, creating a Woody Meadow in Balaclava to create a high amenity green space with low maintenance and watering costs.
- Planted sunflower and tillage radish seeds on the Cruickshank Street Reserve, to determine if the contaminated soil could be remediated to support healthy tree planting. The Cruikshank Street sunflowers were very well-received on social media, reaching over 7,700 people on Facebook. Soil samples indicate an improvement in soil quality, and trees and native wildflowers are now growing at the site.
- Rolled out more water sensitive urban design, including kerb inlets for passive irrigation.
- Mapped biodiversity corridors, and enhanced their connectivity by planting in some streetscapes.
- Continued to plant a diverse structure of plants, not just trees (e.g. Danks Street median and Liardet Street median).
- Participated in a collaborative national Council Tree Trial[8] , and independently trialled some climate resilient species.

[7] $3.193M total funding commitments include: Enhance urban forests as identified in Greening Port Phillip and Act and Adapt Strategies $1.340m; Improve irrigation practice and efficiency $349k; Assess feasibility of stormwater harvesting projects $160k; Design and deliver best practice water sensitive urban design including raingardens $764k; Continue Elster Creek Catchment Partnership and contribute to Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve $430k; Develop permeability requirements for new developments $150k.

[8] Specialty Trees (2023*) Tree Species Trialling*, accessed at https://www.specialitytrees.com.au/blog/tree-species-trialling-47nd8

3.2. Recent strategic highlights

In recent years, Council has also undertaken substantial research and planning to understand the challenges and opportunities for greening, and to prioritise its integration into Council plans and operations. For example, Council has:

- Set greening-relevant targets, including to:
  - increase canopy cover for both street trees and private land by 10% by 2027/28[9]
  - increase the number of trees on Council land by 0.5% by 2022/23[10]
  - achieve Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2021[11]
  - increase the daily number of walking and biking trips by 36% and 151% respectively by 2028/28[12]
  - increase the proportion of residents satisfied with parks and open space to 85% by 2022/23[13].
- Integrated greening objectives and actions across Council strategies, including the *Council Plan 2021-2031*, *Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-2028*, *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028*, and *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32*.
- Adopted guidelines on how to plan, plant and maintain nature strips and street gardens[14].
- Commissioned a biodiversity study that detailed actions to increase biodiversity across the City, which are now being integrated into Council strategies and workplans[15].
- Committed to creating a Biodiversity Plan, Water Sensitive City Plan, and Movement and Place Guidelines that include green infrastructure, for internal use to guide Council works.
- Nominated areas in each neighbourhood for open space upgrades, proposed new open spaces, landscaping plans, street tree plantings and greening[16].
- Prioritised action on enhancing biodiversity, reducing flood risk and urban heat, and increasing greening on private land.
- Undertaken a range of research to address those priorities, including: identifying vegetation values, fauna values and significant trees across the City[17]; investigating permeability rates across the City, and identifying potential mechanisms to increase them[18]; investigating the comparative effectiveness of urban cooling interventions[19]; and investigating potential options to better protect greening on private land[20].

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[9] CoPP (2018) *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028*
[10] CoPP (2021) *Council Plan 2021-2031*
[11] CoPP (2018) *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028*
[12] CoPP (2018) *Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-2028*
[13] CoPP (2021) *Council Plan 2021-2031*
[14] CoPP (2022) *Nature Strip and Street Gardening Guidelines*
[15] Arcadis (2020) *Port Phillip Biodiversity Study*
[16] CoPP (2022) *In Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32* and the CoPP (2017) *Street Tree Planting Program 2017-2022*
[17] Arcadis (2020) *Port Phillip Biodiversity Study*
[18] CoPP (2019) *Permeability Baseline Assessment and Tool Development*), CoPP (2022) *Permeability in the Private Realm*
[19] UNSW & CoPP (2020) *Cooling South Melbourne, Impact Analysis of Cooling interventions*
[20] CoPP (2022) *Protecting Vegetation in the Private Realm*)

3.3. Greening Port Phillip Evaluation (2020)

Greening Port Phillip 2010 has been subject to a mid-term (2020[21]) and full-term (2023) review. Key findings of the 2023 review are summarised below. The full 2023 review is published along with this report to support consultation on the new strategy.

Successes	Challenges	Opportunities
Strategic integration Recent additions to the Planning Scheme (12.01-1L) for retention and protection of significant trees, encouraging biodiversity, climate ready tree species, and innovation in landscape design. Heritage overlays for significant trees in the public realm. New definition proposed under the 2022/23 local law review for significant trees in the private realm. Integration of urban forest actions into key strategies and plans. **Research collaborations** Collaborating on research projects with universities – Woody Meadows project, Walk Quality project. Participating in street tree species trials. **Tree planting** Two five-year streetscape planting programs completed. Signature trees planted in public spaces including Point Ormond, Light Rail reserve, Kerford Road. Many actions converted into business as usual: tree removal and replacement practices, amenity tree value charges, tree protection, pest, disease and animal monitoring and management, and community planting days. **Biodiversity** Biodiversity Study and Discussion Paper. Habitat planting increased along the light rail corridor, the foreshore, Danks St and Bothwell St. **Climate change adaptation** Business as usual actions include climate resilient tree species being identified and used, WSUD program, and raingarden installations. 2017-2022 street tree planting program focused on streets with low canopy cover. Greening and Cooling South Melbourne Study. Commenced depaving projects.	**Targets** Current tree canopy targets are complicated and confusing. **Alternative greening** Implementation of alternative greening options is challenging. **Private land** Most loss of canopy is occurring on private land with little protection, aside from significant trees. **Tree planting** The easiest vacant street and park tree sites have largely been completed. Additional planting will now occur in more difficult sites that are likely to need engineered solutions and considerations for contested space. **Tree maintenance and compliance** Increasing tree planting requires more water. Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance can be difficult with some trees in some areas. There are space constraints for tree planting and tree growth, with overhead and below ground infrastructure. Working with power companies on engineered solutions is costly and time consuming. Much of the existing tree population has had no formative pruning, leading to increased ongoing maintenance. **Industry** Australia wide arborist shortage is affecting the workforce.	**Targets and indicators** Baseline data for indicators and targets is being developed to support development of new indicators and targets. **Alternative greening** MOU to use the City of Melbourne's Green Factor Tool is in place, to work with and build on. **Tree asset management** Ongoing improvement to activate capabilities of new asset management system for trees, including data quality, reporting on tree condition, and reporting on indicators and targets. A method for ascribing a monetary value to urban trees was explored in Year 1 of Greening Port Phillip and found unsuitable at that time; this could be revisited. **Tree planting for performance** Maximise tree performance by improving the quality of tree planting and including best practice plantings in Council's design standards. Continue to explore increasing diversity in tree size and layered plantings. **Community information, education and support** Communication and information on trees, urban greening and biodiversity can be improved. There are opportunities for greater collaboration with community, and support for community groups. **Tree protection** Tree protections could be stronger. Planning compliance could be improved.

[21] City of Port Phillip Urban Forest Mid-Term Review and Report, Urban Forest Consulting, February 2020

4. Strategic and policy context

Over the last decade, urban greening has become well-integrated in local, regional, state and global strategies and policy. These policies widely accept and promote the importance of greening for liveability, prosperity and sustainability in urban environments. The strategic hierarchy is summarised in the infographic on this page, and the relevant high-level priorities for each strategy are listed in this section below.



Image 1: Strategy and Policy Context (Source City of Port Phillip 2023)

4.1. Local

Urban greening has been integrated in several related strategies by the City of Port Phillip. They all recognise the importance of urban greening in delivering benefits to the community, and seek to maximise the positive impact of urban greening through coordinated and strategic planning and management.

The leading strategic priorities for urban greening already integrated in current City of Port Phillip strategies can be summarised as:

- **Climate resilient people and property** – mitigating urban heat and flood risk (eg. by increasing permeability), especially for vulnerable people
- **Biodiverse and climate-ready nature** – climate-suitable species, vegetation and wildlife diversity
- **Liveable and attractive city** – walking and bike riding, high-quality spaces, greening on private land, protecting mature trees.

The most relevant strategies are listed below, including their pertinent high-level objectives (in bold), areas of focus and actions (in brackets), and any relevant sub-plans (○ dot points). A full list of Council's greening-related targets and indicators is also provided below (see section 12.1).

Council Plan 2021-31

- **Liveable** (high quality public space; safer; connected)
- **Sustainable** (active community; greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient)

Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028

- **Greener, cooler and more liveable** (diverse and resilient species; prioritise action to mitigate heat, flooding and social disadvantage; protect and increase vegetation on private land)
    - ○ Biodiversity Study (2020) and internal implementation plan
- **Adapting and resilient to climate change** (blue-green infrastructure to mitigate flooding and sea level rise)
- **Water Sensitive City** (place-based permeability targets; more permeable private land)
    - ○ Water Sensitive City internal implementation plan

Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32

- **Diverse, attractive and inclusive** (laneway gardening; shade)
- **Blue-green spaces** (WSUD; biodiversity; protect mature trees; canopy for bikes and pedestrians; climate-suitable species; repurposing roads for greening; cooling, irrigation, greening and WSUD in private developments)
    - ○ Nature Strip and Street Gardening Guidelines (2022)
- **Sustainable** (nature; soil remediation; climate resilience)

Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-2028

- **Catering for our growing community** (10-minute walking neighbourhoods; street design priorities of safety and comfort)
- **Healthier and connected community** (spaces for walking, socialising and play; boosting bike riding).

4.2. Regional and state

The most relevant regional[22] and state strategies are listed below, including their urban greening related high-level objectives and targets, and any linked sub-plans (o dot points).

Victoria's Climate Change Act 2017

- Net-zero emissions by 2050

Biodiversity 2037 (2017)

- Net gain in extent and condition of habitats

Water for Victoria (2016)

- Healthy and resilient urban landscapes

Open Space for Everyone (2021)

- Health & wellbeing; biodiversity; climate resilience; economic & social benefits

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

- 20-min neighbourhoods (shady and green)
- Resilient, liveable, cooler, greener
    - Trees for Cooler and Greener Streetscapes - Guidelines for Streetscape Planning and Design (2019)

Living Melbourne, Our Metropolitan Urban Forest (2019)

- Healthy People, Abundant Nature, Natural Infrastructure

Plan Melbourne Action 91

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 recognises the urban heat island effect, the role of climate change, the benefits of urban greening, and the challenge of greening a rapidly growing and densifying city. The Plan highlights the need to plan for green infrastructure in the same way as grey infrastructure. It identifies that liveability outcomes can be achieved by protecting existing green spaces, creating new greening opportunities, improving water sensitive urban design, greening buildings, and increasing permeable surfaces.

The Plan Melbourne Implementation Plan commits to developing a whole-of-government approach to cooling and greening Melbourne (Action 91).

Action 91 sets out a short- to medium-term (0-5 year) work program to expand and enhance Melbourne's urban forest. This includes improving spatial data, supporting councils with their urban forest strategies, setting regional targets, establishing a green infrastructure grants program, developing new guidelines and regulations to support greening subdivisions and developments, creating green infrastructure demonstration projects, greening state-owned land, and investigating how alternative water sources can support greening initiatives.

[22] The Inner Melbourne Action Plan 2015-2025 has not been included in this section because of uncertainty over its continuing implementation.

4.3. National and global

4.3.1. Australia's Strategy for Nature 2019-2030

Australia's national biodiversity strategy and action plan[23] recognises that all tiers of government play a part in regulating, funding and managing nature conservation. It aims to support healthy and functioning biological systems through three overarching goals:

- Goal 1: Connect all Australians with nature
- Goal 2: Care for nature in all its diversity
- Goal 3: Share and build knowledge.

The strategy includes an objective for urban areas, Objective 9: Enrich cities and towns with nature. This objective recognises the benefits of urban greening, and promotes improving tree canopy and alternative greening options, integrating urban ecology and biodiversity into urban policies, sharing knowledge, and encouraging individual and community participation.

4.3.2. Global goals

Access to urban nature is increasingly seen as an essential service that cities should provide to their residents, and has been conceptualised as a basic human right[24].

Global Goals

- SDG 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Net Zero by 2050
- Nature Positive by 2030

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals include Goal 11 *Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable*; and indicator 11.7 *By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities*.

Under the UN Convention on Biodiversity, global governments are seeking to negotiate a goal for the world to be nature-positive by 2030 – a world where species and ecosystems are restored and regenerating rather than declining.

There is a global goal to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. In March 2023, UN Secretary General António Guterres was unequivocal: "In short, our world needs climate action on all fronts – everything, everywhere, all at once." Urban trees are sometimes referred to as a 'silver bullet' for climate, as they both reduce the cause (sequester carbon) and adapt to the impacts (eg. by mitigating heat and flooding). The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report found that "Ecosystem-based adaptation approaches such as urban greening… have been effective in reducing flood risks and urban heat (high confidence)."[25]

Cities all over the world have invested heavily in urban greening for these reasons, along with the myriad other benefits urban greening provides, such as improved amenity, cultural connection, cleaner air and water, healthier and more active people, lower crime rates, enhanced biodiversity, reduced energy use, reduced infrastructure maintenance costs, higher property values, and more prosperous main streets.

[23] Commonwealth of Australia (2019), *Australia's Strategy for Nature 2019-2030,* accessed at: https://www.australiasnaturehub.gov.au/national-strategy

[24] Miles, Ellen (2022), *Nature Is A Human Right: Why We're Fighting for Green in a Grey World*, Dorling Kindersley

[25] Synthesis Report of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6): Summary for Policymakers (2023), accessed at: https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf

4.4. Industry capacity building

Increasingly, a number of global initiatives support cities to celebrate and scale best practice urban greening, including:

- **Tree Cities of the World**[26] – Created by Arbor Day Foundation and the FAO in 2019. Global cities can be recognised if they meet five core standards showing a commitment to trees.
- **CitiesWithNature**[27] – A joint ICLEI, The Nature Conservancy and IUCN program recognising almost 180 global cities to date. ICLEI Oceania launched the Australian chapter in 2020.
- **Resilient Cities Network**[28] – Now expanding from the 100 Resilient Cities program, this network seeks to 'build safe and equitable cities for all'. Melbourne is a founding member.
- **National Park Cities**[29] – Started in London in 2019, the program aspires to have 25 National Park Cities by 2025. Adelaide is the second, awarded in 2021.

A number of Australian research programs and bridging organisations play a critical role in building urban forestry capability nationally (in addition to those by global leaders like USDA Forest Service, American Forests, FAO, and the European Commission), noting that some have concluded but leave a legacy of relevant research outputs. They include:

- **Greener Spaces Better Places**[30] – A national initiative funded by Hort Innovation, with over 400 members across sectors (originally 202020 Vision). Promoted the first analysis of Australia's urban canopy trends[31], and publishes influential guides and reports.
- **TREENET**[32], a national urban tree research and education cluster dedicated to improving the urban forest, which runs an annual Street Tree Symposium.
- **Which Plant Where**[33], a five-year research program funded by Hort Innovation and delivered by Macquarie University and Western Sydney University, investigating how current landscaping species will cope under more extreme climates, and identifying new varieties.
- **Green Infrastructure Research Group**[34] at University of Melbourne, where the well-known 'Burnley Method' for tree valuation was created.
- **Centre for Urban Research**[35] at RMIT runs a number of relevant research programs, focusing on health and wellbeing, liveability and climate resilience[36].
- **Low Carbon Living CRC**[37] (for urban cooling guides) and **CRC for Water Sensitive Cities**[38]**.**
- **Clean Air and Urban Landscapes (CAUL) Hub**[39] developed research and guides in urban environmental management, with a biodiversity and climate resilience focus.

[26] https://treecitiesoftheworld.org/
[27] http://www.citieswithnature.org/
[28] https://resilientcitiesnetwork.org/
[29] https://www.nationalparkcity.org/
[30] https://www.greenerspacesbetterplaces.com.au/
[31] Greener Spaces Better Places (2016), *Where should all the trees go?* accessed at: https://www.greenerspacesbetterplaces.com.au/media/163130/wsattg.pdf
[32] https://treenet.org/
[33] https://www.whichplantwhere.com.au/
[34] https://girg.science.unimelb.edu.au/
[35] https://cur.org.au/research-programs/
[36] Current RMIT projects of interest include Onsets not offsets for real biodiversity gains, Communities for Walkability (citizen science), a scorecard for liveable cities, and a questionnaire for cities to assess if they have the success factors to deliver greening.
[37] http://www.lowcarbonlivingcrc.com.au/ (from 2012 to 2019)
[38] https://watersensitivecities.org.au/ (est. 2012)
[39] https://nespurban.edu.au/research-projects/urban-greening/ (from 2015 to 2021)

5. Community values

5.1. Port Phillip – the place and its people

Located on the northern shore of Port Phillip Bay, south of Melbourne's city centre, the City of Port Phillip is one of the oldest areas of European settlement in Melbourne. Port Phillip is known for its urban village feel, with heritage buildings, strip shopping, tree-lined streetscapes and artistic expression. Good planning in the past has left a legacy of beautiful and green historic parks, public and private gardens, and many tree-lined streets that contribute to a mature tree canopy and greening across most neighbourhoods. [40]

A city of neighbourhoods, Port Phillip is made up of:

- Albert Park / Middle Park
- Balaclava / St Kilda East
- Elwood / Ripponlea
- Port Melbourne
- South Melbourne
- Montague
- St Kilda Road
- St Kilda / St Kilda West.

Port Phillip is multicultural. The people of the Kulin Nation were the first people of the Port Phillip area. Station Pier was the first landfall in Australia for many new arrivals, with almost one in three of Port Phillip's residents born overseas.[41]

About fifty-five per cent of residents are aged 18 to 49 years, and there is a growing number of people aged over 60, suggesting many residents will retire and age in the City. Forty-one per cent of households live alone and there is a high proportion of renters (44 per cent). Residents are generally highly educated, physically active, and self-report their health as good. Thirty-six per cent of households have a total gross weekly income of more than $2,500, and more young families and young professionals are expected to move into the City. Several pockets of disadvantage exist, with some members of the community experiencing disadvantage for the first time as a result of Covid.[42]

At approximately 21 square kilometres, the City of Port Phillip is one of the smallest municipalities in Victoria, with the highest inner urban population density, at 5,029 persons per square kilometre[43]. The 2021 population of 103,000 people is forecast to grow to 176,000 people by 2041, with much of the growth focused in the urban renewal area of Fishermans Bend. The City is a dynamic and rapidly changing area, with several major urban redevelopment areas either currently underway or recently completed, including Fishermans Bend (480ha of urban renewal focused on innovation and sustainability), South Melbourne Market (major expansion and modernisation of an iconic market over 150 years old), St Kilda Triangle (prime waterfront location being transformed into a new cultural and entertainment precinct), Waterfront Place (aiming to transform a popular waterfront destination into a world class one), and the Port Phillip EcoCentre (a brand new building for the 19,000 plus annual EcoCentre participants, and Australia's first Citizen Science Lab).

[40] CoPP (2010) *Greening Port Phillip – An Urban Forest Approach*

[41] CoPP (2021) *Council Plan 2021-2031*

[42] CoPP (2021) *Council Plan 2021-2031*

[43] City of Port Phillip Community Profile, id. community, accessed at: https://profile.id.com.au/port-phillip

As well as many active individuals, the City hosts numerous community groups actively contributing to urban greening, including: First Nations groups; 'Friends of' groups in Alma Park, Elster Creek, St Kilda Botanical Gardens and Westgate; community gardening groups; the Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network (PECAN) and its member organisations; other local groups like the Environmental Leaders Action Network (ELAN), Jewish Climate Network, Jewish Ecological Coalition (JECO), Protect our Planes (POP), South Melbourne Sustainability Group, Yarra Riverkeeper Association, Earthcare St Kilda (operating since 1989), Westgate Biodiversity (Bili Nursery & Landcare Inc), and Port Phillip Pickers; and of course the Port Phillip EcoCentre, a not-for-profit, community-managed environment group, operating since 1999, with thousands of local members.

5.2. What we have heard from the Port Phillip community

In recent years, the Port Phillip community has consistently raised greening as a major priority for the City, including in consultation on the *Council Plan 2022-2031* and other Council strategies and initiatives[44].

When it comes to urban greening, the Port Phillip community is passionate, well-informed, highly engaged and active on-ground. It is clear that, since Greening Port Phillip was released in 2010, parts of the community have raised their support for and expectations of urban greening, and have a high level of ambition to green the City. They also highly value the ability to proactively engage in improving the public realm through greening. They are a strength of the City, and offer an opportunity for community partnerships to deliver common goals.

Key themes raised in consultation as community priorities include:

- Increasing permeability and becoming a **water sensitive city**
- Mitigating **urban heat**, using more shade trees
- Providing **more trees and vegetation**, including tree-lined streets, maximising greening in existing public space, and setting aside more land for public green space
- Enhancing **biodiversity**
- Increasing Council influence on **private realm** greening, including ensuring that housing provides for nature and gardening
- Balancing **on-street car parking provision** with tree planting
- Supporting **community stewardship** or 'mobilisation' (including tree planting events, community gardens, nature strips, and initiatives like the Bee Pollinator Program in South Melbourne).

During consultations, people also raise the risks that can arise when people and property co-exist with greening. These are described in the next section.

[44] Including Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-2028, Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028, Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32, South Melbourne Structure Plan 2021, and Nature Strip and Street Gardening Guidelines 2022.

5.3. Co-existing with urban greening

While there are many benefits of greening in urban environments (see section 6 below), there are also risks to navigate when people and property co-exist with greening. People have diverse views and experiences of urban greening. In some cases, people feel differently about greening depending on its context – whether it is in their yard, the local park, or on their street.

In a 2019 national survey, 85% of respondents said that the benefits of urban green spaces are important to them, and 12% found them a nuisance[45]. The most highly rated benefits of greening mentioned in the survey were aesthetics, relaxation, health and wellbeing, and wildlife. The most common concern about urban green spaces was whether they would be properly maintained. Some commonly cited concerns in Port Phillip and elsewhere are examined below.

5.3.1. Green and grey infrastructure

The interface between green and grey and infrastructure is a common concern. This includes below ground (eg. roots entering broken pipes), at ground level (eg. roots lifting footpaths), and at the canopy level (eg. canopy trimming for electrical line compliance).

Councils regularly manage and maintain both their green and grey infrastructure to minimise risks, including monitoring for and repairing trip hazards. Risk mitigation strategies for trees include:

- **Appropriate species selection** (eg. species with non-invasive root systems, smaller trees under powerlines)
- **Risk treatments** (eg. root barriers, adequate soil capacity or structural cells, installing passive watering, replacing concrete, bitumen and pavers with permeable surfaces)
- **Healthy tree management** (eg. adequate watering).

Roots are highly unlikely to break a water pipe – they will only enter pipes that are already broken, seeking access water. It is also important to acknowledge that trees and vegetation can extend the life of built assets, including by stabilising soil, shading (eg. reducing heat-related expansion and contraction of asphalt and other building materials), taking up stormwater (reducing the impact on drainage infrastructure and the risk of flooding), and mitigating wind damage (eg. to powerlines).

5.3.2. Shading of solar panels

An issue gaining interest in recent years is the shading of solar panels. It is understandable that people investing in rooftop solar wish to maximise their power generation potential. However, the cooling, carbon sequestration and other services provided by trees, to both the building occupant and the broader community, are highly likely to outweigh any opportunity cost of reduced generation from shaded solar panels.

There are two factors to consider. One, technology has greatly improved since solar panels were first introduced. More recent solar panel installations are tolerant of partial shade, especially when bypass diodes are used to isolate shaded panels. And two, removing a tree to generate solar energy is likely to increase electricity usage and negate the extra generation, which could be to the economic detriment of the homeowner if they use air conditioning over summer[46].

[45] Greener Spaces, Better Places (2019), *Who's With Us?*, accessed at: https://www.greenerspacesbetterplaces.com.au/media/163040/whoswithus_small.pdf

[46] Moore, G (2014), *Defending and Expanding the Urban Forest: Opposing unnecessary tree removal requests*, TreeNet Symposium presentation, accessed at: https://treenet.org/resource/defending-and-expanding-the-urban-forest-opposing-unnecessary-tree-removal-requests/

5.3.3. Debris – fruits, flowers, leaves and pollen

Greening can cause concern within the community through the dropping of leaves, flowers and fruit. A number of people in the community also have pollen allergies or other physical reactions which can be exacerbated at particular times of the year by plants in flower. Plants that are valued by some parts of the community for their flowers, the fruit they provide, or the shade and shelter from their canopy, can also be the cause of distress for other parts of the community from the debris that is dropped on their nature strips or in their front yards, or due to allergies being exacerbated.

To manage risks from fallen leaves, flowers and fruits, Councils undertake regular street and footpath sweeping, and monitor for any trip or slip hazards. Gutter clean-outs and yard maintenance are the responsibility of the homeowner. However, some Councils have recently commenced programs to support elderly residents in cleaning up tree debris.

Urban forestry has advanced significantly in recent years in its knowledge and management of appropriate species selection for allergens and other hazards. For example, *Lagunaria patersonia*, also known as the Norfolk Island hibiscus, pyramid tree, or more colloquially as the 'itchy bomb tree' due to the fine hairs released from the tree's seed capsules, is now widely recognised as unsuitable for public planting. Hobsons Bay City Council has introduced a program to replace these trees, prioritised by where they are causing the most discomfort to residents[47].

5.3.4. Branch drop

The fear of limbs dropping and causing injury or death may cause distress to residents. However, Council trees are diligently monitored and maintained to keep risks as low as reasonably practical. The probability of being killed by a tree is extremely low, regardless of the species. A 2019 study found that the annual mortality rate from tree failure in Australia is in the order of 1 in 5 million, with 86% of deaths occurring during or immediately after extremely wet and stormy weather[48]. Residents can manage their risk by not being out under trees during storms. By comparison, Australians are roughly twice as likely to die from being hit by lightning[49], and 220,000 times more likely to die in a car accident[50].

5.3.5. Views and aesthetics

Urban greening provides increased amenity for everyone in the City of Port Phillip. While most people highly value an outlook of trees and vegetation, for some, trees are seen to 'get in the way' of views to other landscape features, like the Bay. There are also differing views on which specific tree species and planting styles are aesthetically preferred. Getting physically active in nature, or involved in one of the active conservation groups in the City, may assist in increasing understanding of and appreciation for greening and biodiversity.

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[47] City of Hobsons Bay (2022) *Lagunarina Replacement Program*, accessed at (https://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/Services/Trees-Nature-Strips/Growing-a-diverse-and-healthy-urban-forest/Lagunaria-replacement-program)

[48] Hartley et al. (2019), *A review of deaths in Australia from accidental tree failures*, Arborist Network, accessed at: https://arboriculture.org.au/getassets/a2bd3064-7acd-ea11-90fb-00505687f2af/A%20Review%20of%20Deaths%20in%20Australia%20from%20Accidental%20Tree%20Failures.pdf

[49] University of Western Australia (2015) *Electrical Circuits 1: Lightning facts*, accessed at https://www.uwa.edu.au/study/-/media/Faculties/Science/Docs/Lightning-facts.pdf

[50] Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (2022) *Road Fatalities Australia Monthly Bulletin – February 2022*, accessed at https://www.bitre.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/rda_feb2022.pdf

5.3.6. Vandalism

Unfortunately, a small number of people have chosen to illegally vandalise trees. The City of Port Phillip has a policy that tree vandalism will be assessed for a site-specific response, and the community notified of the illegal activity. Tree vandalism responses may include a police report, erection of signage to notify the community, and leaving the tree in situ or planting a replacement tree.

5.3.7. Car parks, footpaths and bike lanes

Car parking spaces are at a premium in Port Phillip, as a high-density City with many destinations for locals and visitors. Council has prioritised increased canopy cover, as well as increased walking and cycling rates. This is commonly seen as a source of potential conflict or concern. However, greening, accessible walking paths, bike lanes and car parking spaces can all be accommodated with smart streetscape design. One important consideration is to plant the largest canopy tree possible in the space, rather than many smaller trees, to reduce the number of trunks and therefore the on-ground space needed for trees.

5.3.8. Tree life spans

Some community members are concerned that Councils are not planting trees quickly enough, and are highly distressed when a mature tree is cut down. As living infrastructure, trees take a long time to grow, and benefits peak once trees mature. Most of the costs are incurred early in the tree's life, and when it reaches the end of its life. A healthy forest has trees of all ages – uneven age distribution is important for sustainable management (spreading out costs and management activities so they don't all need to happen at once), and for sustainable benefits (ensuring a steady supply of ecosystem services at all times). To ensure a healthy tree population across the City, within resourcing constraints, Council must plant trees every year, care for them when they are young, and manage risks, then replace them, as they reach the end of their useful life. Tree replacement can be particularly distressing to residents, as mature trees become such an integral part of the urban fabric, but it is unfortunately an unavoidable part of managing living infrastructure.

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6. Benefits of urban greening

There is now a well-established body of evidence confirming that urban greening offers a multitude of benefits to people, economies and nature in cities[51].

Green cities promote greater happiness, health, physical activity, and community connectedness among their residents. Water is used as a valuable resource, and stormwater management costs and flood risks are reduced. Air quality is improved, urban heat is reduced, and there are more comfortable microclimates. Soil becomes more productive, and locally sourced food is produced. House prices increase, local businesses thrive, and jobs are created. Biodiversity is supported through the provision of habitat. Carbon is sequestered, emissions are reduced, and climate change risks are mitigated.

Cities with ample greening are more resilient, prosperous, and enjoyable places to live.

The benefits of greening have been illustrated in numerous documents, including Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 (see image).

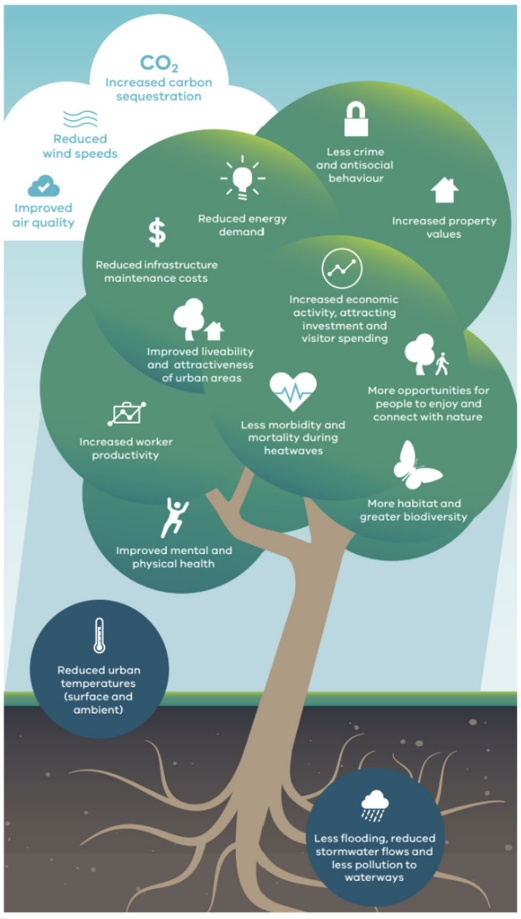


Image 2 Benefits of Urban Greening.
Source Victorian Government (2017), Metropolitan Planning Strategy - Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

It is worth noting that some of the benefits of trees such as sense of place and aesthetics can be difficult to quantify and are often overlooked in cost benefit analyses.

In recent years, the growing field of urban greening research has continued to strengthen the argument for greening by confirming and expanding on its many benefits. The COVID-19 pandemic also strengthened the community's understanding of the benefits of urban greening, with global research recording major increases in the appreciation for and recreational use of urban green spaces[52].

The specific benefits in the context of Port Phillip have been included below, combining the comprehensive list described in the City of Port Phillip's *Street Tree Planting Program 2017-2022* with some of the latest evidence.

[51] For example, see Dobbs et al. (2017) Ecosystem services, in Ferrini F, Konijnendijk van den Bosch C, Fini A (eds) *Routledge handbook of urban forestry,* Routledge, London, pp. 51–64.

[52] Weinbrenner H, Breithut J, Hebermehl W (2021) *The forest has become our new living room —The critical importance of urban forests during the COVID-19 pandemic*. Frontiers in Forests and Global Change

6.1. Economic benefits

- **Reducing energy costs** – Major economic benefits come through shading buildings in summer, reducing the need for air-conditioning and, in turn, cutting energy costs. Well-placed shade trees can reduce home energy consumption by as much as 30%[53].
- **Increasing property values** – Street trees enhancing the appearance of the neighbourhood have been proven to increase property values. A 2019 Melbourne study found that street trees increased property values by an average of $16,889 per property[54], while another Melbourne study in 2015 found a 10% increase in tree canopy cover resulted in an increase in property values of up to 1.2%[55].
- **Avoiding costs of infrastructure damage and renewal** – Shading provided by the urban forest can significantly improve the lifespan of roads, footpaths and other assets, preventing damage from heat related swelling and shrinking, as well as the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation[56]. This delays the need for maintenance and replacement, avoiding costs.
- **Decreasing health costs** – Research suggests that healthy green cities help alleviate the burden on public health systems. While it is difficult to quantify dollar savings, it is likely that urban forests reduce health costs associated with sedentary behaviour, obesity, and mental illness.
- **Marketing the city** – Green spaces play a role in defining the culture and image of a city, with the potential to make a city more competitive, thus expanding its political and economic influence.
- **Nature boosts business** – Research has shown that nature can boost the viability of businesses by drawing shoppers into business districts and encouraging them to spend more. One study found that customers prefer shopping in well-tended streets with large trees. The study also found these customers would pay 9–12% more for goods sold in central business districts with high quality tree canopy, and would travel further to them, visit more often, pay more for parking, and stay longer in a well-treed shopping district.[57, 58]

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[56] Coelho M., Carrilho J., Galvão, A., (2009) *The effect of tree shading on the deterioration of flexible pavements*, Construction and Building Materials, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 60-65.

[57] Mullaney J, Lucke T, Trueman SJ. (2015*). A review of benefits and challenges in growing street trees in paved urban environments*. Landscape and Urban Planning 134, 157–166.

[58] Wolf, K, (2003) *Public Response to the Urban Forest in Inner-City Business Districts*. Journal of Arboriculture 29(3) pp 117 – 126

Monetary benefits of greening on private land

An important study was released in August 2022 by Melbourne Water, providing a common understanding of the full range of values and benefits provided by greening on private land. This study addressed a critical knowledge gap by focusing on the costs and benefits to individual landholders, rather than public trees and the public good.

The study itemised monetisable costs and benefits of trees on private land (see image below), and ran two illustrative cost-benefit analyses, finding that the "*benefits of well-maintained trees can be several multiples of the financial cost. It also shows that there are more benefits to be had by retaining existing mature trees compared to establishing new trees. This is because many of the benefits of trees occur towards the second half of a tree's life, but many of the costs occur upfront.*"

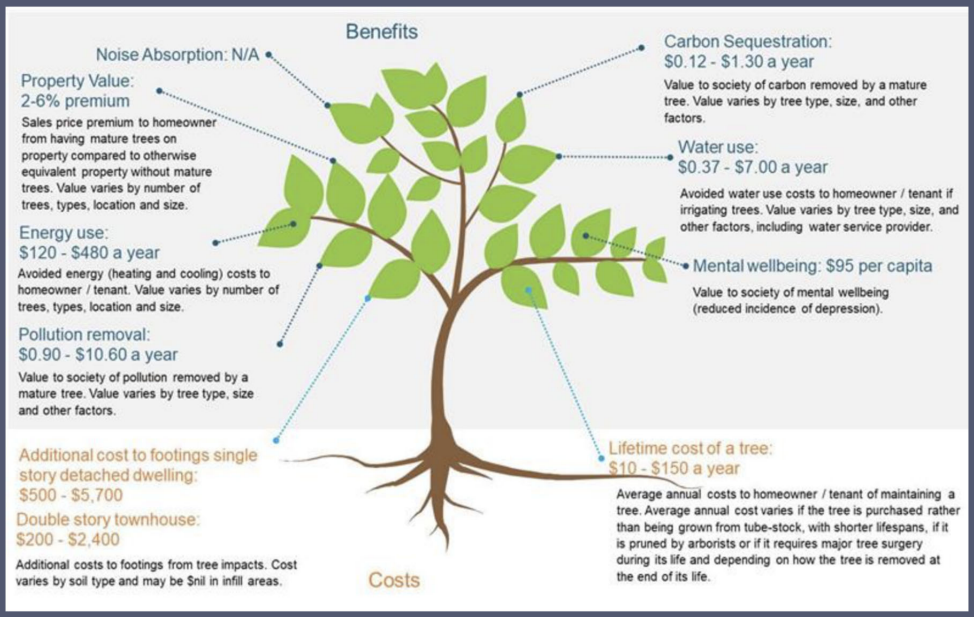


Image 3 Melbourne Water (2022) Value Analysis of trees on private land, accessed at: https://livingmelbourne.org.au/projects/value-analysis-of-urban-greening/

6.2. Ecosystem services

- **Urban cooling** – Urban areas are hotter than surrounding rural areas because hard surfaces that are exposed to the sun absorb large amounts of heat. This 'urban heat island effect' exacerbates heat-related mortality and costs such as increased air-conditioning use. Through shade and transpiration, trees help reduce day- and night-time temperatures in cities, especially during summer. A 2012 Melbourne study found that street trees reduced temperatures by up to 4°C on hot days and that increasing tree canopy cover by 10% could reduce urban temperatures by up to 2.5°C.[59]
- **Cleaning up water and reducing flood risk** – Tree canopies and root systems reduce stormwater flows and nutrient loads that end up in waterways. Broad tree canopies intercept and mitigate the impact of heavy rainfall. Healthy tree roots help reduce the nitrogen, phosphorus and heavy metal content in stormwater, and well as making the soil more porous and absorbent, further slowing stormwater flows into waterways.[60]
- **Reducing air pollution** – Trees produce the oxygen we breathe, and protect us from air pollution, which is a major contributor to ill health and premature death[61]. Through the process of photosynthesis, trees take up carbon dioxide, nitrous oxides, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and ozone. Leaf surfaces capture fine air-borne particulates that can be dangerous to health[62]. A 2018 study in Melbourne showed that an increase of 10% in tree canopy cover resulted in a 3.9% reduction in nitrogen dioxide concentrations in the air[63].
- **Adapting to climate change** – The capacity of urban forests to contribute to climate change adaptation is broad and well-documented[64]. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report found that urban greening has been effective in reducing flood risks and urban heat.[65]
- **Storing carbon** – Trees absorb and store carbon from the atmosphere, making a significant contribution to slowing the causes of climate change. A 2012 study found that trees in the City of Melbourne remove approximately 20,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere each year, contributing to the city's efforts to combat climate change.[66]
- **Enhancing biodiversity** – A healthy urban forest provides habitat for a variety of wildlife. Urban forests have been shown to support a wide range of species, including endangered animals and other species of high conservation value. Biodiversity can be enhanced by ensuring a range of age, strata and vegetation types, a wider range of habitats, food and other resources, and opportunities for movement.[67, 68]

[59] Coutts, A. M., White, E. C., Tapper, N. J., & Beringer, J. (2012). *Temperature regulation of urban landscapes: A Melbourne case study*. Landscape and Urban Planning, 107(3), 317-330.

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[61] Doctors for the Environment Australia (2023) *Trees: The Forgotten Heroes for our Health*

[62] Lovasi, G. S., et al. (2013). "*Urban tree canopy and asthma, wheeze, rhinitis, and allergic sensitization to tree pollen in a New York City birth cohort*." Environmental Health Perspectives, 121(4), 494-500.

[63] Fuller, R. A., Irvine, K. N., Devine-Wright, P., Warren, P. H., & Gaston, K. J. (2018). *Psychological benefits of greenspace increase with biodiversity*. Biology Letters, 14(1), 20170420.

[64] Mullaney J, Lucke T, Trueman SJ. 2015. *A review of benefits and challenges in growing street trees in paved urban environments*. Landscape and Urban Planning 134, 157–166

[65] IPCC (2023) *Synthesis Report of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6): Summary for Policymakers*, accessed at: https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf

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[68] Lindenmayer, D. (2014). *The anatomy of urban forests: A review*. Landscape and Urban Planning, 129, 1-22.

Benefits of green roofs, walls and facades

In 2019, City of Melbourne released their Valuing Green Guide, documenting all known benefits of green roofs, walls and facades, in the City of Melbourne or similar contexts. It groups benefits into the key themes of water, temperature, biodiversity, health and wellbeing, and collective benefits. Each benefit is identified as flowing to an individual, community, or institution (see table below).

	INDIVIDUAL	COMMUNITY	INSTITUTIONAL
Water	• Increased flash flood safety	• Reduced flood cost and damage • Improved water quality	• Flood safety/damage targets • Water quality targets
Temperature	• Increased indoor comfort • Energy use savings for building occupants	• Lower Urban Heat Island (UHI) • Reduced air pollution production • Improved street-level comfort and amenity	• UHI targets (4°C reduction goal)
Biodiversity	• Enjoyment of flora and fauna • Visual amenity and status • Personal and cultural environmental values	• Environmental education • Citizen science	• Regional conservation targets and status • Reduced climate impacts due to Green House Gas (GHG) reduction
Health and wellbeing	• Improved indoor comfort	• Reduced health costs • Improved air quality • Reduced sound pollution • Increased walkability	• Improved levels of community health • Reduced climate impacts due to GHG reduction
Collective benefits	• Higher property values • Rooftop & courtyard locations for social and business activities	• Stronger neighbourhood identity • Increases in productivity through visual amenity Increased economy through social returns	• Socially responsible investment • City identity (community and government)

Image 4 City of Melbourne (2019), Valuing Green Guide: Green roofs, walls and facades, accessed at: https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/sitecollectiondocuments/valuing-green-guide.pdf

6.3. Social, health and wellbeing benefits

- **Providing a sense of place and creation of local identity** – A city's landscape helps define its character and create a sense of connection to place.
- **Improving community cohesion** – Green public space provides places for daily gathering, play, barbecues, picnics, major events, festivals, and celebrations. Events and spaces can bring diverse groups of people together, playing an important role in the integration of minority groups in society and assisting immigrants to adapt to their host country.[69]
- **Encouraging outdoor activity** – Residents living in areas with more trees and green space have been shown to have higher levels of physical activity and better mental health outcomes compared to those living in areas with less green space.[70] This has multiple flow-on benefits such as reduction in obesity and improvement in general physical and mental wellbeing. Increased walkability (and bikeability) also takes cars off the road, thereby reducing greenhouse emissions and other pollution, improving overall amenity, and helping to make streets places for people.
- **Connecting children with nature** – Studies have shown that green spaces allow children creativity of mind, encourage exploration and adventure, promote physical activity, build resilience, and enhance experiential learnings.[71]
- **Reducing sun exposure** – Skin cancer and other sun exposure illnesses highlight the importance of protection from sunlight's UV rays. Shade alone can reduce overall exposure to UV radiation by up to 75%[72].
- **Reducing heat-related illness and mortality** – Heatwaves kill more Australians than any other natural disaster. They have led to many deaths in Victoria, including 204 deaths in the January 2014 heatwave[73]. Urban greening can reduce the mortality risk associated with heat exposure[74].
- **Improving mental wellbeing** – The availability of, access to, and even the ability to view green spaces and trees have positive effects on people's wellbeing[75].

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[70] Astell-Burt, T., Feng, X., & Kolt, G. S. (2014). *Green space is associated with walking and moderate-to-vigorous physical activity* (MVPA) in middle-to-older-aged adults: findings from 203 883 Australians in the 45 and Up Study. British Journal of Sports Medicine, 48(5), 404-406.

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[72] SunSmart Victoria, (2015), *Shade Guidelines*, Cancer Council Victoria, Melbourne, accessed at: https://www.sunsmart.com.au/downloads/resources/booklets/shade-guidelines.pdf

[73] Steffen, W, Hughes, L, Perkins, S (2014), *Heatwaves: Hotter, Longer, More Often*, Climate Council of Australia, accessed at: https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/uploads/9901f6614a2cac7b2b888f55b4dff9cc.pdf

[74] Murage P. et al. (2020) *What individual and neighbourhood-level factors increase the risk of heat-related mortality? A case-crossover study of over 185,000 deaths in London using high-resolution climate datasets*. Environ Int.

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The forgotten heroes of our health

In a March 2023 report, Doctors for the Environment and WWF Australia catalogue and promote the many health and wellbeing benefits of trees.

With only a quarter of the Australian population saying they know a lot about the health benefits of trees, the report's aim is to raise awareness of the vital role trees play in improving physical and mental health outcomes, and in saving people's lives.

Benefits highlighted include that:

- Tree-climbing helps children develop strength, spatial awareness, creativity, imagination and self-confidence
- Trees are integral to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples health and wellbeing, providing connection to Country and lore
- Intact ecosystems help prevent infectious diseases from emerging in humans – up to 70% of emerging infectious diseases (like COVID-19) have jumped from animals to humans due to deforestation and landuse change
- Over one-third of all medicines used today are derived from nature
- Trees are home to a wide range of pollinators, that help ensure a diverse and secure food supply.

Doctors for the Environment and WWF Australia (2023), *Trees: The forgotten heroes of our health*, accessed at: https://dea.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/WWF_DEA_Trees-Health-Report_FINAL_030323.pdf

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7. Port Phillip's urban forest

7.1. What is Port Phillip's urban forest?

The City of Port Phillip's urban forest is made up of:

- Front and backyard gardens
- Balcony gardens
- Rooftop gardens and green roofs
- Vertical gardens – vegetation growing on and up the walls of buildings and fences
- Street trees, shrubs and ground covers on nature strips, median strips and roundabouts
- Trees and gardens in public parks and reserves
- Trees and gardens in other open spaces – shopping strips, industrial properties, etc.

Conceptualising all vegetation in the City as an 'urban forest' enables a united planning and management approach. An urban forest is the sum total of all vegetation growing in an urban area.

Urban forestry is an integrated approach to the management of vegetation in cities. It recognises that vegetation (especially trees) are critical infrastructure, providing a range of services in the same way as grey infrastructure, like buildings, roads, foot and bike paths, utilities, open spaces and activity centres. Green, grey and blue (water-related) infrastructure cannot be managed effectively in isolation from one another.

A standard definition?

Urban forest, urban greening, green infrastructure, nature-based solutions… these are all terms used to refer to nature in cities, with varying definitions.

Urban Green Infrastructure - Planning and decision framework (2023) represents Standards Australia's attempt to pin down the complexity of urban greening. It states that:

"Urban Green Infrastructure (UGI) includes remnant vegetation, designed and cultivated green spaces, and engineered vegetation systems on public and private land as well as buildings in an urban context. Examples of engineered vegetation systems include green roofs, green walls and raingardens. Some forms of infrastructure, such as bioswales, wetlands or vegetation in stormwater retention basins, include both blue and green elements."

https://store.standards.org.au/product/sa-hb-214-2023



Image 5: Top Left: St Kilda Esplanade, Top Right: Bothwell Street Woody Meadow, Bottom Left: Danks Street Reserve, Bottom Right: Acland Street. Source: Kat Ryan

7.2. The urban forest today

The City of Port Phillip attracts millions of visitors annually due to its parks, iconic foreshore, beaches, and tree-lined boulevards. Its network of public open space includes the most sought-after foreshore areas in Melbourne, stretching over 11 kilometres from Elwood in the south to Port Melbourne in the northwest. The City is home to historical and iconic parks like Albert Park, Catani Gardens, St Vincent's Gardens, Gasworks Park, and St Kilda Botanical Gardens. A top priority of the City is optimising the use of all available open space for active and passive recreation, cultural activities, climate change adaptation, and greening opportunities.

Trees are a crucial aspect of the City's landscape, with several well-known native and exotic trees scattered throughout the area, adding to the unique character of the neighbourhoods. For example, the Ngargee Tree in Albert Park holds cultural significance for the Yalukit Willam and the Kulin Nation. The palm trees in Catani Gardens reflect the cultural influences in the area during the early 1900s, when prominent Italian landscape designer Carlo Catani was active in the St Kilda Foreshore Committee.

Boulevards are significant features of Port Phillip's urban landscape – wide streets featuring a median down the centre and higher quality landscaping and scenery. These boulevards include Brighton Road, Queens Road, St Kilda Road, Kerferd Road, Beach Street, Beaconsfield Parade, Jacka Boulevard, The Esplanade, Marine Parade, Ormond Esplanade, Bay Street, and Fitzroy Street. Trees in boulevards are critical to maintaining the distinct urban character of Port Phillip and provide shade for major walking, cycling, and vehicle thoroughfares. The majority of streets in the City are lined with a single species of large deciduous trees or Australian natives. There are also prominent plantings of palm trees, such as the Canary Island Date Palms along Beaconsfield Parade.

The City's urban forest includes diverse garden beds in parks, reserves and along the Bay Trail, on nature strips and medians and in water sensitive urban design interventions throughout the city. These lower storey plantings provide a sense of place and character to parks and neighbourhoods, have ecological value and are an important heritage feature in some historic gardens.

Port Phillip's beaches are the second most visited location in Victoria. Dunes along Port Phillip's coastline provide an essential role in buffering storms and flooding, and the grasses help to bind and hold the sand, acting as a sand reservoir to replenish the beach after severe storms. Several indigenous dune grasses have regional significance, and the dunes are the foundation for the coastal ecosystems and habitats for wildlife and plants.

The City's urban forest also includes trees and other vegetation on private land, including in front and backyards, on rooftop gardens and green walls, and in commercial, retail and industrial properties.

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7.3. Tree canopy cover

A common high-level indicator of the urban forest is tree canopy cover. In 2023, the City of Port Phillip commissioned an assessment of both the existing and historic tree canopy on private and public land from 2012 to 2022. The analysis measured tree canopy cover on roads, public land (parks and reserves managed by Port Phillip), and private land. Tree canopy in Albert park was also measured and is recorded separately to parks and reserves managed by Port Phillip. This dataset provides us with rich detail on the distribution of our trees across the city and different land tenure and land use types.

7.3.1. Canopy cover change over time (2012 to 2022)

Understanding what change is occurring and where can help guide priority actions towards reducing loss and increasing urban greening gains.

In the ten year period of 2012 to 2022, Port Phillip had a slight decline in canopy cover of 0.69%. In 2022, 17.17% of Port Phillip was covered by canopy from trees that are greater than 3 metres in height, down from 17.86% in 2012.

Overall, roads in Port Phillip have a canopy cover of about 26%, well above the average for inner city Melbourne, making it a unique feature of the city's urban forest. Roads in Port Phillip make up about 27% of the total land area, and contribute about 44% of total canopy cover. By contrast, private land makes up about 49% of the land area and contributes about 33% of the total canopy cover.

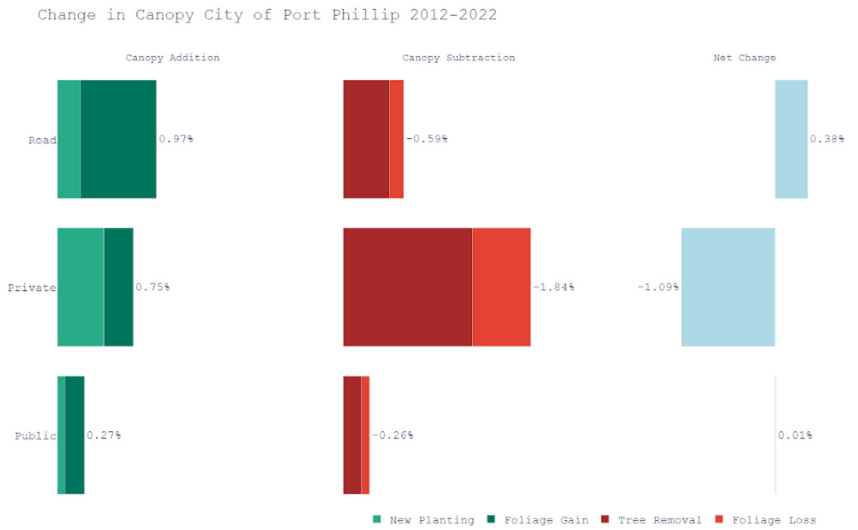


Figure 1. Change in canopy from 2012-2022, Player Piano Data Analytics (2023).

Most of the gain in canopy cover between 2012 and 2022 is from the growth of existing street trees (foliage gain). This growth has offset the street tree canopy loss due to removal, natural loss and pruning. The net canopy change on roads was +0.38%. Street trees contribute 43.68% of total canopy cover over roads, as well as adding to canopy cover over private land.

On public land (parks and reserves, excluding Albert Park), canopy cover did not significantly change (+0.01%). Canopy cover reduction from trees that were removed was ultimately offset by the growth

of existing and newly planted trees. Public land contributes 12.69% of total canopy cover. Albert Park contributes an additional 10.83% of total canopy cover.

On private land there was a net tree loss, at -1.09%, which was predominately driven by tree removals. More than half of the canopy gain on private property was attributed to new plantings. As new plantings mature, they may offset some of the removals. Private land contributes 32.78% of total canopy cover.

All suburbs in Port Phillip experienced a net decline in canopy on private land. Elwood, St Kilda, Port Melbourne and St Kilda East showed the greatest loss. These four suburbs also contain 71% of all tree canopy on private land.

Growth of existing street trees in Elwood and Port Melbourne made the largest contribution to the net gain reported council wide, with 82% of the additional canopy over roads attributed to these two suburbs. On public land, there was a slight increase in tree canopy cover in Elwood and Port Melbourne, while other areas remained steady.

7.3.2. Current canopy cover levels and distribution (2022 data)

In 2022, 17.17% of Port Phillip was covered by canopy from trees that are greater than 3 metres in height. Results of this analysis are summarised in **Error! Reference source not found.**.

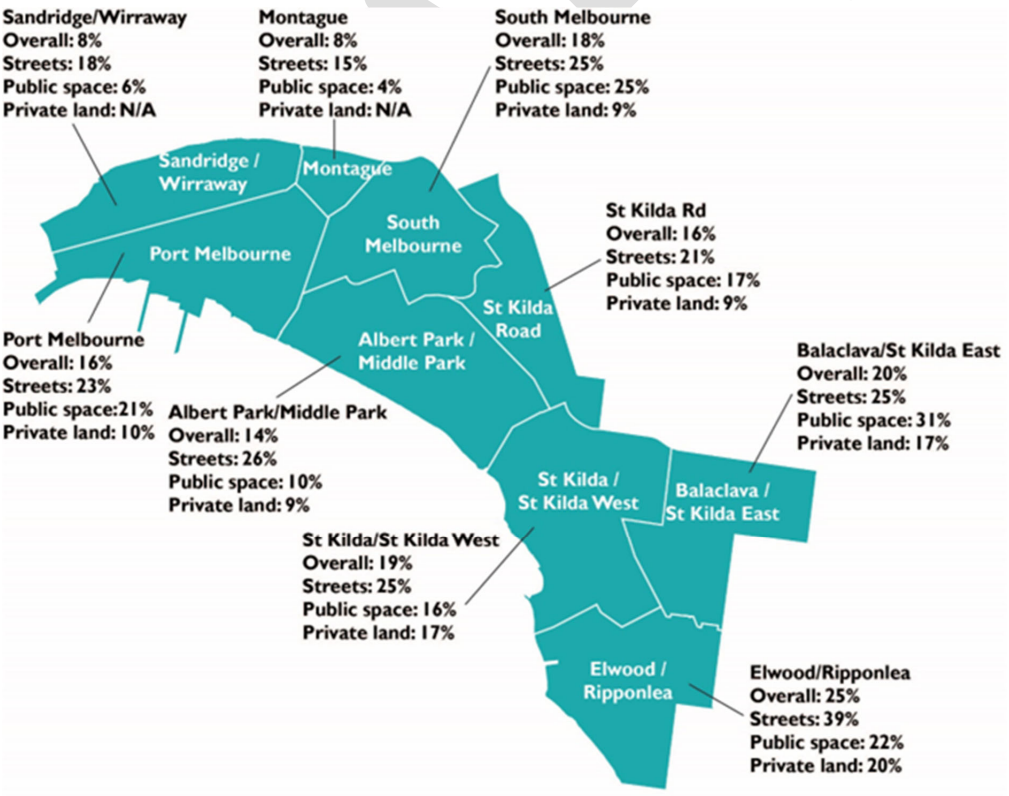


Figure 2. Canopy cover distribution across the City of Port Phillip, 2022.

It is evident in Figure 2 that tree canopy cover is not evenly spread across the city, with differences between neighbourhoods and also within land use types. There is a general north west to south east transition from 8% through to 25% canopy cover. Understanding the level of canopy cover in different neighbourhoods and on private and public land can help guide priority actions for tree planting and other greening activities where it is needed most.

Overall, roads in Port Phillip have a canopy cover of about 26%, well above the average for inner city Melbourne, making street trees a fantastic asset of the city. Roads in Port Phillip make up about 27% of the total land area, and contribute about 44% of total canopy cover. By contrast, private land, which Council has far less control and influence over, has less than 20% current cover in every neighbourhood.

On public land (parks and reserves, excluding Albert Park), canopy cover is less than streets. It ranges from 4% in Montague through to 31% in Balaclava/St Kilda East. While there is opportunity for more plantings on public land, part of this disparity in canopy cover is influenced by sporting ovals, coastal foreshore, Council buildings and community gardens which are unlikely to ever have high density of trees.

Canopy data in City of Port Phillip in 2022

Total land area in Port Philip:

- Roads – 27%
- Private Property – 49%
- Public space – 17% (12% not including Albert Park)

Other land including Railway reserves makes up the remainder of space in Port Phillip.

Overall tree canopy cover of the City of Port Phillip was 17.17%

- public space 17%,
- streets 25%,
- private land 12%, and
- Albert Park 16%.

Please refer to the Canopy Cover Analysis report for more detail, including per suburb breakdowns.

A note on evolving data capabilities

Spatial data analysis is a rapidly evolving field, including for tree canopy assessments. In 2010, when Greening Port Phillip was published, data was not available to determine the baseline tree canopy cover for Port Phillip. Multiple canopy cover datasets have since been produced[76], from 2013 onwards.

When the City of Port Phillip set out its canopy targets in *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028*, it used the best available data, commissioned by the Victorian Government and produced by RMIT University[77].

The targets are to:

- Increase street tree canopy cover by 10% by 2027/28
- Increase canopy cover on private land by 10% by 2027/28.

[76] By Council, Living Melbourne, the Victorian Government, and research bodies.

[77] Hurley et al. (2019) Urban Vegetation Cover Change in Melbourne 2014 - 2018, Centre for Urban Research, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia, accessed at: https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/data-and-insights/melbournes-vegetation-heat-and-land-use-data

The 2015/16 baselines for these targets were 19% and 11%, respectively.

The study commissioned by the City of Port Phillip in 2023 (from Player Piano Data Analytics, described above) shows significantly higher levels of baseline canopy cover. The reasons for this difference are the classification used for tree canopy[78], and the technology used for mapping and analysis[79].[80]

The results of each study are consistent within the studies themselves, and results are all valid. However, studies using different methodologies cannot be compared. So, although the baselines may have shifted, the ambition to increase canopy by 10% in ten years still stands. It is clear from the latest analysis that more needs to be done, especially on private land, to meet this goal.

7.4. Tree population

The City of Port Phillip manages approximately 46,000 trees, 75% of which are street trees. London Plane Trees (*Platanus X acerifolia*) dominate the public realm, making up 9% of street and park trees. The next three most common species are the Queensland Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*), Coastal Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*) and Drooping Sheoak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) (4% each)[81].

Having diverse tree species is important for a resilient urban forest (see section 11.2). The US Forest Service provides a recommended rating system to distinguish between 'fair' and 'good' species diversity[82]:

- Fair diversity: No more than 10% of a single species, 20% of a single genus and 30% of a single family. (10/20/30).
- Good diversity: No more than 5% of a single species, 10% of a single genus and 15% of a single family. (5/10/15).

Here the public tree population of Port Phillip is assessed for diversity against the US Forest Service ratings of fair (10/20/30) and good (5/10/15)[83].

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[78] In the RMIT study, only vegetation above 3m was included. The study assigned a per pixel height and aggregated canopy cover for all pixels above 3m, which means that only the portion of tree canopy above 3m high is included in the analysis. Any canopy below 3m is excluded, resulting in an underestimate of canopy. Player Piano Data Analytics include the canopy area of the tree if the tree is above 3m, resulting in a more accurate measure of canopy.

[79] The RMIT study used instrumentation and data processing to determine whether a pixel in an image is vegetation or not. Player Piano Data Analytics uses artificial intelligence algorithms trained by human analysts to identify an individual tree and make a measurement of the crown area, repeated for aerial images over time. The RMIT study measured loss and gain in canopy by subtraction. The technology developed by Player Piano Data Analytics provides greater detail of canopy gain and loss including whether a tree was removed, how much retained canopy grew or senesced and how newly planted trees were surviving.

[80] Details about differences in methodology and technology supplied by Player Piano Data Analytics

[81] Statistics supplied by the City of Port Phillip, May 2023.

[82] US Forest Service (2016), Sustainable Urban Forest Guide, accessed at https://www.itreetools.org/documents/175/Sustainable_Urban_Forest_Guide_14Nov2016.pdf

[83] Data and analysis supplied by City of Port Phillip, June 2023

Tree species

Fair (**10**/20/30)
- All species ≤ 10%

Good (**5**/10/15)
- Most planted tree is 9% (P. acerifolia – London Plane)
- All other species ≤ 5%

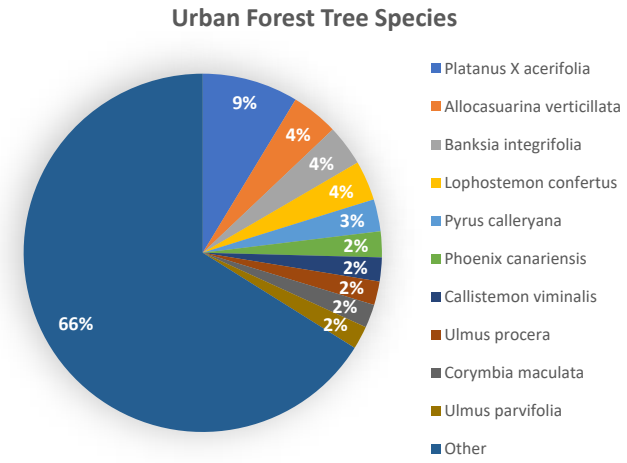


Figure 3. Tree species diversity in the City of Port Phillip 2022

Tree Genus

Fair (10/**20**/30)
- All genera ≤ 20%

Good (5/**10**/15)
- All genera ≤ 10%

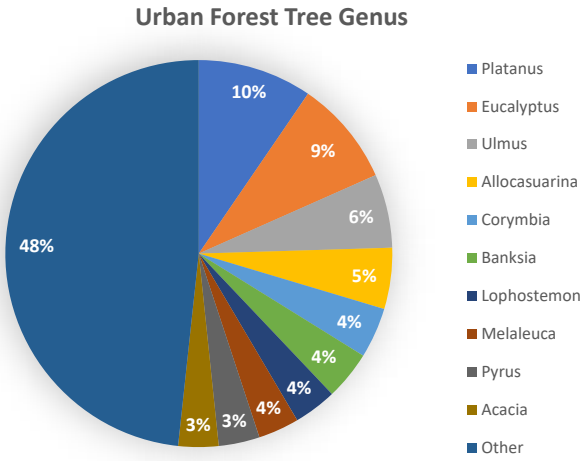


Figure 4. Tree genus diversity in the city of Port Phillip 2022

Tree Family

Fair (10/20/**30**)
- Most planted tree family (Myrtaceae) is > 30%
- All other families ≤ 30%

Good (5/10/**15**)
- Most planted tree family (Myrtaceae) is > 15%
- All other families ≤ 15%

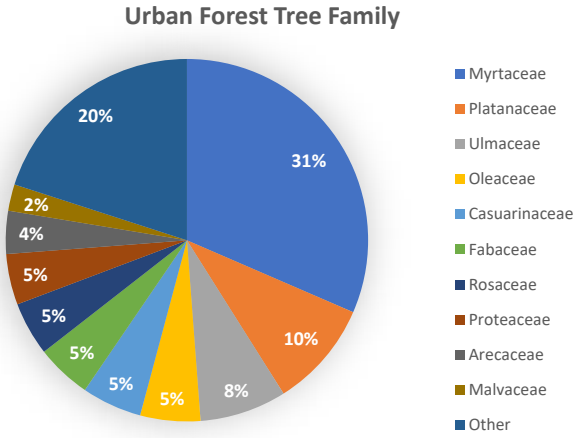


Figure 5. Tree family diversity in the City of Port Phillip 2022

Overall tree diversity in Port Phillip is good as shown in Figures 3, 4 and 5. Tree species diversity is generally good. Only one species, the London Plane, is above 5% of the total tree population (at 9%). Tree genera diversity is good, with all tree genera making up ≤ 10% of the total tree population. The Myrtaceae family makes up 31% of trees, slightly above the fair rate of 30%. All other families are in the good range, making up less than 15% each of the tree population. In Australia the Myrtaceae family is large, with over 70 genera and 1,500 species, consisting of eucalyptus, corymbia and angophora (gums), callistemon (bottlebrush), melaleuca (paperbarks and honey myrtles) and syzygium (lily-pillies)[84]. These species are planted widely in the streets in Port Phillip.

7.5. Threats to specific tree species

Various threats pose risks to some of Port Phillip's most iconic species. As the climate changes to warmer conditions, some species, like the English Elms planted in some parks, may struggle to cope and go into decline. Other species, including Canary Island Palm trees and London Plane trees that contribute significantly to the character of Port Phillip's neighbourhoods have more specific threats.

Canary Island Palms line Beaconsfield Parade and the St Kilda foreshore and feature in Catani Gardens, areas loved as Melbourne's playground hosting local residents and visitors.

Plane trees provide a green, leafy character, lining most streets in Elwood, and other some other avenues in the city including along St Kilda Road, Brighton Road, Williamstown Road, Richardson Street, Raglan Street and Barkly Street.

Serious management challenges exist for both species and it is timely to consider how their population is managed to retain the iconic character and benefits these trees bring to neighbourhoods. The challenges include disease, drought stress, infrastructure damage from tree roots and electric line clearances impacting on the longevity of trees and integrity of avenue plantings. The future of these iconic species is linked strongly to the character of several neighbourhoods, and Council is proceeding to with those local communities to find a way forward for these iconic trees and avenues.

[84] Australian Native Plant Society Myrtle Family (Myrtaceae) - Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) (anpsa.org.au)

7.5.1. London Plane Trees

London plane trees make up 9% of the total tree population in Port Phillip and provide 85% of the canopy cover in Elwood. Over half of Port Phillip's plane trees are planted under powerlines and are heavily pruned to comply with electrical line safety regulations.

The London Plane tree (*Platanus × acerifolia*) is a deciduous tree developed as a hybrid cross between American sycamore (*P. occidentalis*) and Oriental planetree (*P. orientalis*). Typically, in Australia, London Plane trees grow as a single-trunk tree up to 20 to 30 metres tall with a rounded habit. Trunks can be quite broad and typically range from 1 to 2.5 metres in diameter (approximately 8 metres girth). Plane trees are long-lived and the median age of plane trees in Port Phillip is approximately 60 years.

London Plane trees have many advantages as ornamental trees including size and longevity where these are required. Other advantages include a moderate shade that is enough to allow grass or other plants to grow below it, tolerance of pollution, tolerance of difficult soil conditions, and tolerance of pruning, including bad pruning. The species has good tolerance of compacted sites, i.e. low oxygen levels and of changes to its growing environment and loss of root system. Due to its tolerances the plane tree is one of the most successful urban trees which have subsequently seen it used extensively around the world and in Melbourne.

However, London Plane trees can cause bronchial problems, like hay-fever with some people due to hairs and down shed from the young leaves and fruit. Leaf drop can become a nuisance, requiring additional street sweeping and garden clean ups. London Plane trees have substantial roots with large, secondary, woody roots extending well beyond the dripline of the canopy.

London Plane trees are sometimes impacted by outbreaks of Powdery Mildew (*Microsphaera alni*) and Plane Anthracnose (*Apiognomonia veneta* (asexual:*Discula platani*)). Powdery mildew is a foliage disease, usually affecting the appearance of trees in late summer. The Plane Anthracnose problem is more serious, placing the trees under stress and has noticeable aesthetic impacts including brown leaves, and loss of foliage in severe cases. Stressed trees are likely to be more susceptible to other infectious and non-infectious problems including insect attack. Outbreaks of anthracnose are more likely when during periods of wet weather in spring and early summer. Anthracnose regularly affects up to half of the plane tree population in Port Phillip each year and is actively monitored.

An emerging threat to London Plane trees in Melbourne is an insect pest, Sycamore lace bug (SLB) (*Corythucha ciliata*). While the bug is not a major insect pest yet in Melbourne it is more prevalent on Plane trees in NSW, it is a major potential threat as insect populations move towards Melbourne. and it has been found in several towns in the north-east Victoria. Several consecutive years of severe SLB damage, combined with other stress factors, can kill plane trees. Heavy infestations are more common in urban areas than in natural settings and damage is more severe during dry weather. SLB can have up to five generations per year.

While plane trees are a resilient species, cumulative stress from tree root conflict interventions, extended dry periods and infestation of Plane Anthracnose can lead to their decline and death.

Pruning around powerlines can also add stress to trees, and the threat of the Sycamore lace bug is of concern.

Other Melbourne Councils including Melbourne, Stonnington, Boorondara and Yarra are rationalising their plane tree stock as a response to over dependence on the species and ongoing maintenance issues. Plane trees add significant value and character to Port Phillip, and maintaining avenue tree plantings is a high priority. Council is proceeding to work with the community to determine how best to maintain and enhance the leafy character of neighbourhoods and manage the current and future challenges associated with their large stock of London Plane trees.

7.5.2. Canary Island Palm Trees

The iconic avenue of palms on Beaconsfield Parade and plantings in Catani Gardens, O'Donnell Gardens and other areas of the foreshore forms part of the historical and cultural identify of St Kilda and the City of Port Phillip. Recently several wet summers have resulted in a loss of some of the iconic palms along Beacosnfield Parade, particularly the residential side, and other foreshore areas due to a fatal fungal disease Fusarium Wilt (*Fusarium oxysporum*).

Fusarium Wilt (*Fusarium oxysporum*) was first identified in the City of Port Phillip nearly two decades ago. Presently, there is no control for the fungus. Given Fusarium Wilt is always fatal, removal of infected palms, and use of biological controls during palm management practices, is currently the only effective method to control the spread of Fusarium. Since the mid-2000's approximately 115 palms have been removed due to Fusarium.

There are approximately 1,700 palm trees in Port Phillip and of these, just over 1,500 are susceptible to Fusarium Wilt, including 1050 Canary Island Date Palms. Palms from the Washingtonia genus are also susceptible and planted in Port Phillip.

Fusarium Wilt is spread through the movement of:

- Infected plants and plant material (i.e. contaminated cuttings, sawdust, roots etc.).
- Infested soil (i.e. carried on boots, machinery tracks and tyres, contained in nursery soil, pedestrian traffic).
- Tools and equipment in contact with infected palm material or soil, and
- Movement of groundwater
- Birds, possums and rats.

Council Arborists run auditing and testing regimes in line with best practice to manage Fusarium Wilt. The current practice includes:

- February/March: Visual assessment of all susceptible palms to identify those displaying signs of infection.
- March/April: Testing of palms identified as showing signs of infection.
- Removal of palms testing positive to Fusarium is programmed following receipt of test results.

Current biosecurity controls are the only available method for reducing the spread of Fusarium, and in turn the loss of palms to the disease. Port Phillip is closely following research into Fusarium cures treatments overseas, though none currently exist in Australia. Biosecurity protocols are in place for horticultural and maintenance works along the foreshore and in parks and gardens with susceptible

palm species. Fusarium Wilt remains in the soil for over 10 years which prevents new palm planting to replace a palm killed by the disease.

Palms are slow growing plants, immature stock can take upwards of 20 years to achieve a suitable planting size. There are some other species of palms not susceptible to Fusarium Wilt, but mature stock is scarce or non-existent in commercial nurseries.

Retaining palms in Catani and O'Donnell Gardens and the foreshore side of Beaconsfield Parade is a strategic goal for Port Phillip, and strong biosecurity practices are in place to protect these iconic trees. Recent palm losses along the residential side of Beaconsfield Parade have impacted the look and feel of the area and, in consultation with Beaconsfield Pde residents and the broader community, a plan to develop better greening outcomes related to this issues should be considered for high priority in the new strategy.

7.6. Biodiversity, ecology and habitat

The City of Port Phillip is in the 'Sandbelt' area of southeastern Melbourne. For thousands of years the landscape consisted of coastal dunes, extensive swamps (today's Elwood, Albert Park, Port Melbourne, Kingsway), a timbered shale and sandstone ridge (today's St Kilda) that marked the boundary of the Yarra delta, inland sand plains covered in healthy woodland, red gum and tea-tree swamps along the Yarra and the low but prominent grassy basalt plateau of Emerald Hill[85].

The region is now heavily urbanised, with remnant native vegetation now largely restricted to the foreshore and a few parks and reserves. The city has six remnant indigenous flora sites, including Coastal Dune Scrub and Grassy Woodland Plains ecosystems. The six remnant sites are located at Sandridge Beach, Port Melbourne; West Beach, St Kilda; Point Ormond Reserve; HR Johnson Reserve; St Kilda Botanic Gardens; Canterbury Road Urban Forest; Elwood Foreshore; and Tea Tree Reserve.

Point Ormond Reserve is particularly significant as one of the last surviving indigenous remnants in urban Melbourne, with 39 indigenous plant species, five of which are regionally significant, including *Allocasurina vertillicata* (Drooping Sheoak) and *Alyxia buxifolia* (Sea Box). The West Beach dunes, stretching from pier to pavilion along Beaconsfield Parade, has very high local ecological significance. It covers 1.2 hectares and includes 31 indigenous species, five of which are regionally significant, including *Carex pumila* (Strand Sedge) and *Distichlis distichophylla* (Australian Salt-grass).[86]

The Biodiversity Study in 2020 compiled all the available biodiversity records for the City. It found that the biodiversity values remaining in the City are significant and require protection and enhancement for future generations. The study identified:

- 1,059 flora species comprising 102 algae (most of which are marine macroalgae), 32 bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) and 920 vascular plants.
- 1,090 fauna species comprising:
    - 464 vertebrate species including 276 birds, 115 fish, nine frogs, 34 mammal (17 marine mammals) and 30 reptiles

[85] CoPP (2010) Greening Port Phillip – An urban forest approach

[86] CoPP, *Native Vegetation Areas*, accessed April 2023 at https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/council-services/trees-and-vegetation/native-vegetation-areas

    - 626 invertebrate species, including 23 crustaceans, 424 invertebrates (spiders, insects, worms etc.), 52 marine invertebrates (jellyfish, worms, starfish, tunicates etc.), and 127 molluscs
    - 113 fungal species, including seven lichens
    - 2 protist species of slime mould.
- Rare or threatened species including:
    - Three flora and 30 fauna species listed under the Australian *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
    - Eight flora and 44 fauna species listed under the Victorian *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*
    - 20 flora and 74 fauna species classified as rare or threatened in Victoria by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

The study recognises the importance of keystone species in providing important ecological functions like pollination, feeding resources, habitat, sand dune stability, microclimate, etc. The most notable keystone species include Hairy Spinifex, Seagrasses, seasonally flowering canopy species, almost all invertebrates (terrestrial, freshwater and marine), the Australian Anchovy (*Engraulis australis*), the pollinator Grey-headed Flying-fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*), and *Scleroderma cepa*, a type of Puff Ball, for its symbiotic relationship with Eucalypts and other plants.

The study also identifies flagship species as essential nature ambassadors that improve the wider community's connection with and understanding of biodiversity. These include characteristic plants like Eucalypts, Wattles and Banksias, dominant grasses like Hairy Spinifex, Kangaroo Grass, Spear Grass and Wallaby Grass, other culturally or ecologically significant species like Murnongs, Noon-flowers and saltmarsh species, and the recently recorded rare and beautiful Green-staining Coral (*Ramaria abietina*) in Westgate Park. The introduced Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) has been widely planted as an iconic foreshore feature, but was not recommended for further planting. Flagship fauna species include the tourist attracting Little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*) and the culturally significant Wedge-tailed Eagle (*Aquila audax*) and Australian Raven (*Corvus coronoides*), common species like the Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*), Grey Fantail (*Rhipidura albiscapa*) and Rakali (Water-rat, *Hydromys chrysogaster*), and iconic fauna species groups such as Dolphins, Whales, Shearwaters, Seagulls, Seahorses and Whiting.

Potential threats to biodiversity noted in the study include climate change (especially for foreshore and estuarine habitats), pet dogs and cats, beachcombing and herbicide spraying. The study recommends the City protect and enhance biodiversity for the benefit of both the environment and the community's connection to nature.

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8. Key trends related to Port Phillip's urban forest

8.1. Climate change

The City of Port Phillip declared a climate emergency in 2019, recognising that everyone must play their part in addressing this global challenge. The City is already experiencing the impacts of climate change, and projections show increased risk of flooding (see more below), storm damage, foreshore inundation, water supply issues, and extreme heat (see more below).

Trees are long-lived assets, so urban greening strategies need to consider future climate conditions (see image below). Tree populations need to be diverse to resist extreme heat, drought, pests and diseases. The species selected need to be suited to a different climate than the one we live in now. Greening also plays a crucial role as a climate solution, by drawing down greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and assisting the City and its people to adapt to the changing climate. The City of Port Phillip is reducing its own emissions and preparing its assets and community for a changing environment, including by investing in greening.

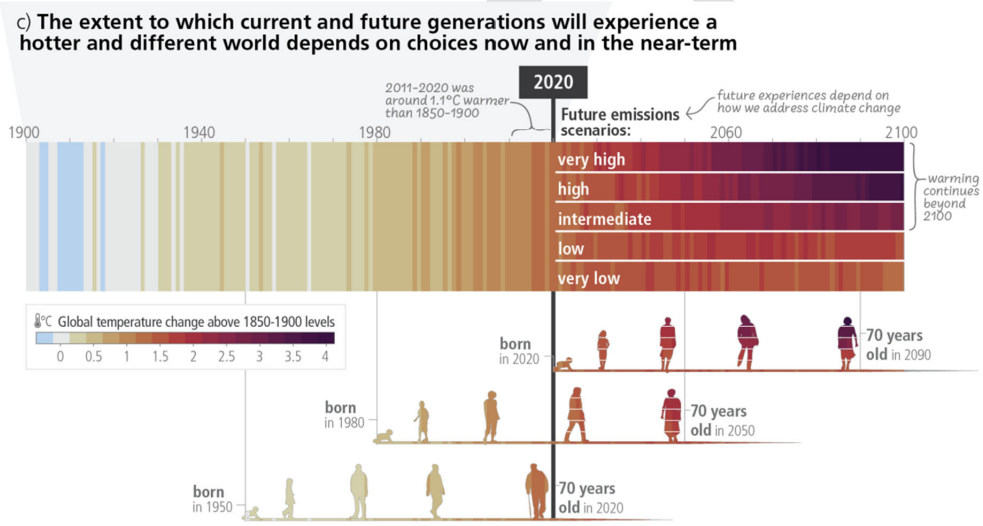


Image 6: Infographic source - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2023), Synthesis Report of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6): Summary for Policymakers, accessed at: https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syr/pdf/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf

Specific climate risks the City of Port Phillip has identified that are relevant to greening include[87]:

- Lower than average rainfall, changing rainfall patterns and inconsistent water supply, with an expected overall drop in annual rainfall of 31mm by 2030 and 61mm by 2050, requiring adjustments to water management and irrigation, and potential for greater costs.
- Rising average temperatures and more days of extreme heat will cause heat-related health stress (for people, animals and vegetation). Public spaces will become more important to help cool the City and be places of refuge.
- More frequent extreme weather events (such as heatwaves, storms and floods), combined with increased urbanisation, may impact how public spaces are used and managed.
- Sea level rise and storm surges will make the foreshore vulnerable, and may result in areas of the coast being inundated or eroded.
- The changing climate will impact biodiversity, including through changes to species range, and a rise in pests and diseases, which will require different species choices and management practices.
- Rising groundwater levels will make it more difficult and costly to manage soil contamination and heighten the risk of soil salinity issues.

Sand Motor



Image 7 Climate-ADAPT (2019), Sand Motor Case Study

The Sand Motor is a 'mega-nourishment' coastal management project implemented in 2011 on the coast of the Netherlands. A large artificial sandbar (known as the Sand Motor) was constructed, designed to gradually erode over time and replenish the beach. A large area of coastal vegetation was planted along the dunes and beach, helping to stabilise the dunes and prevent erosion (see image above).

The project has been highly successful in mitigating coastal erosion and protecting against storm surges and sea level rise. New opportunities have been created for recreation such as surfing, swimming, and bird watching, and habitat provided for a range of coastal species.

The project shows how coastal vegetation can be integrated with engineered solutions and natural processes to achieve resilient coastal systems.

[87] City of Port Phillip (2022) *Places for People Public Space Strategy 2022-32*

8.2. Heatwaves and urban heat

As the climate continues to change, cities are getting hotter. Maximum annual temperatures could increase by up to 1.6˚C by the 2030s and up to 2.7˚C by the 2050s under a high greenhouse gas emissions scenario, with the number of extreme heat days (maximum >35˚C) and nights (minimum >20˚C) both projected to more than double by the 2050s (extreme heat days up from 8.3 to 20.4, extreme heat nights up from 5.8 to 18.4)[88] To put this in perspective, Melbourne's climate is expected to be more like Wangaratta's is now by the 2050s (a regional city over 200km inland).

Heatwaves kill more Australians than any other natural hazard[89], and place great pressure on Council assets. Urban heat can have a direct and serious impact on people's health, wellbeing and safety[90]. More specifically, urban heat can increase energy use, peak electricity demand, heat related mortality and morbidity, and levels of harmful pollutants[91], as well as causing significant loss of income for local businesses[92]. Importantly, 24% of all public trees (35% of species) in Australia's cities are at high risk from increased temperatures by 2070 (in the business-as-usual emissions scenario).[93]

A key opportunity for the City of Port Phillip is to manage its future growth in a way that does not limit its ability to mitigate and adapt to increasing urban heat. The City of Port Phillip has set urban heat reduction as a key priority in developing a greener, cooler and more liveable city that is resilient and can adapt to climate change[94]. Many of the City of Port Phillip's strategies, guidelines, plans and policies therefore prioritise the need to minimise the impacts of urban heat.

Biodiverse greening for cooler neighbourhoods

New research indicates that more biodiverse green spaces have a greater urban cooling effect.

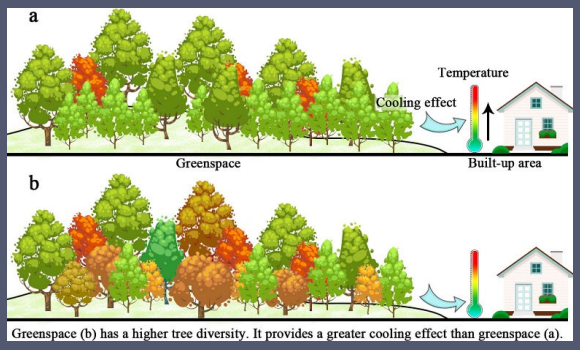


Image 8 Xinjun W. et al. (2021), Tree species richness and diversity predicts the magnitude of urban heat island mitigation effects of greenspaces, Science of the Total Environment, Volume 770, accessed at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2021.145211

[88] Clarke JM, Grose M, Thatcher M, Round V, & C, H. (2019). *Greater Melbourne Climate Projections 2019*. Melbourne, Australia. CSIRO. https://www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au/media/ccia/2.1.6/cms_page_media/508/Vic%20Climate%20Projections%202019%20Regional%20 Report%20-%20Greater%20Melbourne.pdf

[89] Climate Council (2014) '*Heatwaves: Hotter, Longer, More Often'*, accessed at https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/resources/heatwaves-report/

[90] Santamouris, M. (2015). *Regulating the damaged thermostat of the cities—Status, impacts and mitigation challenges*. Energy and Buildings, 91, 43-56. https://doi. org/10.1016/j.enbuild.2015.01.027

[91] Santamouris, M. (2020). *Recent progress on urban overheating and heat island research. Integrated assessment of the energy, environmental, vulnerability and health impact. Synergies with the global climate change*. Energy and Buildings, 207, 109482. accessed at: https://doi. org/10.1016/j.enbuild.2019.109482

[92] Sweeney Research, & City of Melbourne. (2014). *A Quantitative Research Report on: 2014 Heatwave Business Impacts* - Social Research. https://www.melbourne.vic.gov. au/sitecollectiondocuments/eco-impact-of-heat-waves-onbusiness-2014.pdf

[93] Kendal, D., Farrar, A., Plant, L., Threlfall, C.G., Bush, J., & Baumann, J. (2017) *Risks to Australia's urban forest from climate change and urban heat*, Clean Air and Urban Landscapes Hub.

[94] CoPP (2018) *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy* 2018-2028

Low Carbon Living CRC's 2017 *Guide to Urban Cooling Strategies*[95] recommended a number of effective strategies for cooling Greater Melbourne. Increasing tree canopy cover was identified as an appropriate strategy to reduce air temperature and improve amenity and thermal comfort at street level.

Building on that work, the City of Port Phillip partnered with the University of New South Wales to determine the most effective cooling strategies for South Melbourne[96]. The study found that increasing urban greenery[97] in the public realm and using cool materials for all streets, footpaths and private hard surfaces would be highly effective at reducing street level air and surface temperatures, especially in business and retail precincts that have wider, unshaded streets. Moderate green infrastructure in the private realm was found to be effective for new buildings, while converting existing roof materials to cool roofs could improve indoor thermal comfort and reduce energy and air conditioning use. The most effective intervention was to combine all strategies – public and private urban greening, cool materials and water misters – resulting in a significant localised cooling impact on street level air and surface temperatures.

Cooling South Melbourne made a number of recommendations to increase urban greening in order to reduce urban heat, including to:

- Maximise green infrastructure in the public realm, primarily through additional street trees and rain gardens, and in the private realm, through green roofs and vertical greenery.
- Provide for moderate private green cover in new developments as a baseline (40-50% of the site area as urban greenery (including vertical) for all new buildings)
- Increase the number of street trees in wider (>28m), unshaded streets, which may include exploring alternatives to existing road and pedestrian networks.
- Improve the amenity of existing and future green public spaces through additional greening, shade structures and water misting systems.
- Use cool and permeable surfaces for all streets and hard surfaces in the public domain, especially in key redevelopment precincts where the street tree canopy is limited.

Turn Down the Heat

Western Sydney is significantly hotter than Sydney's CBD.

In 2018, the Turn Down the Heat project was initiated by the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Council (WSROC) to build a cooler and more heat-resilient future for Western Sydney.

This collaboration's shared target is to reduce the average peak ambient temperatures in Western Sydney by 1.5°C through water, greening and cool materials strategies by 2023.

Tools delivered by the project include an Urban Heat Planning Toolkit and a 'Cool Suburbs' heat resilience rating and assessment tool to inform development decisions at all scales.

Their climate resilient street trees project set up demonstration sites to test how species selection and passive irrigation can influence successful outcomes for a mature, healthy and cooling canopy. A selection of species with varied climate-risk and cooling benefits were planted with and without access to passive irrigation, and tree performance will be monitored over time (no results are publicly available yet).

https://wsroc.com.au/projects/project-turn-down-the-heat

[95] Osmond P, Sharifi, E, *Guide to Urban Cooling Strategies* (2017), Low Carbon Living CRC, https://www.lowcarbonlivingcrc.com.au/sites/all/files/publications_file_attachments/rp2024_guide_to_urban_cooling_strategies_2017_web.pdf

[96] Ding, L et al.(2020) *'Cooling South Melbourne'*, City of Port Phillip and University of New South Wales http://uhimitigationindex.be.unsw.edu.au/static/files/Cooling%20South%20Melbourne%2019-11-20.pdf

[97] A 20% increase in urban greening is highly effective at reducing ambient temperatures during the early hours of the morning (1:00am to 7:00am), with reductions of up to 1.8°C (Cooling South Melbourne, 2020).

8.3. Flooding and permeability

Port Phillip is located at the bottom of the Elster Creek and Yarra River catchments. Over 44% of the City of Port Phillip is less than three metres above sea-level, and is prone to flooding. Sea level rise, increased severity and frequency of storms, and more extreme rainfall are projected to increase the likelihood of flooding of homes, businesses, council buildings, roads, and public spaces.

Sponge Cities

The terms 'water sensitive city' and 'sponge city' describe cities that work with nature to absorb and reuse rainwater, instead of using concrete to channel it quickly away.

Sea level rise and the impacts of in-fill development are anticipated to further exacerbate existing flooding issues. However, increasing permeability can help offset these issues. Permeable surfaces allow water to be absorbed into the soil, and to either infiltrate into groundwater or be released back into the atmosphere through evaporation or plant transpiration. Permeable surfaces include garden beds, lawn, green roofs, permeable pavers, and other unsealed surfaces (see Figure 6 below).

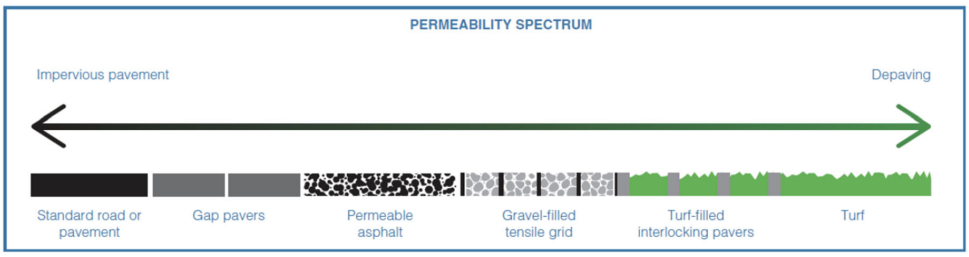


Figure 6. Permeability spectrum, showing typical ground surface treatments in order of least to most permeable.
Source: Supplied by the City of Port Phillip

Increasing permeability in urban areas has multiple benefits for flood protection, water quality, urban cooling, and biodiversity:

- **Flood protection:** By increasing permeability, stormwater can infiltrate close to its source, reducing the need for new or upgraded drainage infrastructure.
- **Stormwater quality:** Green infrastructure can remove pollutants from stormwater, improving downstream water quality and the health of receiving waters like the Bay.
- **Greening and cooling:** Increased permeability and vegetation can retain more soil moisture, provide water for plant growth, and increase shading and evapotranspiration, offsetting urban heat island effects.
- **Biodiversity and habitat:** Permeable green infrastructure like raingardens and green roofs can provide valuable habitat for native species.

The City of Port Phillip is committed to transitioning to a water sensitive city, as expressed in its *Council Plan 2021-2031* and *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028*. As part of this commitment, Council has recognised the need to substantially improve permeability outcomes in the public and private realm. Act and Adapt includes Action 39: '*Update Council policy and engage with the community to achieve greater permeability on private property*'. This is reflected in the Council Plan through the key initiative to *'increase permeability of ground surfaces across public streets and in our public spaces as well as examining ways to support greater permeability on private property'*.

Most catchments in the municipality are 60-80% impervious, with the higher ranges in expected catchments like Fishermans Bend and Southbank. Port Melbourne and Middle Park also have higher impermeability rates in the private realm. Total impermeability across the LGA was estimated to be >60% in 2021 and is expected to increase to >70% by 2050.

As expected in a high density area, the City is very impermeable overall, with higher permeability in the public realm offsetting lower permeability in the private realm. Increasing permeability in the private realm represents a big opportunity for the City to help manage stormwater flows.

Melbourne, a Water Sensitive City

The City of Melbourne is widely considered to be an exemplar water sensitive city. The City kickstarted integrated water management in 2014 with its *Total Watermark: City as Catchment* strategy, and has since developed a *Municipal Integrated Water Management Plan* (2017), aiming to reduce the demand for potable water, reduce flood risk, improve stormwater runoff quality, cool the city, and support urban greening. This strategy integrates with the City's climate adaptation, biodiversity, greening, and open space strategies.

Some of the key initiatives the City of Melbourne has implemented include:

- **Green and blue private development** – Introduced Clause 22.23 in the Melbourne Planning Scheme to require water reuse (rainwater tanks), quality treatments (eg. raingardens), infiltration (eg. permeable paving), and passive irrigation of gardens, with a performance-based assessment tool (eg. STORM or MUSIC). Commenced implementation of the Green Factor Score to encourage green walls, facades and roofs.
- **Green and blue streetscapes** – Installed passive irrigation systems supporting street trees (eg. structural soil trench with smart soaker pits in Flinders Street) and permeable pavers (eg. Collins Street and Eades Place), and converted pavement to green public space.
- **Drought-proofing open spaces** – Implementing a 10-year stormwater harvesting plan to irrigate and cool parks and gardens, including through infiltration and passive irrigation. Six large stormwater harvesting projects now provide for 23% of the Council's water use.

City of Melbourne (2017), *Municipal Integrated Water Management Plan; and City of Melbourne website*

8.4. Sustainable and active transport

If car ownership trends continue, there is predicted to be a 24% increase in the number of cars owned in the City in the ten years to 2028, but the current supply of on-street car parking spaces is barely enough to meet current demand[98]. Recognising this, Council has prioritised increasing choices for healthy, safe, connected and convenient public transport, walking and bike riding in the City.

Improving the uptake of sustainable and active transport modes has many widely accepted benefits, including improving liveability and safety, promoting health and wellbeing, and bolstering the economy, especially through improved visitation and spending in shopping strips. Recognising this, there is now a growing global shift towards an integrated 'movement and place' approach to design cities and streets for people, rather than cars. This approach aims to respond to the local context and the needs of all users, and to optimise positive social, economic and environmental outcomes.

The City of Port Phillip has embraced this approach in its *Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-28*. The strategy identifies the need to provide better pedestrian facilities such as wider footpaths, seating or kerb extensions, which could require removal of some car parking. This may provide both opportunities and challenges for urban greening, for example[99]:

- Increased greening creates a more enjoyable and safer environment (from UV and extreme heat), encouraging the uptake of walking, biking and public transit.
- Footpaths may be widened for the comfort of more pedestrians, especially to provide for social distancing. Separated bike lanes may be created or expanded. It is possible to deliver on these objectives while protecting trees and increasing greening.
- Streets may be repurposed (temporarily or permanently) to create new public space (eg. parklets and playstreets) and bike and walking routes, which may include the removal of car parking (see Image 9).

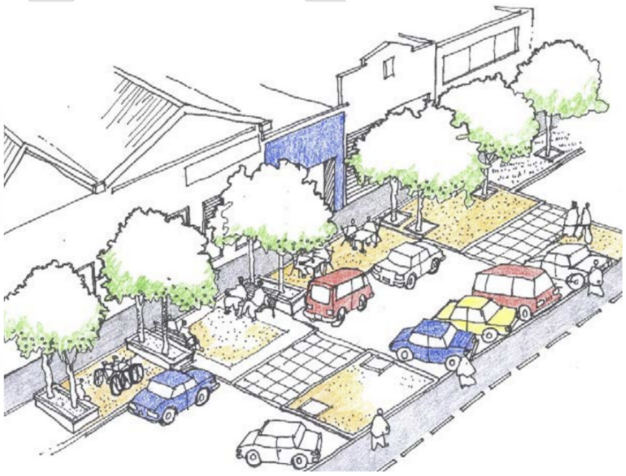


Image 9: Artist impression of repurposed streets with mixed public use. Source City of Port Phillip, & David Lock Associates (2007) South Melbourne Central Urban Design Framework

[98] City of Port Phillip (2018) *Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-28*

[99] City of Port Phillip (2022) *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32*,

Walking and cycling meccas

The City of **Vancouver** (Canada) is integrating greening into pedestrian and cycling routes to encourage sustainable transport . With a strategic direction to make two-thirds of all trips in Vancouver by foot, bike, and transit, the City's initiatives include:

- **Greenways** – Six city greenways are under construction, to provide safe and attractive cycling and walking routes that are separated from vehicle traffic. They include improvements like expanded parks, increased landscaping, public art, and drinking fountains (refer Image 10).
- **Complete Streets** – The Complete Streets Policy aims to create streets that are safe and accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users. It takes an 'outside-in' approach, from building access to the pedestrian realm, to 'between the curbs'. New and reconstructed streets must be designed for all users of all abilities, and seamlessly integrate green infrastructure.
- **Green Streets program** – A volunteer program for locals to green traffic calming spaces.
- **Urban Forest Strategy** – The above initiatives are supported by the City's Urban Forest Strategy, which includes tree planting and community stewardship programs, and policies to protect mature trees.

In another example, the City of **Portland** (United States) has implemented a Neighborhood Greenways program, to create a network of streets that prioritise walking, cycling and 'rolling' over vehicle traffic. The Neighborhood Greenways are designed to be low-traffic, low-speed, and feature traffic calming measures like speed bumps and chicanes. The streets are lined with trees and other vegetation, supported by the City's Green Streets program to install WSUD infrastructure, and its urban forestry program.

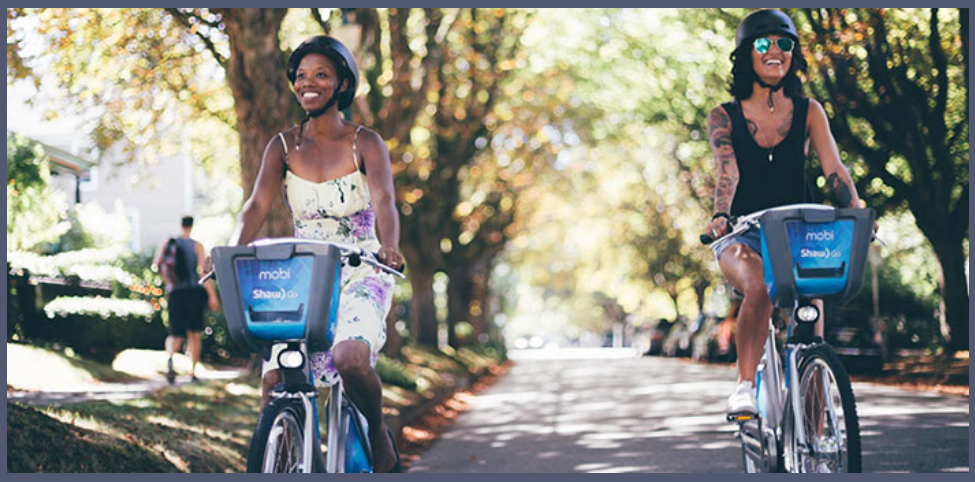


Image 10 Users of the mobi bike hire scheme enjoying a leafy street in Vancouver. Source City of Vancouver, accessed 2023 at https://vancouver.ca/streets-transportation/greenways-for-walking-and-cycling.aspx

City of Vancouver (2017) *Complete Streets*, accessed at https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/complete-streets-policy-framework.pdf 2017

City of Portland (2020) *Neighborhood Greenways*, accessed at https://www.portland.gov/transportation/what-are-neighborhood-greenways

8.5. Meeting the outdoor needs of a growing and changing city

The City of Port Phillip is currently Melbourne's most densely populated municipality, with 186m^2 for each resident, more than twice the population density of the metropolitan Melbourne average. The worker population is expected to rise dramatically (especially in Fishermans Bend), and the resident population is projected to grow by 23% by 2027, with new residents likely to be housed in apartments that have little access to private open space[100].

As more people live in apartments, parks are replacing backyards, and public spaces are becoming the 'living rooms' where people meet and interact[101]. Streets and parks will increasingly become central to the City's identity and character, with increased demand for opportunities for relaxation, recreation, social connections, and individual connections with nature.

Each of the City's neighbourhoods has different characteristics. In Albert Park / Middle Park, for example, the population is ageing and many people live in larger houses with backyards. Other neighbourhoods have a larger population of young families with children, and in others, single person households are more common.

Some neighbourhoods have more public space than others. Some have historic 'gaps' where there is not currently public space within a short, easy and safe walking distance. This is particularly true of Balaclava / St Kilda East and South Melbourne. The quality of many of the City's public spaces is high, but some spaces are of a lower quality due to factors like size, diversity of use, and facilities.

The COVID-19 pandemic created new and different demands on urban greening, including a significant increase in the number of people using Port Phillip's public spaces at different times of the day, and a change in the types of activities. This has seen increased community interest in upgrading or changing public spaces, including an increased demand for engagement in nature closer to home.

Some of the key challenges and opportunities of meeting the needs of the City's people include[102]:

- More people will be using public spaces, but there is limited capacity to expand them – new public spaces (including sporting fields) cannot be provided at the rate of population growth (other than within Fishermans Bend).
- Green spaces will need to work harder and be maintained more frequently (including nature strips and community gardens), increasing maintenance costs.
- Public spaces need to be accessible for all people of all abilities.
- As apartment living increases, the community will be more reliant on public space for leisure and recreation.
- As more people live alone, they will rely on public spaces for social connection.

[100] City of Port Phillip (2018) *Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-28*

[101] City of Port Phillip (2022) *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32*

[102] City of Port Phillip (2022) *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-32*

8.6. Tree health in the urban environment

Trees need soil, water, nutrients, space, air and light to grow. These can be hard to get in a dense inner urban environment (see Figure 7). Tree health depends on factors including local climate conditions, soil type, nutrients and available volume, soil compaction and contamination, irrigation regimes (including passive irrigation), solar access, pests, diseases and vandalism. These factors may affect both establishment and optimum growth of individual trees. Trees close to the foreshore in Port Phillip also have to contend with salt spray and salty soils, precluding many species from thriving. The City of Port Phillip undertakes careful tree species selection and detailed site assessments to minimise establishment issues and tree loss over time[103].



Figure 7. Illustration of common constraints for trees in urban areas.
Source: Maribyrnong City Council (2018) Urban Forest Strategy.

Poor growing conditions in cities can place trees under stress, which can cause root systems to strain against the surrounding infrastructure in search of adequate nutrients, oxygen and moisture. This can increase maintenance costs, of both trees and infrastructure. There are now a number of resources, including the Victorian Government's *Trees for Cooler and Greener Streetscapes Guidelines for Streetscape Planning and Design* (2017) which provide guidance on how to support healthy trees in streetscapes, to maximise benefits while seamlessly integrating with other streetscape functions and infrastructure. These guidelines emphasise provision of adequate, healthy soil volume and soil moisture, which can deliver[104]:

- Double the growth rate
- Canopy cover which is 8-10 times as large
- An increase in tree lifespan of 13 to 50 years.

[103] City of Port Phillip (2010) Greening Port Phillip

[104] E2Designlab for the Victoria Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2019), *Trees for Cooler and Greener Streetscapes Guidelines for Streetscape Planning and Design*, accessed at: https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0034/439297/Trees-for-Cooler-and-Greener-Streetscapes-21112019.pdf

Trees in challenging spaces

It can be tough for trees to thrive in an urban environment. A range of guidelines now lay out how to achieve quicker, healthier and more vibrant tree growth in challenging spaces – those that are constrained by limited space above ground and below ground, and with limited access to water. Six key principles are:

- **The Roots get the Shoots** – soil volume is critical to successful trees and thriving canopies
- **Happy Trees Happy Infrastructure** – provide for a tree's needs for space, oxygen, nutrients and water to reduce impact on surrounding infrastructure
- **Cost Efficient Solutions Maximise Implementation** – plant trees for short and long term cost efficiency
- **The Right Tree for the Right Location** – consider the tree species' growing needs and potential benefits and impacts for each site
- **Prioritise Trees** – consider trees as essential infrastructure and prioritise them to maximise benefits
- **An Integrated Approach** – equal ownership, engagement and commitment between horticulture, engineering, infrastructure, asset management and other disciplines.

City of West Torrens (2021), Street trees in challenging spaces, accessed at https://www.westtorrens.sa.gov.au/files/sharedassets/public/objective-digitalpublications/external-website/publications/trees-in-challenging-spaces-report.pdf

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8.7. Policy and legislation directly impacting the urban forest

The most relevant policy and legislation impacting the urban forest involves tree protection, footpath safety, electrical line clearance, and the planning scheme.

Tree protection

People in the City of Port Phillip are required to seek permission to remove or prune significant trees or palms on their property[105]. This is in addition to any planning approvals. Under the Local Law, a tree or palm on private land is significant if it has a trunk circumference of 150 centimetres or more, measured 1 metre above the base (or at the base if the tree has been removed). Applications are assessed by the Council arborist.

Under the City of Port Phillip's Tree Protection Guidelines[106], public trees cannot be pruned or have branches removed (except by Council and its contractors). Trees on Council owned and managed land must also be protected from construction works and other activities, with a Tree Protection Zone (TPZ)[107] established while any works are undertaken, and a Tree Protection Management Plan prepared if any demolition or construction activity is proposed to encroach a TPZ.

Footpath safety

In line with the Local Law, residents are responsible for ensuring that pedestrian access to paths and traffic sight lines are not blocked by trees and vegetation on their property.

The Australian *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person, in many areas of public life, including in accessing public places, because of their disability. Compliance with this Act can be challenging when managing existing trees, where there is fruit drop, narrow footpaths, and where roots become invasive and interfere with footpaths.

Electrical line clearance

Most of Port Phillip's streets have above ground power and communication cables. Council has legislative clearance requirements for trees around powerlines, under the *Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations 2005*[108]. As the Responsible Authority under these regulations, Council is required to undertake regular pruning to keep trees a regulated distance away from powerlines. This will result in some trees having large limbs removed and, if there are no viable management options, trees being removed. If Council does not comply with these requirements, it will be penalised[109]. Non-compliant trees pose a risk of fire, power outages, service reliability and electrocution to operators attempting to manage the trees.

[105] City of Port Phillip (2013) *Local Law No.1 Community Amenity 2013* accessed at https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/uxyj0vjw/copp-local-law-number-1-community-amenity.pdf

[106] City of Port Phillip (2008), *Tree Protection Guidelines*, accessed at: https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/3kogbd40/tree-protection-guidelines.pdf

[107] The City of Port Phillip uses the tree protection distance method outlined in the Australian Standard AS 4970-2009 'Protection of trees on development sites' to calculate TPZs. This method provides a TPZ that addresses both tree stability and growth requirements.

[108] The Electric Line Clearance Regulations are made under sections 151, 151A and 157 of the *Electricity Safety Act 1998* and incorporates activities under the *Electricity Safety (Bushfire Mitigation) Regulations 2013*.

[109] As the Responsible Authority for compliance with the ELC regulations, Energy Safe Victoria has notified all Councils that as of 1 July 2022, penalty notices will be issued for non-compliance with the ELC regulations.

Planning Scheme

The Port Phillip Planning Scheme[110] contains policies and provisions that control land use and development. The Scheme states that Council supports:

- *Protecting Port Phillip's natural environment and landscape values*
- *Protecting and enhancing Port Phillip's urban forest, including large canopy trees and vegetation.*
- *Protecting and enhancing Port Phillip's green spaces and corridors to provide habitat to native flora and fauna.*
- *Reducing the environmental impact of urban areas on waterways and receiving bodies by managing stormwater quality and quantity.*
- *Creating a greener, cooler City that reduces urban heat island effect by:*
    - *Increasing canopy cover and diversity of tree species in public open spaces, road reserves and transport corridors.*
    - *Protecting and enhancing vegetation on private land and in development.*

The Scheme includes ordinances on the Protection of biodiversity (12.01-1S), Urban forest (12.01-1L) and Native vegetation management (12.01-2S). These include strategies to:

- *Protect and enhance biodiversity* (including by avoiding landuse impacts, increasing connectivity, and supporting development that enhances urban habitat for native species).
- *Retain significant trees.*
- *Encourage opportunities for landscaping that contribute to biodiversity and provide habitat including the planting of canopy trees and green roofs and walls.*
- *Support tree and plant selection suitable to a drier climate, and resistant to storms.*
- *Ensure development protects significant trees and vegetation through siting and design.*
- *Support innovative approaches to landscape design and construction, including greater use of indigenous plant species and species that benefit biodiversity.*
- *Ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.*

The specific polices under these ordinances are:

- Provide for the retention of significant trees greater than 1.5m in circumference[111] (consistent with the Local Law).
- Ensure any decisions that may cause removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation apply this three-step approach[112]:
    - Avoid the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.
    - Minimise impacts where removal, destruction or lopping cannot be avoided.
    - Provide an offset to compensate for the biodiversity impact.

Spatial protections in overlays

Environmental Significance and Vegetation Protection Overlays can also be used to protect specific trees or areas, which Port Phillip has done for:

- Light Rail Remnant Indigenous Vegetation
- The Ngargee Tree
- West Beach Natural History Reserve
- English Oak at 71 Grey Street, St Kilda

Clause 42.01 and 42.02, Port Phillip Planning Scheme

[110] Department of Transport and Planning Victoria, *Port Phillip Planning Scheme*, accessed 2023 at https://planning-schemes.app.planning.vic.gov.au/Port%20Phillip/ordinance

[111] As measured 1 metre from the tree base, either a single stem tree with trunk circumference greater than 1.5 metres, or a multi-stemmed tree, where the circumference of its exterior stems is equal to or greater than 1.5 metres

[112] In accordance with the Victoria State Government (2017) *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation*

9. Benchmarking recent urban forest strategies

City of Port Phillip is not alone in urban forest management. This is particularly true among inner-metro Councils, including Port Phillip's immediate neighbours. Benchmarking enables Councils to learn from each other, continually improve, and build on what has been achieved before.

The benchmarking review highlighted widespread agreement on the importance of increasing tree canopy cover, creating new green spaces, and establishing green corridors to connect and enhance existing green spaces. They also emphasise the need for community engagement, partnerships, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure the success and sustainability of urban greening initiatives.

9.1. Benchmarking approach

Ten neighbouring and peer Councils with urban forest or greening strategies have been reviewed, alongside Greening Port Phillip (2010), to identify common themes, trends and individual highlights. A list of the strategies compared for content analysis is included in Table 2

A number of other Council's strategies were also reviewed beyond this benchmarking process (including interstate and global), with insights and case studies included throughout this report.

Data collection used a content analysis approach where key elements were identified and counted. This included grouping similar meaning words or phrases to count as the same, such as 'climate ready species palette' and a 'climate resilient tree stock'. This approach enabled quantitative analysis, especially to assess frequency of key element use.

The strategies of other peer Councils were also reviewed for insights and case studies.

Table 2. Neighbouring Council urban forest strategies compared in this benchmarking study

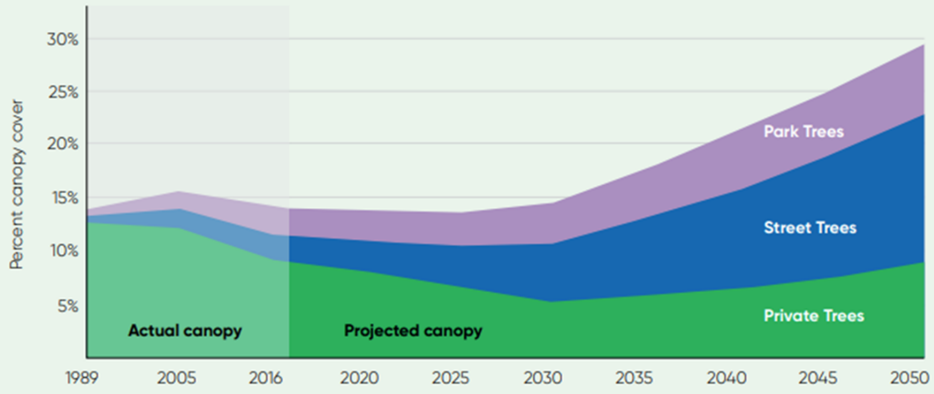
Council	Start Date	End Date	Lifespan (years)
Port Phillip	2010	2020	10
Melbourne	2012	2032	20
Merri-bek	2017	2022	5
Stonnington	2017	2027	10
Yarra	2017	2037	20
Maribyrnong	2018	2040	22
Moonee Valley	2018	2040	22
Hobsons Bay	2020	2040	20
Whittlesea	2020	2040	20
Glen Eira	2021	2040	19
Bayside	2022	2040	18

9.2. Strategy lifespans

Most strategies had around a 20-year lifespan (see Table 2). A majority of the inner Melbourne Councils' strategies from 2018 on shared an end year of 2040 to align with the recommended targets in Living Melbourne. A long-term strategic outlook is also recommended in the frameworks and guidelines in section 13, as trees are typically slow growing and require decades to measure success against canopy cover targets. For practicality, shorter-term action plans and regular monitoring and reviews (typically 5 years) can complement the long-term goals.

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now.

From the Merri-bek City Council strategy, the below graph shows projected canopy cover and the long lag time to see outcomes from investment in urban greening. Actions taken around 2020 are not projected to see significant gains in canopy cover until at least 2035.



	1989	2005	2016	2020	2030	2040	2050
Street trees	0.7%	1.9%	2.4%	3.0%	5.5%	9.3%	14.7%
Park trees	0.6%	1.6%	2.6%	2.8%	3.8%	5.6%	6.6%
Private trees	12.7%	12.1%	9.2%	8.0%	5.2%	6.5%	9.0%
Moreland canopy cover	14.0%	15.6%	14.2%	13.8%	14.5%	21.4%	30.3%

Figure 8. Actual and projected tree canopy cover from implementing the Merri-Bek City Council Urban Forest Strategy. *Source: Merri-Bek City Council (2017), Urban Forest Strategy, accessed at: https://www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/globalassets/areas/strategic-planning/urban-forest-strategy-2017.pdf*

9.3. Common benefits

The reviewed strategies listed many benefits covering social, economic and environmental categories (as in section 6 of this report). Most were backed by the growing evidence base of peer-reviewed scientific research.

Thirty-one unique benefits of urban greening were identified in the review (Figure 9). Greening Port Phillip (2010) remains the most comprehensive, with 28 referenced benefits identified (the next closest Council had 19).

The most frequently cited benefits across all assessed Councils were urban cooling, carbon capture, stormwater benefits and improving air quality.

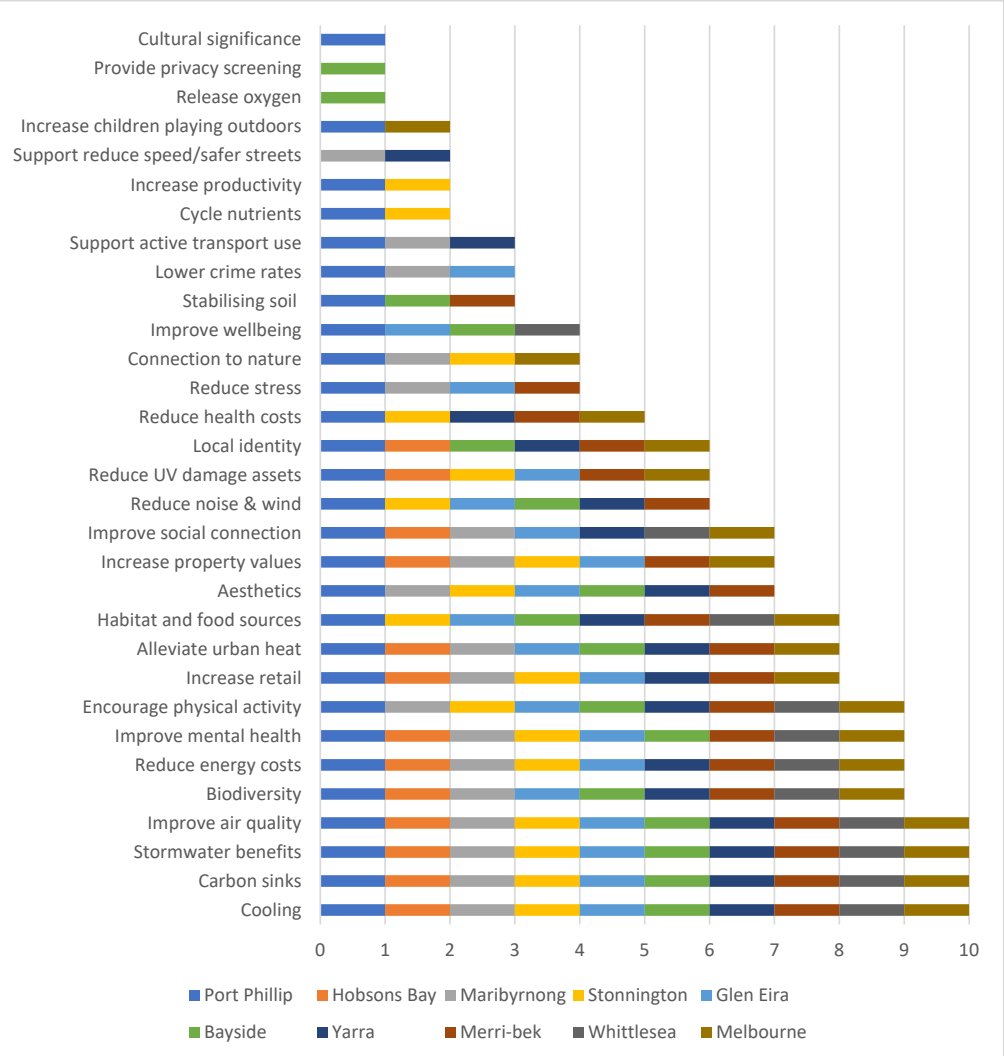


Figure 9. Frequency of benefits cited in the benchmarked urban forest strategies

Note: Moonee Valley did not include a list or section on greening benefits, as its urban forest strategy is part of a larger integrated community strategy.

9.4. Common challenges

Challenges or threats were discussed explicitly in most strategies. Twenty challenges for urban greening were identified in the review (see Table *3*), which also reflects potential common opportunities for improvement that could be worked on together.

Table 3. Frequency of challenges cited in the benchmarked urban forest strategies

	Challenge cited for urban greening Note: those in bold were identified in Greening Port Phillip (2010)	Frequency (%)
1	**Climate change**	**100**
2	New development	89
3	**Conflicts with existing infrastructure**	**89**
4	Population growth	67
5	Species diversity	56
6	**Ageing tree stock**	**56**
7	**Tree health and/or risks from failures**	**56**
8	Limited space	44
9	Urban heat	44
10	**Local conditions for survival and establishment (eg. Soil)**	**33**
11	**Integrated water management**	**33**
12	Trajectory of canopy loss over time	22
13	Community perceptions	22
14	Contested open space (eg. Sporting facilities)	11
15	Historically low canopy	11
16	Public greening removed (eg. Vandalism)	11
17	Maintenance costs for vulnerable residents	11
18	Women's safety and low visibility	11
19	Residents find tree governance confusing	11
20	Pest and disease management	11

The commonly citied challenges can be grouped into four key themes, outlined below. For more detail on current challenges and trends impacting urban forests, refer to sections 8 and 5.3 of this report.

Climate change

- Trees are long-lived assets, so urban greening strategies need to consider future climate conditions.
- Tree populations need to be diverse and well-managed to resist extreme heat, drought, pests and diseases. The species selected need to be suited to a different climate than the one we live in now.
- Greening is an important tool to prepare our communities for these changed conditions, especially through carbon capture, urban cooling and flood risk reduction.

Contested urban spaces

- Trees need soil, water, nutrients, space, air and light to grow and thrive. These can be hard to get in a dense inner urban environment.
- New development, surrounding utilities and infrastructure, impermeable surfaces, limited water access, compacted soils, pollution, heat, and direct damage (eg. Accidental damage by vehicles) are all threats to greening.
- Public space is scarce, with trade-offs and smart design needed to address all desired objectives, including active transport routes, sporting facilities, car parking and greening.

(un)Healthy tree populations

- Urban forest health and survival can be at risk long-term if trees are not managed for 'defensive diversity' through a good mixture of species, age classes, structural sizes, species suitability and functional diversity (eg. Habitat, shade, flowering).
- For short-and medium-term health, urban forests need careful management including regular health audits, pest treatments and risk management, soil preparation and capacity, formative pruning, establishment watering, passive irrigation, root treatments and other ongoing maintenance.

Community values

- Community perceptions on urban greening can have a large impact on the quality and quantity of the urban forest. For example, communities who value trees and actively engage in greening are likely to retain trees and increase greening, whereas, in communities where trees are not valued, they may not be well-funded or prioritised in capital works.
- Fears and concerns, both real and perceived, over allergies, limb failures, loss of parking, maintenance requirements (eg. Gutter cleaning), unwanted shade (eg. Solar panels), aesthetic preferences, and so on, all threaten the urban forest. For example, mature trees may be removed, plans for new greening stopped, and even intentional vandalism (eg. Poisoning) of trees may occur in some instances.

9.5. Common outcomes

All strategies compared included a vision, objectives and actions. The majority of strategies also included outcomes (see Figure *10*). Four did not include outcomes explicitly, but they may be included or inferred through the vision.

The most common desired outcomes were:

- Urban forest that is healthy, resilient and thriving in a changing climate
- Cooler neighbourhoods
- Urban forest that reflects our unique character
- Improved amenity
- Greater tree and vegetation cover
- Greater awareness and care for urban trees.

Outcome is a goal we want to achieve – it may not be reached in the lifespan of the strategy.

Objective is how we reach each outcome – it should be clear, concise, and focused.

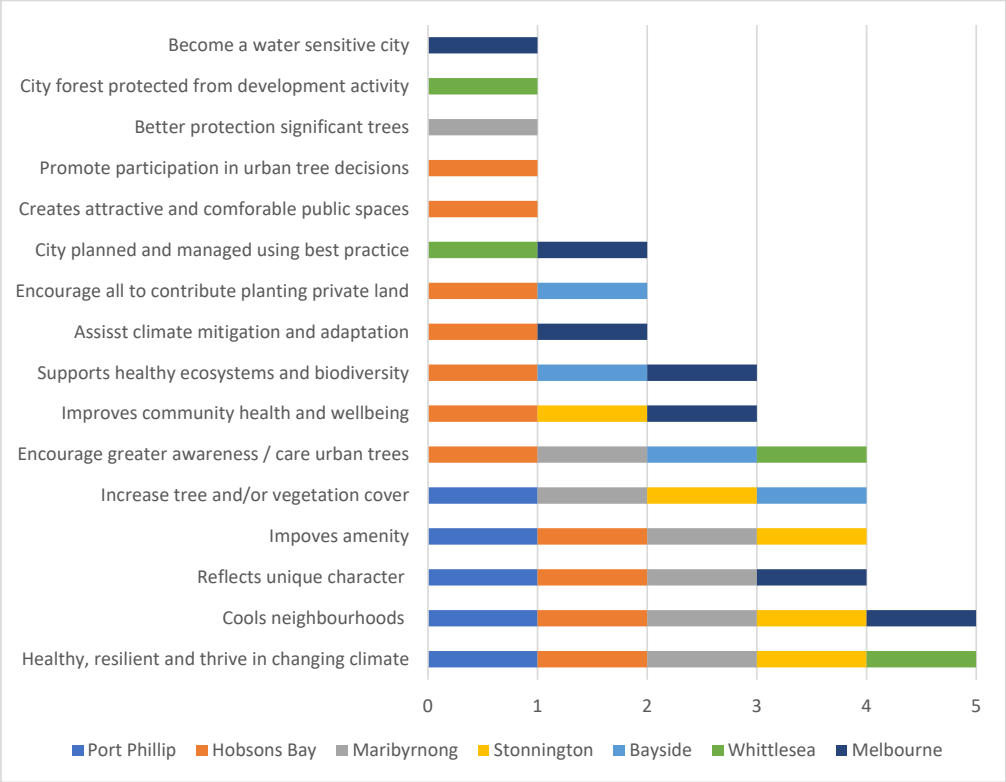


Figure 10. Frequency of desired outcomes cited in the benchmarked urban forest strategies

9.6. Common objectives

There is significant consistency in the underlying intent of the objectives of all strategies compared (despite wording differences). The frequency of objectives is provided in Table 4[113].

The leading objectives are to:

- Increase tree canopy
- Protect existing trees
- Educate and promote care of urban trees
- Develop a diverse and healthy forest.

Table 4. Frequency of objectives cited in the benchmarked urban forest strategies

	Objectives Note: Those in bold were cited in Greening Port Phillip (2010)	Frequency (%)
1	**Increase canopy**	**91**
2	**Protect existing trees**	**73**
3	Educate and promote care of urban trees	73
4	**Develop a diverse and healthy forest**	**73**
5	**Create habitat/biodiversity**	**55**
6	**Increase alternative vegetation (eg. understorey, green walls, depaving)**	**55**
7	**Adapt to climate change**	**55**
8	Monitor and evaluate urban forest	36
9	**Manage interface of grey and green infrastructure**	**36**
10	**Maximise community health and wellbeing outcomes**	**27**
11	**Reduce heat exposure**	**27**
12	Best practice and evidence-based arboriculture	27
13	Improve tree outcomes on private land	27
14	**Create feature boulevards**	**18**
15	**Value urban forest as a key element of urban space**	**18**
16	Proactive management of risks	9
17	Replace aging trees	9
18	**Enhance and maintain unique character**	**9**
19	Improve soil moisture & water quality	9

[113] There is some repetition in Table 4, for example 'Replace aging trees' could be grouped within 'Develop a diverse and healthy forest'. These have been included as discrete objectives where Councils included both in their strategies. Where Councils grouped multiple objectives into a single objective statement, these were counted in the multiple to enable comparison. For example, City of Port Phillip has 'Minimising the impact of the heat island effect by increasing the number of trees and overall canopy cover in the City of Port Phillip and by seeking other greening opportunities where trees cannot be planted', which was counted against 'reduce heat exposure', 'increase canopy' and 'increase alternate greening'.

10. Best practice and emerging focus areas

Through analysis of the background and benchmarking information, including the guidelines included for further reading in section 12, a number of contemporary standards and emerging focus areas have been identified.

Baseline standard

Before discussing best practice, it is worth noting the common, or baseline standard.

It is now standard for urban greening strategies to at least discuss (if not directly address) three common challenges:

- Climate change (urban heat and flooding resilience, tree species resilience)
- Contested urban space (finding space for greening in urban environments)
- Healthy tree populations (age and species diversity, good management practices).

Urban greening strategies are now expected to include, at a minimum, actions to:

- Protect existing trees
- Increase tree canopy against a target
- Manage and maintain healthy tree populations
- Collect data on Council's urban forest and canopy.

Meanwhile, not every Council has an urban greening strategy, so Councils achieving this baseline are still ahead of others.

Best practice and emerging focus areas

The best practice and emerging themes identified in global and local guidance, research and contemporary tree strategies include:

- Spatially prioritised greening for climate adaptation and social equity
- Outcome-oriented targets, with proactive monitoring and promotion of progress
- Strengthened tree protections
- Defensive diversity and biodiversity sensitive urban design (BSUD)
- Engineered solutions to recover space and support thriving trees
- Community education, stewardship and engagement
- Greening on private land
- Manage trees as assets, reflecting their true economic value
- Systematic integration of greening across Council and beyond
- Proactive innovation, including R&D partnerships.

More detail on these focus areas is included below.

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10.1. Spatially prioritised greening for climate adaptation and social equity

It is now widely recognised that higher levels of greening generally correlate with higher levels of wealth and health. Greening is therefore becoming a social equity issue, especially as it relates to people's vulnerability to growing climate risks like urban heat and flooding.

A number of spatial prioritisation frameworks are now in use by cities around the world, that combine greening (eg. canopy and green cover), heat (eg. hotspots), and social vulnerability (eg. age groups, SEIFA index) data. These include the VHHEDA Vulnerability Index and Tree Equity Score. Multi-functional spatial prioritisation frameworks that include, for example, flood risk and air quality, are currently limited (see example at right).

Actions in this focus area may include:

- Regular spatial data capture and analysis to overlay greening, heat, flood risk and social vulnerability data to identify the areas of greatest need.
- Planned, prioritised tree planting to address greening deficits in the areas of greatest need.
- Funding programs that prioritise greening where it is needed most.

Detroit and the GISP

The University of Michigan introduced a Green Infrastructure Spatial Planning (GISP) model, which combined spatial data on stormwater management, social vulnerability, access to green space, air quality, urban heat island, and landscape connectivity, with weightings to help prioritise green infrastructure initiatives in Detroit (United States).

Collaboration between the City and the University is ongoing, but the model does not appear to have been formally adopted yet.

Meerow, S (2017), Prioritising Green Infrastructure in Detroit's Urban Landscape, Proceedings of the Water Environment Federation.

Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (2022), Green Infrastructure Progress Report

For more information on this focus area, see sections 8.1 Climate change, 8.2 Heatwaves and urban heat, 8.3 Flooding and permeability, and 11.1.2 Outcome-based targets.

10.2. Outcome-oriented targets, monitoring and promotion

There is a growing trend towards outcome-based target setting, to focus attention on the specific objectives cities are trying to achieve, rather than just increasing overall canopy cover. For example, a Council may be most interested in delivering enhanced biodiversity, urban cooling, energy savings, stormwater management, active transport, public health and wellbeing, economic development, social equity, or a combination of these.

By proactively monitoring progress, and widely promoting progress, Council can focus the community's attention on the specific benefits that greening is providing (and that the community values). This has the potential to garner greater support in the community for greening.

Actions in this focus area may include:

- Outcome-oriented targets for indicators measured more frequently than canopy change.
- A plan focused on the target, with multiple actions/levers to address the desired outcome.
- Regular, planned promotion and engagement on progress, achievements, and why this target is a priority.

For more information on this focus area, see sections 11.1.2 Outcome-based targets and 11.2 Considerations in setting greening targets.

10.3. Strengthened tree protections

If cities are to increase tree canopy, existing mature trees must be protected wherever possible. It is widely recognised that mature trees provide the most benefits for the least cost. Australian Councils are also confirming (through recent advances in spatial mapping) that there is not enough space on public land to offset greening losses on private land, which emphasises the need to protect against those losses.

Tree protections vary widely across Australia, but the average metropolitan Council protects trees with a circumference of approximately 50 centimetres and above.[114] This is in contrast to the City of Port Phillip, which protects 'Significant Trees' with a circumference of 150 centimetres[115]. Many Councils[116] also protect trees exceeding a certain height (majority between 4-6 metres) or crown spread (majority between 3-5 metres). Some also afford protection via tree registers, or by meeting criteria other than size. At a state level, the maximum penalties for unlawfully damaging or removing a protected tree peak at $1.1 million maximum penalty in New South Wales. At the local level, a number of Councils apply financial penalties under local laws, generally between $100 and $6,000, but up to $500,000 in the City of Sydney. [117]

ACT Urban Forest Bill 2022

With an aim to achieve 30% canopy cover for the ACT, their Parliament introduced a Bill in 2022 to:

- Update the definition of protected trees, including new height, crown and trunk size thresholds (making a lot more trees protected)
- Create a tree register, which anyone can nominate a tree for
- Increase the penalty for damaging a protected tree to $80,000
- Introduce a canopy contribution framework, enabling offset payments or tree planting orders to be issued
- Introduce tree bonds for works near protected trees.

Australian Capital Territory Government (2022) Urban Forest Bill 2022

Actions in this focus area may include:

- Local ordinance that protects more trees, for example with lower height, crown and trunk size thresholds for protection.
- Improved protection during developments, using Planning Scheme Overlays.
- Adjusting zone schedules in the Planning Scheme to encourage buildings to be designed around existing trees in certain areas.
- Aligning the protection of vegetation with permeability and flood mitigation outcomes.
- Financial penalties for damaging or removing a protected tree, at an amount that reflects the lost community benefits (see models from Cities of Sydney and Melbourne).
- Bond system to protect street trees during developments.
- Mandated use of the *Australian Standard (AS4373-2007) for Pruning of Amenity Trees*, and involvement of qualified arborists in tree assessments and works to protect trees.

[114] Belder, R, Delaporte, K, & Caddy-Retalic, S (2022), Urban Tree Protection in Australia, accessed at: https://plan.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1087886/Urban_tree_protection_in_Australia.pdf

[115] In the above study of 101 capital city Councils, only four had a minimum threshold for tree protection above 100 centimetres.

[116] Over half of those assessed in the above study.

[117] Belder, R, Delaporte, K, & Caddy-Retalic, S (2022), Urban Tree Protection in Australia, accessed at: https://plan.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1087886/Urban_tree_protection_in_Australia.pdf

10.4. Defensive diversity and biodiversity sensitive urban design (BSUD)

There is now global recognition that the planet is facing dual climate and biodiversity crises (see section 4.3). With growing awareness of its ecosystem services (benefits to people), cities are increasingly focusing greening efforts on restoring and enhancing biodiversity. Urban forestry is about more than just trees – diversity applies to urban tree populations as well as other forms of greening (eg. understorey plantings, green walls, facades and roofs).

It is common practice for urban forest strategies to focus on managing and maintaining healthy tree populations, but this may be limited in scope. Increasingly, there is more widespread recognition (beyond the arboriculture team) that the quality of the urban forest is as important as its quantity. Tree populations that are diverse, healthy and thriving deliver more benefits, and are more likely to survive for longer, reducing costs and risks.

Specific outcomes of biodiversity-sensitive urban design initiatives may include, maintenance and creation of habitat, facilitation of species dispersal, minimisation of threats and human-generated disturbance, facilitation of natural ecological processes, and improved potential for positive interactions between people and nature.

Sydney Green Grid

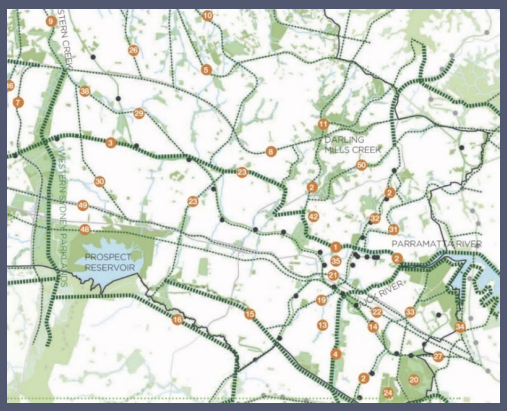


Image 11 Green Grid Project Opportunities, source: Government Architect NSW (2017) Greater Sydney Green Grid

In Sydney, green infrastructure investment is prioritised spatially in the Sydney Green Grid. Green Grid seeks to create a cohesive and connected network, bringing together the hydrological, recreational and ecological fragments of the city. The aim is to connect up strategic, district and local centres, public transport hubs, and residential areas while supporting recreation, biodiversity and waterway health. It is aligned with the New South Wales Greener Spaces Design Guide, which includes 'Bushland and Waterways – for habitat and ecological health' as one of its three priorities.

Government Architect NSW (2017), Greater Sydney Green Grid, and (2020), Draft Greener Spaces Design Guide

Actions in this focus area may include:

- Use of local native plants in capital works and greening projects.
- Identify opportunities to connect wildlife corridors, and prioritise biodiverse greening actions that strengthen those connections.
- Retain dead trees for habitat.
- Design greening sites to be more resilient, including through species selection (eg. drought-tolerant plants), passive irrigation, providing adequate soil, nutrients and light, and managing extreme heat, flooding and pollution.
- Targets for defensive diversity (eg. species, structural and functional diversity, age distribution, species suitability), tree health (eg. new tree survival, tree health rating), and biodiversity (eg. number of bird species, species richness, number of unique ecosystems, and extent of key biodiversity areas).

For more information on this focus area, see sections 7.6 Biodiversity, ecology and habitat, and 8.6 Tree health in the urban environment, and 11.1 Greening target types and trends.

10.5. Engineered solutions to recover space and support thriving trees

Trees need soil, water, nutrients, space, air and light to grow and thrive. These can be hard to get in a dense inner urban environment. Compounding this, the 'low hanging fruit' of tree planting opportunities have now been largely picked in many cities (especially those, like Port Phillip, that have practiced proactive urban forestry for over a decade). Further opportunities to increase greening on public land rely on engineered solutions to recover space and support thriving trees.

Examples of engineered solutions include:

- Depaving (eg. in-road tree pits, pocket parks, traffic islands, street entry and exits)
- Daylighting waterways (restoring natural creeks from covered concrete drains)
- Bundling services to create more space roots and branches to thrive
- Living infrastructure (eg. vine trees, green roofs, walls and facades)
- Passive watering treatments (eg. tree inlets, raingardens, permeable surfaces)
- Engineered soil preparations to maximise species-specific healthy soil volume (eg. structural cells, drainage, microbe treatments, remediating contaminated or compacted soil)
- Solutions to minimise infrastructure conflicts (eg. tree guards and cages, root barriers, flexible paving).

Actions in this focus area may include, for example:

- Exemplar engineered solutions in all Council facilities.
- Recognition that engineered solutions can cost more upfront, but can minimise maintenance costs and maximise benefits over the life of the greening asset.
- Proactive plans and budget to incorporate engineered solutions for greening in all streetscape renewals and capital works.
- Internal capacity building and process improvement to better integrate green and grey infrastructure.
- Retrofitting of engineered solutions to help existing trees thrive (especially passive watering).

For more information on this focus area, see sections 5.3 Co-existing with urban greening and 8.6 Tree health in the urban environment.

From parking lots to paradise

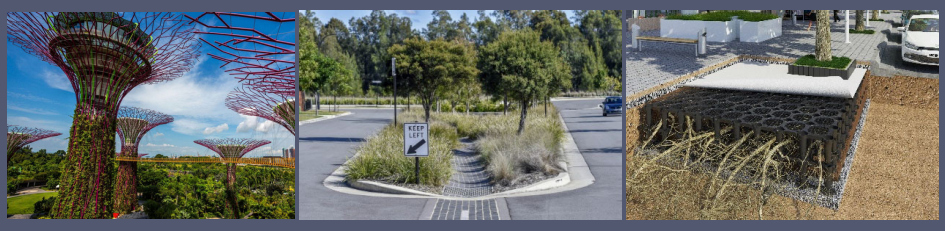


Image 12: From the futuristic Supertrees in Singapore (left), to raingardens in Sydney car parks (middle), to structural cells holding pavement off tree roots (right), engineered solutions are being more widely adopted to create more space and support thriving greening.

Sources from (L-R):Gardens by the Bay, accessed 2023 https://www.gardensbythebay.com.sg/en/things-to-do/attractions/supertree-grove.html , Western Sydney Regional Organisations of Councils, accessed 2023 https://wsroc.com.au/, City Green, Structural cells, accessed 2023 https://citygreen.com/structural-soil-sand-vs-soil-cells-whats-the-better-choice/

10.6. Community education, stewardship and engagement

While community education and engagement programs are not new, it is clear that communities are increasingly aware of and engaged in urban greening issues, and are seeking new ways to participate. Engaging with local communities to ensure that green spaces meet their needs and preferences, and that they have a sense of ownership and stewardship over these spaces, is increasingly critical to the success of urban greening strategies.

Actions in this focus area may include:

- Partner with First Nations to identify and protect culturally significant trees, and to support their own greening objectives.
- Generate wonder and joy through greening projects (eg. City of Port Phillip's Cruikshank Street Reserve sunflowers project and Woody Meadows trial).
- Ad hoc education and engagement opportunities (eg. Tree Tags[118], tree fan mail[119]).
- Encourage urban food growing, including productive trees and community gardens.
- Community-led performance criteria for green spaces (see Edinburgh case study in section 11.1.2).
- Community stewardship of nature strips, transit corridors, round-abouts and traffic-calming areas.
- Streetscape visualisations to support community engagement.
- Technology that streamlines community tree planting requests.
- Tree planting events and groups on Council land.

For more information on this focus area, see sections 5 Community values and 9.4 Common challenges.

Toronto, Champion of Trees

Canada's largest urban centre, Toronto was awarded the 2020 Champion of Trees Award by the Arbor Day Foundation. In three years, the City invested $4.1M and leveraged an additional $9M, to plant 53,325 trees and shrubs and engage 154,504 people.

The City's community engagement initiatives are many and varied. They include tree planting events hosted by volunteer Tree Planting Captains, Nature Ambassadors who interpret the natural features of parks for visitors, an urban farm dedicated to teaching, community engagement and research, backyard tree giveaways, and free advice from Council arborists on the best species and planting location for backyards.

An important community partnership since 2018 is Nikibii Dawadinna Giigwag (see image). Guided by Elders, professionals and practitioners, Indigenous youth gain employment opportunities, an introduction into environmentally sustainable design, and hands-on ecological learning opportunities. Participants explore traditional teachings of the land, and learn about potential career paths in fields such as architecture, urban design, conservation and filmmaking.



Image 13. City of Toronto (2018), Nikibii Dawadinna Giigwag community partnership, accessed https://www.toronto.ca/business-economy/partnerships-sponsorships-donations/partner-2/parks-environment/urban-forestry-grants-and-incentives/

[118] Kat Ryan & Jenni Garden (2016), Benefits of Trees, 17th National Street Tree Symposium accessed at https://cdn.treenet.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/BENEFITS_OF_TREES_%E2%80%93_Combining_science_community__asset_management.pdf

[119] City of Melbourne, Urban Forest Visual, accessed 2023 at http://melbourneurbanforestvisual.com.au/

Cool Streets©



Image 14: Infographic on different benefits projected by different street tree planting scenarios. Source Gallagher Studio, (2016) Cool Streets accessed at https://www.coolstreets.com.au/

Cool Streets© uses a software model to show residents different street tree planting scenarios (different tree sizes, native vs. deciduous, single species vs. mixed species, planting layouts), and the effects each scenario would have on CO_2 emissions and energy costs. Starting from a pilot in Blacktown (Sydney) in 2016, the initiative takes a street-by-street approach, using street parties, resident education, tree planting parties and giveaways to engage people while delivering improved environmental, social and economic outcomes.

10.7. Greening on private land

With increasingly dense urban environments and changing lifestyle preferences, cities everywhere are grappling with escalating losses of trees and greening on private land. These losses cannot be offset by greening on public land – there is simply not enough space. Seventy-five per cent of the land in Port Phillip is privately owned, so all landowners play an important role in urban greening. The intersection between urban forestry and urban planning is increasingly important.

Community Canopy Program



Image 15: Participants from Community Canopy program.
Source Arbor Day Foundation (USA), Community Canopy Program accessed at https://www.arborday.org/programs/community-canopy/

Through the Community Canopy program, cities in the United States can partner with the Arbor Day Foundation for their residents to be able to reserve free trees and use an online mapping tool that takes the guesswork out of where to plant a tree on their property. The mapping tool ensures that they plant the right tree in the right place, and identifies the ideal planting location to help maximize the air, water, energy, and carbon benefits of their new tree.

Actions in this focus area may include:

- Encourage or regulate infill that provides space for greening (see, for example, the CRC for Water Sensitive Cities' Infill typologies catalogue[120]).
- Performance-based assessment tools that encourage greening (eg. City of Melbourne's Green Factor Score – see section 11.1 Greening target types and trends), applied either voluntarily or through regulation.
- Local Laws to protect more trees (see section 10.3 Strengthened tree protection).
- Use planning zones and overlays that apply place-responsive protections and greening requirements.
- Changes to Planning Scheme, education and compliance to reduce 'moon-scaped blocks'.
- Economic disincentives for tree removal (eg. penalties for illegal removal).
- Economic incentives like free or discounted arborist assessments and tree pruning for those with significant trees.
- Compliance to ensure planting conditions for planning approvals are met.
- Volunteer programs to prune and maintain trees and gardens on private land.
- Grants or subsidies for older people and people with a disability to prune and maintain trees and gardens on private land.
- Tree giveaways and incentives.
- Layer controls, compliance, education and incentives to maximise outcomes.

For more information on this focus area, see sections 5 Community values, 9.4 Common challenges and 11.1 Greening target types and trends.

[120] CRC for Water Sensitive Cities (2020), *Infill typologies catalogue*, accessed at: https://watersensitivecities.org.au/content/infill-typologies-catalogue/

10.8. Manage trees as assets, reflecting their true economic value

Historically, trees and other greening have been treated as either a risk, or an operational project, often with reactionary maintenance and management. With increased recognition and quantification of greening benefits, accompanied by advances in technology, more and more Councils are shifting their treatment of urban forests to be more aligned with traditional asset management. Treating trees as assets includes maintaining a comprehensive inventory of trees and a proactive maintenance and management program, including regular condition audits.

If trees are truly treated as assets, they must also be economically valued. This presents challenges for traditional accounting systems, which do not recognise 'appreciating assets' (the value of trees increases as they grow). But, by accurately valuing and accounting for urban trees on financial statements, cities can make more informed decisions about how to invest in their urban forest to maximise outcomes and efficient use of funds and staffing resources.

There are now a range of widely supported and readily available tree valuation tools (eg. Burnley Method, Thyer Tree Evaluation Method, i-TreeEco) that can factor in amenity value and ecological services value – and, in the case of a tree proposed for removal, the removal and reinstatement costs (eg. City of Melbourne method).[121] Reflecting a tree's true economic value in planning, asset management, investment and removal decisions can greatly assist in prioritising trees as critical urban infrastructure.

A whole of life cycle approach provides Councils with the best chance of long-term success, ensuring that young plant care (eg. soil preparation, establishment watering, formative pruning), ongoing maintenance, and a gradual succession program for trees at the end of their useful life are all accounted and budgeted for. Proactive management of tree assets may appear to have a high cost per tree, but across the urban forest, costs can be far less due to reduced risks of tree failure and grey infrastructure conflicts.

Actions in this focus area may include:

- Quantify expected economic returns of greening in project proposals for funding.
- Raise community and stakeholder awareness of the true value of trees, including their ability to raise property values[122].
- Set tree removal fees and tree bonds that reflect the true value of trees.
- Explore potential to enter the carbon offset market and receive income for greening.
- Proactive asset management, including a standalone Tree Asset Management Plan.
- Merge tree inventory with asset management system to include whole-of-lifecycle maintenance predictions.
- Protective fencing and tree bonds to protect street tree assets during developments, with tree damage fees and tree bonds that reflect the true value of trees.
- Embed trees in financial accounting systems.
- Invest in compliance resources to support adherence to private tree asset management.

[121] City of Melbourne, *Tree Valuations in the City of Melbourne*, accessed 2023 at: https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/sitecollectiondocuments/tree-valuations.doc

[122] Martinez, A., Z. Bachar, and M. Allen (2019). *Monetising the benefits of water sensitive urban design and green infrastructure features. Technical report for Resilient East*, accessed at: https://www.resilienteast.com/resources

10.9. Systematic integration of greening across Council and beyond

There is now increasing appreciation for the need to integrate greening across Council business, and through partnerships with external stakeholders. Council urban forestry practitioners cannot achieve greening targets by working alone. Greening can provide many benefits, including to climate change mitigation and adaptation, active transport, stormwater management, biodiversity, air quality, public place activation, and economic development. Greening can and should be designed to be both multi-functional (ie. maximising delivery of those multiple benefits) and integrated across Council business and other stakeholder activities (eg. conservation groups, community gardens, private backyards, green roofs, schools, etc.).

Actions in this focus area may include:

- Close inter-departmental collaboration to deliver integrated greening outcomes in capital works, asset renewal, maintenance and community engagement programs.
- Include greening as an essential element from the concept stage of every capital investment, including a greening target and budget.
- Enhance Council staff resourcing and capability to enable increased greening and integration.
- ABlue and green infrastructure integration.
- Funding and assistance for schools, social housing and aged care providers to plant more trees on their land.

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10.10. Proactive innovation

Urban forestry is a rapidly evolving field, accelerated through recent advances in engineered solutions (eg. tree inlets, structural cells), smart data (eg. spatial mapping, sensors, online inventories, analytics, engagement and reporting platforms), and research. There are numerous opportunities for practitioners to engage in peer-to-peer learning, to apply recent advances in engineering and technology (including in creative ways), and to partner with research bodies to bolster the evidence base for change and to test new solutions devised locally.

Actions in this focus area may include:

- Proactively retrofit engineered solutions to greening in all streetscape renewals.
- Sensors and data analytics for effective green space management, such as by monitoring plant health and smart irrigation (eg. combining soil moisture with weather forecasts).
- Robust data collection and publication system to transparently monitor and manage the urban forest, with live updates from annual tree inspections and maintenance work.
- Harness the creativity and passion of Council people and the community to generate ideas, try new things and accept the risks.
- Partner with other Councils, State Government and organisations to share learnings, research and continue to improve.
- Use allotment-scale canopy data to target community engagement and incentives (see below).

How much canopy at your place?

The City of Unley uses spatial canopy mapping and change detection as part of its urban forest management. In 2021 it applied this dataset down to individual property level, creating a publicly available interactive map and, for the initial launch, listed the property's tree canopy cover on quarterly rates notices. This information was also used to prioritise an $80 tree voucher competition to those suburbs with the lowest canopy cover. The City is currently exploring other financial measures to influence canopy cover on private land.



Figure 11. Demonstration of the My Canopy App, showing canopy cover change over an individual property.
Source: City of Unley (2021), My Canopy App, accessed at https://mycanopy.unley.sa.gov.au/

11. Urban forest indicators and targets

11.1. Greening target types and trends

Greening targets[123] are commonly used to set a specific ambition for more urban trees and greening. The most commonly used targets are for percentage canopy cover and number of trees planted, but there is a growing global trend towards targets that are outcome-based (eg. equal access, health & wellbeing, active transport) or specific to land use types (residential, commercial, industrial) or tenures (public and private).

11.1.1. Output-based targets

Canopy and green cover

The percentage of land covered by tree canopies (canopy cover) is the most commonly used metric in urban greening strategies. Urban tree canopy is ideal for goal setting because it can represent the complex distribution and benefits of an urban forest within a single, simple metric[124]. It is readily assessed and tracked, easily communicated, and very persuasive. One of the first tree canopy cover goals was set in Baltimore, USA in 2009[125], and since then, the technology available to map canopy and evaluate its change over time has rapidly improved, resulting in widespread adoption of canopy targets.

The new Standards Australia document *Urban Green Infrastructure - Planning and decision framework* supports the use of tree canopy and green cover targets[126]. The European Commission's latest Urban Greening Plans guidance and Green City Accord both recommend measuring tree canopy (at a minimum) as one of three core targets[127].

Place-based canopy cover

In some cases, an overall canopy cover goal for the municipality is broken down into specific, context-based targets, such as neighbourhoods, land tenure (public or private) and land use type (suburban, medium or high density residential, open space, commercial, industrial). This can help to guide formulation of specific policies and projects that deliver appropriate and realistic outcomes for the different contexts. The City of Port Phillip's Street Tree Planting Program 2017-2022 set tree canopy increase targets for each neighbourhood. Some other examples include:

- The City of Sydney's previous canopy targets were influenced by American Forests guidelines which suggest the City's overall target should be at least 22.3%, based on the breakdown of

[123] An indicator is a measure of something (eg. canopy cover), but a target is a numerical objective of the desired performance of that indicator (eg. increase tree canopy cover over the City of Port Phillip to 30% by 2040). To be effective, targets should be SMART – specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound.

[124] Canopy cover is easy to track, but when setting targets, be aware that absolute canopy change is made up of gain (trees planted, natural regeneration, existing tree canopy growth), minus loss (trees removed for development or risk management, natural mortality, and maintenance reductions).

[125] USDA Forest Service (2019) *Urban Tree Canopy Assessment: A Community's Path to Understanding and Managing the Urban Forest*, accessed at https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs_media/fs_document/Urban%20Tree%20Canopy%20paper.pdf

[126] Standards Australia (2023) *Urban Green Infrastructure - Planning and decision framework*, accessed at https://www.standards.org.au/standards-catalogue/sa-snz/building/pc-002/sa--hb--214-colon-2023

[127] Under the European Commission's Urban Greening Plans guidance (2022), the three core targets recommended are: 1. Percentage of urban green space (public and private) in the city and its municipality; 2. Percentage of tree canopy cover in the municipality and numbers of newly planted trees; and 3. Percentage of protected natural areas on public land in the municipality. The Green City Accord's Mandatory Indicator Set (2022) includes: 1. Percentage of protected natural areas, restored and naturalised areas on public land in municipality; 2. Percentage of tree canopy cover within the city; and 3. Change in number of species of birds in urban area/built-up areas in the city.

land use types – 15% canopy in the CBD and industrial areas, 25% in urban residential and light commercial areas, and 50% in suburban residential areas. Although these targets don't precisely add up to the overall target, they were adopted for each land use type.

- The City of Melbourne has a target of doubling canopy cover to 40% by 2040, but this relates to tree cover in the public realm only – not the more difficult to influence private realm.
- The 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide has a target of increasing overall canopy by 20% by 2045, but this is only applied to LGAs with existing cover under 30% – for LGA's with existing canopy over 30%, the target is no net loss.

Tree planting

Setting a target for the number of trees Council will plant is a practical, easily measured metric. It helps to ensure direct action by Council. However, it may lack context (scale of contribution to the problem) and outcome-orientation (it may be unclear if it will result in net tree or canopy gain). The European Commission has recommended that the number of new trees planted be included in a city's core greening targets[128]. Examples include:

- The City of Mitcham (SA) has a goal of no net tree loss, and calculated it would need to increase annual tree planting from 1,000 to 1,800 trees to achieve this.
- New York City created its MillionTreesNYC program – aiming to plant 220,000 street trees, 480,000 park trees, and 300,000 trees on private land in a decade – in order to increase tree canopy by 20%.

Defensive diversity for healthy tree populations and optimal ecosystem services

Defensive diversity in the urban forest is important because it reduces risks from pests, diseases and climate change, and improves resilience in the supply of ecosystem services (like shade)[129]. Many urban streets, especially boulevards, are lined with single species, often all planted at the same time. These kinds of tree populations are most at risk, especially when the species is not suited to the changing climate.

Defensive diversity metrics to help ensure healthy tree populations and optimal ecosystem service provision over time could include species diversity, structural diversity (ie. size and shape), functional diversity (ie. shade, habitat, food, etc.), age distribution, and species suitability. Species suitability is becoming increasingly important as the climate continues to change.

10/20/30 species diversity rule

The 10/20/30 species diversity rule of thumb proposed by Santamour in 1990 has had widespread acceptance. It states that urban forests should comprise of no more than 10% of any particular species, 20% of any one genus or 30% of any single family. This rule of thumb has been adopted and adapted over time, with diverging views on the ideal mix.

Kendal et al. (2014), Global patterns of diversity in the urban forest: Is there evidence to support the 10/20/30 rule?, Urban Forestry & Urban Greening, accessed at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ufug.2014.04.004

[128] Under the European Commission's Urban Greening Plans guidance, the three core targets recommended are: 1. Percentage of urban green space (public and private) in the city and its municipality; 2. Percentage of tree canopy cover in the municipality and numbers of newly planted trees; and 3. Percentage of protected natural areas on public land in the municipality.

[129] Kendal et al. (2014), *Global patterns of diversity in the urban forest: Is there evidence to support the 10/20/30 rule?,* Urban Forestry & Urban Greening, accessed at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ufug.2014.04.004

According to the US Forest Service's Sustainable Urban Forest Guide (2016)[130]:

- The ideal **age distribution** of trees is 40% juvenile, 30% semi-mature, 20% mature and 10% senescent; and
- A 'good' **tree species diversity** target is that no single species represents more than 5% of the total population; no genus more than 10%; and no family more than 15%; and
- A 'good' **tree species suitability** target is that more than 75% of trees are suitable for the area.

Other delivery and management targets to ensure healthy tree populations could include:

- **New tree survival rate** (85% is a common target among CoPP's neighbouring Councils)
- **Proportion of healthy trees** (90%+ assessed as healthy in a tree audit is a common target among CoPP's neighbouring Councils).

Some examples of targets related to healthy tree populations include:

- To improve biodiversity outcomes, Barcelona (Spain) has committed to no single tree species accounting for more than 15% of the total population within the urban area.
- The Town of Walkerville (SA) has a target of at least 90% of the trees on public land being maintained at a useful life expectancy of more than 20 years, to protect the overall tree population from threats and loss.
- The City of Melbourne has a target to increase urban forest diversity, with no more than 5% of any one tree species, 10% any genus and 20% any family.
- The City of Burnside (SA) has a goal for street and park tree populations to not comprise more than 10% any one species, 30% any genus and 40% any family.

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[130] US Forest Service (2016), *Sustainable Urban Forest Guide*, accessed at https://www.itreetools.org/documents/175/Sustainable_Urban_Forest_Guide_14Nov2016.pdf

Green infrastructure in private developments

Green roofs, walls and facades, as well as water sensitive urban design features like permeable paving and raingardens, can be installed to cool a building, reduce stormwater runoff and increase biodiversity, especially in high density areas where there is less room for traditional greening.

The new Standards Australia document *Urban Green Infrastructure - Planning and decision framework* supports the use of sustainability rating tools to promote the inclusion of urban green infrastructure in development projects[131]. The standard also supports the concept of 'no net loss' as a minimum for greening in development, with 'net gain' being the preferred outcome.

The City of Melbourne launched its Green Factor Tool in 2020. The calculation is a weighted area of greening on a site, as a proportion of the site area. This is currently a voluntary tool, but the City of Melbourne is currently working towards regulating its use for new developments. Melbourne partnered with the City of Port Phillip, Merri-bek City Council and City of Yarra in 2021 to establish trials that enable developers and designers in those areas to use the Green Factor tool freely, including user technical support.

A target for private green cover could be, for example:

- No net loss of green cover in new developments by 2040.
- All new developments achieve an average of 55% private green site coverage (including vertical area) by 2040.
- All new developments achieve a minimum Green Factor Score of 0.55 by 2040.

Green Factor

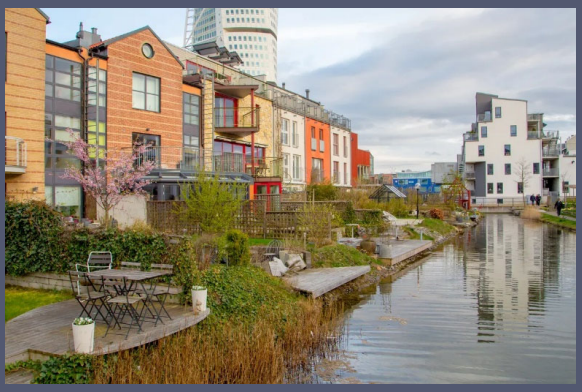


Image 16. Example from Bo01, an industrial redevelopment project in Sweden. Source Kruuse, A (2011), *GRaBS Expert Paper 6: The Green Space Factor and the Green Points System*, accessed at: https://tcpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/EP6_FINAL.pdf

Green Factor Score is a globally proven sustainability rating tool. This concept started in the 1980's with Berlin's Biotope Area Factor, and was popularised by Malmo, Sweden, which created its Green Space Factor in 2001 for an exemplar industrial redevelopment project called Bo01. In the Malmo tool, different types of green spaces including trees, green roofs, and water elements come with a specific score based on their extent and number, and developers are required to meet a score threshold. Due to the Green Space Factor's success, it has now been rolled out to all new developments in Malmo and Lund (Sweden), and adapted and adopted by other cities including Helsinki (Finland), London (UK) and Melbourne.

[131] Standards Australia (2023) Urban Green Infrastructure - Planning and decision framework, accessed at https://www.standards.org.au/standards-catalogue/sa-snz/building/pc-002/sa--hb--214-colon-2023

Council delivery and asset management

Targets focused on how Council manages its urban greening assets and delivers the greening strategy could also be included. These kinds of targets were introduced in 2008 and 2010 by the municipalities of Oakville and Ajax (respectively) in Canada[132], and due to their success, have been recommended as a model by the US Forest Service and Davey Institute[133]. Management indicators and targets could include, for example:

- GIS-based tree inventory is complete, including age distribution, species mix, detailed tree condition and risk ratings.
- Greening policy is implemented by formal interdepartmental working group on all Council projects.
- All capital works projects include a greening budget line.
- Council staff have the capability and capacity to implement all of the actions and principles of the strategy within set timeframes.
- All trees are planted in sites with adequate soil quality and quantity, and with sufficient growing space and site conditions to deliver their maximum ecosystem services potential.

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[132] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2016) *Guidelines on urban and peri-urban forestry*, accessed at https://www.fao.org/3/i6210e/i6210e.pdf

[133] US Forest Service (2016), *Sustainable Urban Forest Guide*, accessed at https://www.itreetools.org/documents/175/Sustainable_Urban_Forest_Guide_14Nov2016.pdf

11.1.2. Outcome-based targets

There is now a growing trend towards outcome-based targets, which are specific to the drivers for change and the objectives Councils are trying to achieve. For example, a Council may be most interested in delivering enhanced biodiversity, urban cooling, energy savings, stormwater management, active transport, public health and wellbeing, economic development, social equity, or a combination of these. Understanding the desired outcomes can influence how much greening is needed, which species should be planted, and where to plant them. Some examples of outcome-based indicators and targets are provided in this section.

Table 5. Questions to consider when determining which greening outcomes could be measured, as recommended by the World Health Organisation.

Impacts	Suggested questions to pose to establish the information
Environmental/ ecological impacts	▪ What is the impact of the urban green space on air quality, noise or urban heat exposure? ▪ Does it support water management and reduce risk of flooding? ▪ Does it support contact to nature? ▪ Does it enhance biodiversity?
Lifestyle impacts	▪ Does the urban green space support/increase physical activity levels? ▪ Does it enable active transport by foot or bike? ▪ Does it increase the time people spend outdoors? ▪ Are more people using the urban green space? ▪ Does it support healthy lifestyles and active recreation?
Social impacts	▪ Does the urban green space support or enhance social cohesion? ▪ Does it promote social interaction and exchange? ▪ Does the development of a green space support gentrification processes leading to displacement of local residents?
Equity impacts	▪ Do all population groups make use of and benefit from the urban green space? ▪ If not, who are those groups that benefit least or even face disadvantages? ▪ Does the urban green space enable different functions for different user groups?

Source: World Health Organisation (2017) Urban Green Spaces: A brief for action, accessed at https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/344116.

Equitable access to greening

Aligned with the global concept of the 15-minute city[134] or Plan Melbourne's 20-minute neighbourhoods[135], there is broad agreement that everyone should live within a short walk of public green space. There has been substantial debate over the specifics[136], but the most widely accepted indicator has been set by the World Health Organisation (WHO), stipulating that people should live within 300m (around 5 minutes' walk) of public green space at least 0.5-1.0 hectares in size[137]. Building on the 'Six Acre Standard' introduced in England in the 1930s, Natural England also recommends provision of at least 2 hectares of public green space per thousand population[138].

3-30-300 equitable green access rule

A new 3-30-300 rule of thumb, proposed by Prof. Cecil Konijnendijk, has caught considerable widespread attention, including from those outside 'green' professions, including planners, engineers, and politicians. The rule states that everybody should be able to see 3 trees from their home, live in a neighbourhood with at least 30% tree canopy (or vegetation) cover, and be no more than 300 metres from the nearest green space that allows for multiple recreational activities (see infographic below). Note that by the author's own admission, this rule of thumb is designed to promote action, but may not be applicable in every context.

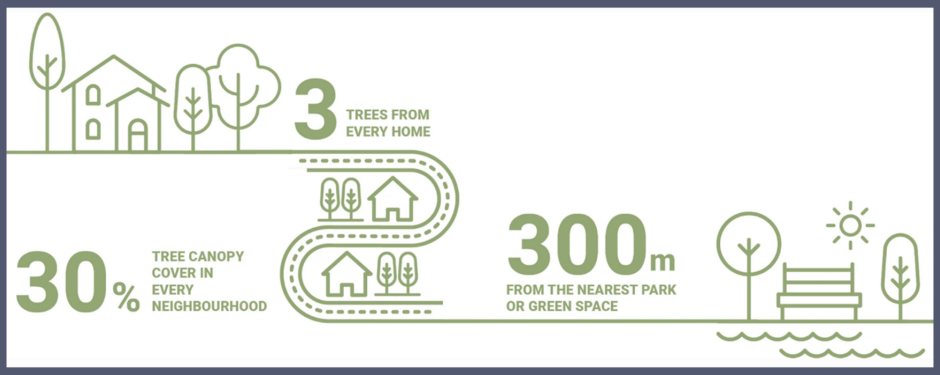


Image 17. Visualisation of the 3-30-300 rule for urban forestry.
Source: Konijnendijk, C (2022) Evidence-based guidelines for greener, healthier, more resilient neighbourhoods: Introducing the 3–30–300 rule, Journal of Forestry Research 34, 821-830.

[134] C40 Knowledge Hub (2021) *Why every city can benefit from a '15-minute city' vision*, accessed at https://www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/article/Why-every-city-can-benefit-from-a-15-minute-city-vision?language=en_US
[135] Victorian Government (2017), Metropolitan Planning Strategy - Plan Melbourne 2017-2050
[136] Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe (2016) *Urban green spaces and health*.
[137] WHO Regional Officer for Europe, (2017) *Urban green spaces: a brief for action*.
[138] Natural England (2003) Accessible Natural Green Space Standards in Towns and Cities: A Review and Toolkit

Some examples of targets to make greening access more equitable include:

- Quito (Ecuador) has a target of at least 20m^2 of green area per resident by 2030, with a focus on the equitable distribution of green space between neighbourhoods.
- Los Angeles (USA) has a target of at least 65% of residents living within half a mile (800m) of a park or open space. This target rises to 75% by 2035 and 100% by 2050.
- Lisbon (Portugal) has a target for 90% of the population to be less than 300m from a green space bigger than 2000m^2 by 2030.
- Mayors from 31 cities including Sydney have signed C40's Urban Nature Declaration committing to 70% of residents accessing green (vegetation-based) or blue (water-based) public spaces within a 15-minute walk or cycle, and to green or permeable spaces making up 30% to 40% of the total built-up city surface area by 2030.
- With health and accessibility as key objectives, a target of the City of Vancouver's (Canada) Greenest City Action Plan is to ensure that every person lives within a 5-minute walk of a park, greenway, or other green space by 2020.
- The City of Frederiksberg (Denmark) has a target that it should be possible to see at least one tree from every residence.

Social justice and vulnerability to heat

Social justice is a critical greening issue because higher levels of disadvantage are generally correlated with lower levels of greening and higher levels of urban heat. As tree canopy mapping has improved, Councils have increasingly been overlaying social vulnerability and urban heat data on canopy data to better understand the priority areas to target more greening.

Indicators of social vulnerability include, for example, elderly population, people needing assistance due to a disability, English as a second language, median rent, and SEIFA score[139].

There are two examples of potential indicator frameworks that could have targets set against them – the VHHEDA Vulnerability Index and the Tree Equity Score (see below). These approaches are particularly useful where there are significant disparities between advantage and disadvantage in a City.

Prioritising cooler neighbourhoods

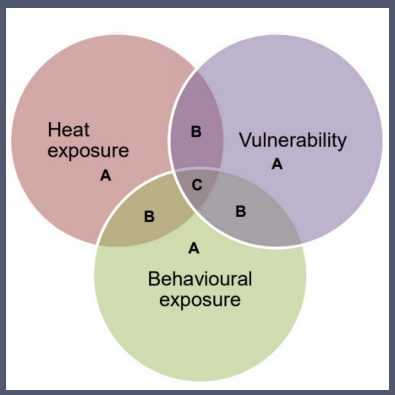


Figure 12. Prioritising cooler neighbourhoods, from high (C) to medium (B) and moderate (A).

To mitigate urban heat, greening and cooling should be prioritised in areas where it will address the key factors of surface temperature (heat exposure), more vulnerable members of society (vulnerability to heat), and areas with high pedestrian activity (behavioural exposure).

Source: Norton et al., (2015). Planning for cooler cities: A framework to prioritise green infrastructure to mitigate high temperatures in urban landscapes Landscape and Urban Planning, v134, 127-138.

[139] AdaptWest (2017) *Western Adelaide Urban Heat Mapping Project*, accessed at https://www.adaptwest.com.au/sites/adaptwest/media/pdf/western_adelaide_urban_heat_mapping_report-(2).pdf

VHHEDA Vulnerability Index

RMIT has analysed urban Australian Councils against their VHHEDA Vulnerability Index. This tool compared the vulnerability of Councils on a scale of 1 to 5, based on heat (how hot does it get on hot days), health (are the people living there healthy and resilient to heatwaves), and greening trends (is the area gaining, losing or retaining greening). The City of Port Phillip was ranked 3.0, not in the top 50 priority Councils. To be effective as a management tool for a City, the index would need to be applied at a more granular scale.

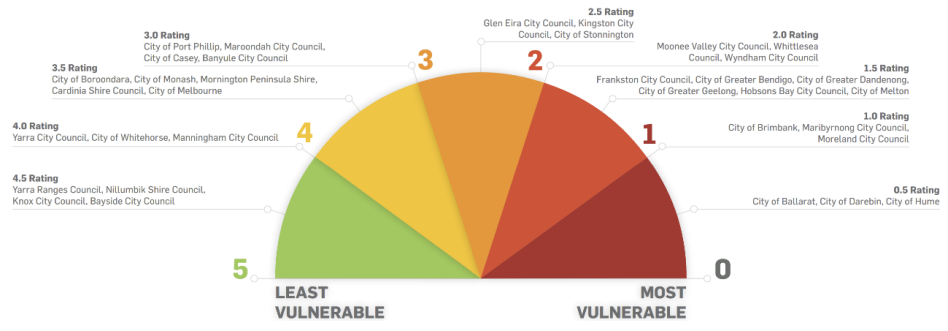


Figure 13. Vulnerability of Councils on the VHHEDA scale of 1-5. *Source: Greener Spaces Better Places (2017), Where Should All the Trees Go? accessed at: https://www.greenerspacesbetterplaces.com.au/guides/where-should-all-the-trees-go/*

Tree Equity Score

In the United States, American Forests has recently introduced a Tree Equity Score to help greening planners address social inequities. This tool gives each neighbourhood in the United States a score out of 100, with 100 showing that Tree Equity has been achieved.

The score's methodology combines tree canopy data (modified for climate zone and density) with data on income (% of population below 200% of poverty), employment (unemployment rate), race (percentage of people who are not white non-Hispanic), age (ratio of seniors and children to working-age adults), climate (urban heat island severity), health (composite index of poor mental, physical, respiratory and cardiac health).

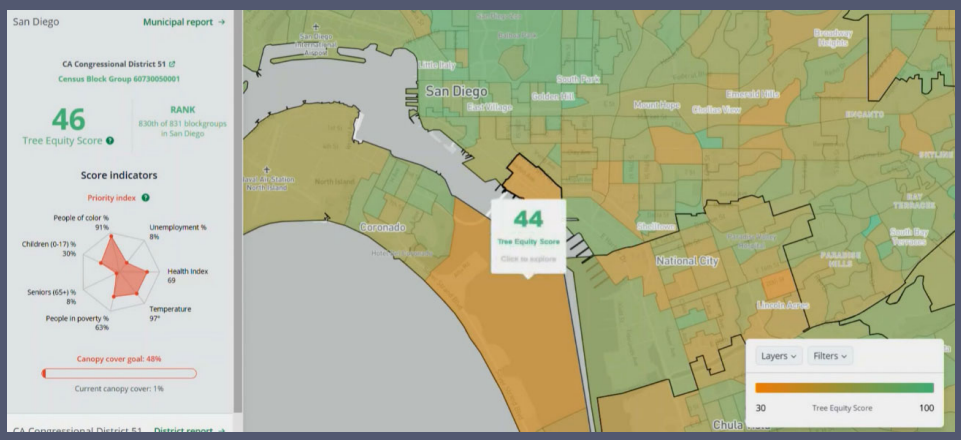


Figure 14. Example of Tree Equity Score mapping from the City of San Diego.
Source: American Forests (2021). Tree Equity Score

Active transport

There is a growing trend towards prioritising greening in active transport routes, to provide a more comfortable, enjoyable and safe environment for people. For example, Councils may preferentially increase plantings near commercial centres, schools, parks, playgrounds, foreshores and watercourses, and other known areas of high pedestrian activity. In the past, a canopy cover target for active transport routes has not been readily measurable at scale. However, as canopy mapping tools have improved, so has the potential to set targets and measure progress. For example:

- To achieve the outcome of encouraging healthy, outdoor lifestyles, Brisbane City Council has a tree canopy goal of 50% for footpaths and bikeways in residential areas by 2031.
- The Greater Sydney Green Grid aims to connect communities to the landscape. Over the long-term, the aim is to deliver high quality greening along priority corridors to connect centres, public transport and public spaces to green infrastructure and landscape features. It includes enhanced waterway corridors, transport routes, suburban streets, footpaths and cycleways.
- The South Australian Department for Transport and Infrastructure's Green Infrastructure Commitment (2021) set targets including a 20% increase in canopy cover on department managed land (eg. road and rail reserves), 50%+ tree shade cover on footpaths and bikeways, and 50%+ local native species in new landscape plantings in transport projects[140].

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[140] South Australian Department for Transport and Infrastructure, (2021) *Green Infrastructure Commitment*, accessed at https://www.dit.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/958236/DOCS_AND_FILES-17839389-v4-Technical_Services_-_Green_Infrastructure_Commitment.pdf

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is complex, and difficult to capture in a single indicator. However, there are examples of cities using indicators based on flagship species or groups, like the number of birds, pollinators, native fauna species or native flora species present in the city. For example, the European Commission's Green City Accord includes a mandatory indicator of 'Change in number of species of birds in urban area/built-up areas in the city'[141]. Other metrics could include species richness, number of unique ecosystems, and extent of key biodiversity areas[142].

Singapore Index

For a more comprehensive approach, the Singapore Index, also known as the City Biodiversity Index, is a self-assessment tool for cities to evaluate their performance on 23 metrics across four categories. The categories are:

- Availability of urban nature (such as amount of green space, configuration of green and blue space, etc.)
- Biodiversity (such as bird species richness, plant species richness, proportion of invasive species, etc.)
- Ecosystem services (such as water regulation, climate regulation, etc.)
- Administration of nature (such as funding, number of policies in place, etc.).

The assessment provides a score out of a possible 92. The Singapore Index has been applied in 50 cities globally to track current levels of urban biodiversity, nature, and ecosystem services.

Chan et al. (2021) Handbook on the Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Singapore National Parks Board

Community experience

Greening has substantial community benefits, and community experiences of greening provide a number of potentially measurable outcomes. Some examples of potential indicators include[143]:

- Perceived quality of urban blue-green spaces (accessibility, amenities, natural features, incivilities and recreational facilities)
- Place identity or 'sense of place'
- Recreational value of public green space.

[141] European Commission (2022) Green City Accord Mandatory Indicator Set, accessed at https://environment.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-04/Green%20City%20Accord%20-%20Indicator%20overview.pdf

[142] The World Bank and the Global Platform for Sustainable Cities, (2021) *Urban Nature and Biodiversity for Cities*, accessed at https://www.thegpsc.org/sites/gpsc/files/final_urban_nature_and_biodiversity_for_cities.pdf

[143] European Commission, (2021) *Evaluating the impact of nature-based solutions: A handbook for practitioners*, accessed at https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/evaluating-impact-nature-based-solutions-handbook-practitioners-2021-05-06_en

Community-driven performance standards for parks

The City of Edinburgh (Scotland) uses community measures to guide its greening efforts. The Council's Open Space Strategy (2016) aims to maximise the number of homes with sufficient access to good quality public spaces. In 2010, the Council engaged with residents to understand their needs, set agreed standards for how green space should meet those needs, and on a five-yearly cycle, they audit the performance of public spaces against the standards, and plan and implement actions to improve performance. The standards include benefit and quality indicators (eg. access to space, appearance of space, diversity of habitats, and degree of connectivity), use indicators (the types of uses occurring, eg. informal sports, wildlife watching, picnics) and contextual appropriateness (eg. size, location, adjacent use).

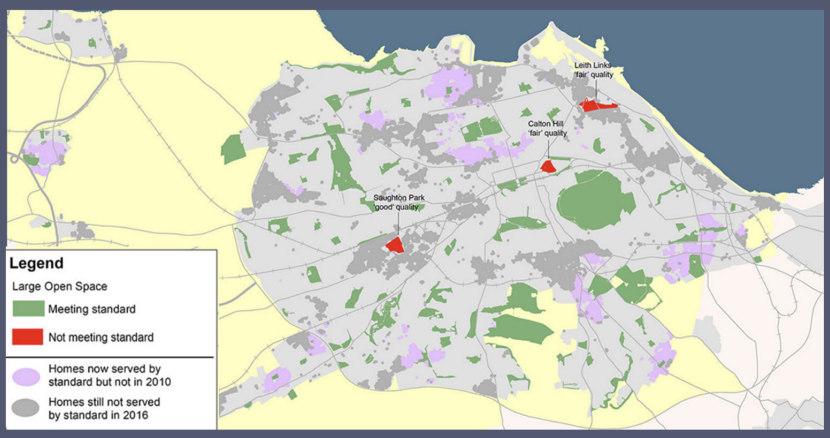


Figure 15. Access to Large Greenspaces in 2016 compared to 2010, Edinburgh.
Source: City of Edinburgh (2021) Open Space Strategy, accessed at https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/22616/open-space-2021

In 2010, twenty green spaces did not meet the standards. By 2016, that number was down to three, with over 30 new local green spaces created within 400 metres of homes (see image). The City of Edinburgh has measured its progress in detail, finding that:

- 82% of Edinburgh's citizens are satisfied with parks and greenspaces compared to 76% nationally.
- Around 71% of residents have taken part in 30 minutes physical activity each week.
- Every £1 spent on Edinburgh's parks delivers £12 of social, economic and environmental benefits.
- Cycling increased by over 50% in five years, and almost one third of journeys are on foot. Much of this activity takes place on the off-road network, passing through the city's greenspaces.

11.2. Considerations in setting greening targets

11.2.1. Integrating indicators and targets with policy and practice

An indicator is a measure of something (eg.tree canopy cover %), while a target is a quantified objective of the desired performance of that indicator (eg. increase tree canopy cover over the City of Port Phillip to 30% by 2040).

Target setting is widely recommended as a tool to support the delivery of strategic objectives. When set and used well, targets can be very persuasive in compelling action. They can be even more effective when they are actively monitored, reported, and integrated into adaptive management. This could include using the data to actively inform decision-making, such as prioritising where greening occurs and how resources are invested. It can also include evaluating the effectiveness of interventions, and changing course if needed.

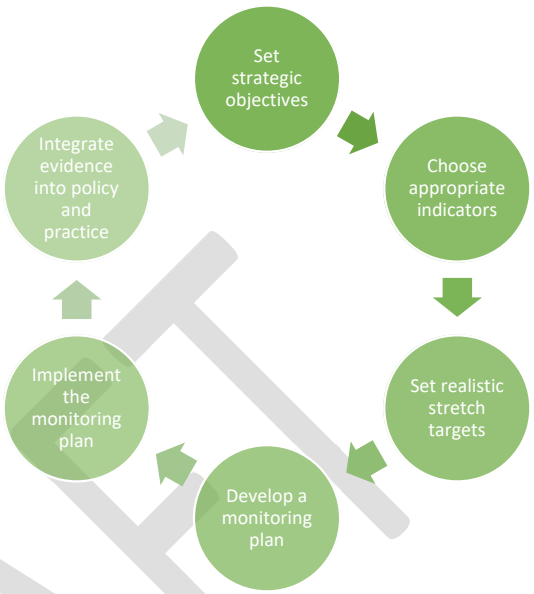


Figure 16. Process of integrating indicators and targets with policy and practice.

Source: Adapted from the Connecting Nature Impact Assessment Framework (2021) Framework Programme of the European Union Grant Agreement

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11.2.2. Setting indicators and targets

Principles

When setting greening indicators and targets, there are a number of important principles to consider[144]:

- **Aligned** – Align targets with those in existing strategies (from local to global, where relevant).
- **Strategic** – Be clear on why the target is being set, with a clear link between strategic objectives and the selected indicators (only measure progress towards your desired goal).
- **A realistic stretch** – Balance the local context (including the baseline and constraints) with the desired outcomes and ambition (see more on this below).
- **Compelling** – Set indicators and targets that are easily understood and can be used to inform, engage and inspire stakeholders.
- **Transferable** – Gather indicator data that is useful for multiple purposes, including adaptive management that prioritises action and investment where it is needed most.
- **Cost-effective** – Be pragmatic and practical by only setting targets that can be measured using data that is already collected, or that can be collected in a cost-effective manner (including cost of staff time).
- **Credible** – Use indicators, targets and data collection methods that are widely accepted and supported by scientists and experts.
- **Long and short-term** – Balance indicators with long and short timescales (eg. canopy cover and tree planting).
- **SMART targets** – Specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound.

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[144] Inspired by European Commission, (2021) Evaluating the impact of nature-based solutions: A handbook for practitioners, accessed at https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/evaluating-impact-nature-based-solutions-handbook-practitioners-2021-05-06_en

Setting realistic stretch goals

What makes a good green cover goal? Some research states that canopy cover of 30% and above will maximise benefits[145], but international guidance recommends adopting a target to reflect local factors like baseline canopy, local climate, built form and landuse patterns, and so on[146]. For example, in the US, where urban forestry and goal setting is advanced, canopy cover goals range from 19% to 60%[147].

Setting an ambitious green cover target does have advantages – such as communicating a simple message, engaging the public, motivating leaders, and inspiring funding and stewardship. However, higher ambitions are generally riskier and more resource intensive. Instead, the target should be a realistic stretch.

> "Many cities set goals — some based on careful study of current canopy, community needs, and availability of planting space. They follow the principle of 'right tree, right place'.
>
> Others, based on the principle that more trees are better than fewer, set ambitious campaign goals, then work to mobilize efforts to meet it."
>
> *Source: Canopy Goals for US Cities, Vibrant Cities Lab, 2014*

To be attainable and sustainable, tree canopy targets should consider:

1. Baseline canopy (percentage over each land use / land tenure)
2. The projected effects of threats and trends (eg. development, natural die-off, climate)
3. Potential planting areas[148] (eg. uncontested verges and parks, not ovals)
4. Priority planting areas[149] (eg. high flood risk, urban heat, foot traffic, social disadvantage)
5. Whether potential priority planting areas are on public (local or state) or private land
6. How much direct impact Council can have by planting and maintaining trees on public land (planting and maintenance budgets, timeframes, available public land), under different scenarios (no change, no net loss, small gain, large gain)
7. How much indirect influence Council can have by encouraging planting and retaining trees (stewardship, incentives, education and other levers) in non-Council settings (state land and projects, residential land, commercial land)
8. Maintenance budgets and other resources.

[145] For example, Astell-Burt and Feng (2019) *Association of Urban Green Space with Mental Health and General Health Among Adults in Australia*, AMA Netw Open;2(7):e198209. and, Ziter et al. (2019) *Scale-dependent interactions between tree canopy cover and impervious surfaces reduce daytime urban heat during summer*, PNAS vol116, n15.

[146] American Forests recommended a universal 40% goal in 1997, but has since rescinded this advice, stating that the research does not support it. It now uses a baseline canopy goal of 40% for 'forest' climates, 20% for 'grassland' climates, and 15% for 'desert' climates, adjusted for the specific location based on population density (adjustment factor of 1.2 for very low density (<2K ppl/km2), 1 for low (2K-4K), 0.8 for moderate (4K-8K) and 0.5 for high (>8K)). Source: Leahy I (2017) *Why we no longer recommend a 40% Urban Tree Canopy Goal*, American Forests, accessed at https://www.americanforests.org/article/why-we-no-longer-recommend-a-40-percent-urban-tree-canopy-goal/

[147] US Forest Service (2016), Sustainable Urban Forest Guide, accessed at https://www.itreetools.org/documents/175/Sustainable_Urban_Forest_Guide_14Nov2016.pdf

[148] 'Plantable space', as defined in spatial studies, can be a poor indicator. Even if public space appears to be plantable (eg. verges and parks), it is generally constrained by overhead services, underground services, safety requirements (eg. sight lines), access, amenity, recreational uses, etc. In the case of apparently plantable space on private land, this is constrained by other open space demands such as amenity landscaping, food production and child play areas. Plantable space statistics tend to significantly overstate actual opportunities, and must be used with caution. They also imply that existing hardscaped surfaces can never be reclaimed for greening opportunities.

[149] Most actual tree canopy benefits are derived under or in close proximity to the canopy. The spatial distribution of tree canopy is therefore important to understand, particularly when considering the effects on factors like urban heat, social disadvantage, mobility and attractiveness of retail areas.

Other considerations

What's the baseline? – Every quantifiable goal needs a baseline. If limited baseline data is available, it can be difficult to set a realistic target. However, a best-guess target could be set, with gathering of baseline data assigned as an early action in the monitoring plan.

To or by? – Some strategies aim to increase canopy ***to*** a certain percentage (outcome-oriented), other aim to increase ***by*** a certain percentage (action-oriented). For example, the City of Hobart aims to increase canopy cover in urbanised areas **to** 40% by 2045 (from a 2017 baseline of 16.7%) – an ambitious canopy cover goal. Meanwhile, Greater Adelaide has a target to increase tree canopy cover by 20% by 2045 – a more realistic, but less memorable canopy cover goal of 26.7%[150].

Being specific about greening types – When setting greening cover targets, it is important to differentiate between trees, shrubs and grassed areas (as well as vertical greening like green walls and facades), and to set baselines and targets accordingly. For example, the City of Sydney has a target for overall green cover of 40% by 2050, including 27% tree canopy cover[151]. This is because the derived benefits and management strategies differ between them, as do the techniques used to monitor change. The definition of 'tree' for target-setting purposes is widely accepted as vegetation over 3m in height.

Different canopy cover targets can suit different objectives – The target should also reflect the desired greening objectives. Australian researchers Profs. Astell-Bert and Feng have found in numerous studies that a canopy cover of at least 30% resulted in higher health benefits (sleep patterns, mental health and overall health)[152]. Meanwhile, Ziter et al. (2019) found that local tree canopy should be at least 40% before substantial cooling effects are noted[153].

Quality is as important as quantity – A canopy cover target is a stand-in metric for the benefits or ecosystem services provided by that magnitude of trees. However, to actually deliver those benefits, the quality of the urban forest is just as important as the number of trees that comprise it. 'Quality' can cover factors like tree health, age and species diversity, and strategic location (eg. hotspots, vulnerable populations, commercial strips).

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[150] State Planning Commission (2020) 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide, 2017 Update Report Card, accessed at https://dit.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/893927/30-Year_Plan_for_Greater_Adelaide_-_2017_Update_Report_Card_-_2020-21.pdf

[151] City of Sydney (2022) *Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050* accessed at https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/sustainable-sydney-2030-2050

[152] Astell-Burt and Feng (2019) *Association of Urban Green Space with Mental Health and General Health Among Adults in Australia*, AMA Netw Open;2(7):e198209

[153] Ziter et al. (2019) *Scale-dependent interactions between tree canopy cover and impervious surfaces reduce daytime urban heat during summer*, PNAS vol116, n15

11.2.3. Developing a monitoring plan

With some astute consideration and planning from the outset, monitoring can support adaptive management, bolster high-level support, and minimise unexpected costs, waste and distractions from on-ground delivery.

Some questions to ask and answer when developing a monitoring plan include[154]:

- Do we have baseline data for this indicator? If not, what is the plan to obtain it?
- Is the method used to establish the baseline repeatable (can we monitor change over time)?
- Do we (or someone else, like the Australian Bureau of Statistics) already regularly collect this data? If not, can it be collected in a cost-effective manner?
- What channels are already available to us to collect this data (eg. annual Business Plan survey, quarterly Neighbourhood Conversations)?
- At what timescale can/should the data be acquired? Consider cost-benefit of data capture, acquisition channels (eg. survey schedules, five-yearly Census), and length of time for benefits to be realised (eg. trees to grow)
- Is the data capture method credible (eg. widely adopted, agreed by scientists and experts)?
- Who can undertake the data capture and analysis, and how will that be resourced?
- Who will own the data? Who will store it?
- How will the data be accessed, and by whom? How will they make sense of it (eg. do we need FAQs or briefings)?
- When will progress against targets be reported, how and to whom?
- When do we need the data to inform or prioritise planned actions and investments?
- How and when will data be used to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, and inform adaptive management?

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[154] Inspired by European Commission, (2021) Evaluating the impact of nature-based solutions: A handbook for practitioners, accessed at https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/evaluating-impact-nature-based-solutions-handbook-practitioners-2021-05-06_en

12. Tailoring targets and actions for Port Phillip

Each Council is unique with its own local context, priorities, existing data sets and methods of measurement available which influence target setting. This chapter covers existing greening indicators, baseline data available and exploration of potential targets and indicators which could be considered.

12.1. City of Port Phillip's existing greening indicators

Council has set a range of indicators and targets relating to urban greening. Some are direct measures of increased greening (eg. canopy cover, trees planted), others are indirect measures of greening benefits (eg. pollutants removed from stormwater, community satisfaction with open space, reduction in hotspots).

As the Urban Forest Strategy would be the lead document relating to urban greening and using new mapping data it would be ideal if any new targets developed replace targets in all other strategies and plans, establishing a consistent suite. The existing indicators and targets in each strategy and plan are listed below.

Greening Port Phillip 2010: An Urban Forest Approach

- Reduction in the number of hotspots contributing the urban heat island effect
- Increase in the total area of tree canopy cover
- Increase in the number of trees in streets and parks
- New greening initiatives undertaken where trees are not an option (eg. depaving)
- Community satisfaction with the action being undertaken to maintain the urban forest

Greening Port Phillip Street Tree Planting Program 2017-2022

- Increase street tree canopy in neighbourhoods by 2027 as follows:
  - St Kilda by 2%
  - East St Kilda by 3%
  - Elwood/Ripponlea by 1%
  - Middle Park/Albert Park by 3%
  - Port Melbourne by 4%
  - South Melbourne by 4%
  - St Kilda Road by 2%

Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022-2032

- Number of open spaces rated good or high quality (target 60-100% by 2032)
- Percentage of municipality within a safe walking distance of parks, gardens and reserves (target 90% by 2032)
- Resident satisfaction with open space through Customer Satisfaction Survey and Neighbourhood Conversations (target 90% by 2032)

Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028

- Increase street tree canopy cover by 10% by 2027/28
- Increase canopy cover on private land by 10% by 2027/28
- Reduce mains water use by Council by 15% by 2027/28
- Increase pollutants removed from stormwater by 2027/28 (suspended solids by 27%, phosphorous by 20%, nitrogen by 15%)
- Reduce the number of hotspots

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- Reduce GHG emissions (tCo2-e) to Net Zero by 2021 (and 2027/28)

Move, Connect Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-2028

- Increase number of daily walking trips by 36% by 2028/28
- Increase number of daily bike riding trips by 151% by 2027/28

Council Plan 2021-31

- Proportion of residents satisfied with parks and open space (target 85% by 2022/23)
- Net tree increase on Council land (target 0.5% or 231 by 2022/23).

12.2. City of Port Phillip's potential greening targets and indicators

With some astute consideration and planning from the outset, developing targets to track the **quantity** and **quality** of progress can support adaptive management, bolster high-level support, and minimise unexpected costs, waste and distractions from on-ground delivery.

Gathering, analysing and testing data from a range of sources can create a practical and impactful strategy that has **evidence based targets**.

The following sections outlines urban forest indicators and measures introduced in Chapter 11, but with potential application for City of Port Phillip based on its current available data sets, local context and current urban forest set out in Chapter 7.

Every quantifiable goal needs a **baseline** so progress can be measured from an agreed starting point. If baseline data is not available, a best guess target could be set, with gathering of baseline data assigned as an early action in the revised Urban Forest Strategy.

12.2.1. Canopy and green cover

The percentage of land covered by tree canopies (canopy cover) is ideal for goal setting because it can represent the complex distribution and benefits of an urban forest, be readily tracked, easily communicated, and very persuasive.

It can also be broken down into specific, context-based targets, such as neighbourhoods, land tenure (public or private) and land type (roads vs open space). This can help to guide formulation of specific policies and projects that deliver appropriate and realistic outcomes for the different contexts.

Australian researchers Profs. Astell-Bert and Feng have found in numerous studies that a canopy cover of at least 30% resulted in higher health benefits (sleep patterns, mental health and overall health)[155]. Meanwhile, Ziter et al. (2019) found that local tree canopy should be at least 40% before substantial cooling effects are noted[156]. In urban contexts however, it may not be possible to achieve 40% canopy cover and focus should be placed on where canopy cover it is most needed.

[155] Astell-Burt and Feng (2019) *Association of Urban Green Space with Mental Health and General Health Among Adults in Australia*, AMA Netw Open;2(7):e198209

[156] Ziter et al. (2019) *Scale-dependent interactions between tree canopy cover and impervious surfaces reduce daytime urban heat during summer*, PNAS vol116, n15

Current canopy cover

As set out in Chapter 7, in 2022, 17.17% of Port Phillip was covered by canopy from trees that are greater than 3 metres in height. Tree canopy cover is not evenly spread across the city. There is a general north west to south east transition from 8% through to 25%.

Overall, roads in Port Phillip have a canopy cover of about 26%, well above the average for inner city Melbourne, making street trees a fantastic asset of the city. Roads in Port Phillip make up about 27% of the total land area, and contribute about 44% of total canopy cover. By contrast, private land, which Council has far less control and influence over, there are no sections above 20% current cover.

On public land (parks and reserves, excluding Albert Park), canopy cover is less than streets. It ranges from 4% in Montague through to 31% in Balaclava/St Kilda East. There is more disparity and room for improvement, but this includes sporting ovals and council buildings and the type and size of public space varies across the city.

Converting canopy cover to indicative number of trees

When investigating what targets could be considered for canopy cover, it should factor in how many trees are needed to plant to reach a canopy target, and where there is space for additional tree planting. It can also be a useful way to visualise the task ahead and set short term planting targets.

Setting a target for the number of trees Council will plant is a practical, easily measured metric and good option in between canopy assessments which might only be measured every five or so years.

A desktop assessment was completed to work out what typical tree sizes look like in City of Port Phillip. In reality trees come in all shapes and sizes, but this approach looked at what an indicative large and small tree sizes are to then extrapolate to work out how many extra trees would be needed to plant to reach potential canopy cover targets. The typical tree sizes in Figure 17 below were used to get an idea of how many extra trees would be needed to plant.

Typical Small Tree
Canopy area = 70 square meters



Crepe Myrtle: https://www.flickr.com/photos/35318832@N00/2244167622

Examples;
Crepe myrtle, *Lagerstroemia indica*
Platypus Gum, *Eucalyptus platypus*

Typical Large Tree
Canopy area = 150 square meters



Plane tree: https://www.elmsavers.com.au/news-blog/plane-tree-anthracnose-disease

Examples;
London plane, *Platanus x acerifolia*
Lemon-scented gum, *Corymbia citrodora*

Figure 17. Indicative 'typical' tree sizes for number of tree analysis.

Table 6 Estimated trees to reach 30 & 40% across all streets

Neighbourhood	Gap to reach 30%	Small trees	Large trees	Gap to reach 40%	Small trees	Large trees
Albert Park / Middle Park	4.11%	592	276	14.11%	2033	949
Balaclava / St Kilda East	5.00%	402	187	15.00%	1205	562
Elwood / Ripponlea	0.00%			1.31%	127	59
Montague	15.02%	362	169	25.02%	604	282
Port Melbourne	6.95%	939	438	16.95%	2288	1068
Sandridge / Wirraway	11.61%	697	325	21.61%	1297	605
South Melbourne	4.51%	567	264	14.51%	1823	851
St Kilda / St Kilda West	4.84%	609	284	14.84%	1866	871
St Kilda Road	8.69%	442	206	18.69%	951	444
	Total	**4609**	**2151**	Total	**12194**	**5691**

Table 7 Private land - Estimated trees to reach 30 & 40% across all Private Land

Neighbourhood	Gap to reach 30%	Small trees	Large trees	Gap to reach 40%	Small trees	Large trees
Albert Park / Middle Park	20.65%	3188	1488	30.65%	6174	2881
Balaclava / St Kilda East	13.43%	2889	1348	23.43%	8607	4017
Elwood / Ripponlea	10.28%	2221	1036	20.28%	8641	4032
Montague						
Port Melbourne	20.40%	3793	1770	30.40%	7437	3471
Sandridge / Wirraway						
South Melbourne	21.22%	2777	1296	31.22%	5235	2443
St Kilda / St Kilda West	13.09%	3290	1535	23.09%	10057	4693
St Kilda Road	21.32%	1434	669	31.32%	2691	1256
	Total	**19593**	**9143**	Total	**48842**	**22793**

Tables 6 & 7 extrapolate the number of trees required to plant in each neighbourhood to reach 30 or 40% canopy cover on streets and on private land.

This data provides a useful indicator of the scale of work required to improve canopy coverage, however should not be taken as a reflection of trees that can actually be planted in the ground.

For example, wider streets in South Melbourne and Port Melbourne a 30 or 40% canopy coverage may not be possible due to trees not being able to shade full street widths. In St Kilda, East St Kilda and Balaclava adequate space for the number of trees required could be especially challenging due to driveways, narrow road reserves and footpaths and infrastructure.

On private land, building envelopes, built form and lot size will influence the availability of space to plant trees. Port Phillip has a prevalence of small lots, small garden areas and apartment buildings which restrict space for tree planting. It is estimated an additional 10,000 to 20,000 trees on private land would be needed to achieve an overall 30% canopy cover target, and with the current built form that is unlikely to be achieved.

There are other urban greening options such as green walls and climbers, but in the context of setting an overall canopy cover target it could be worthwhile setting an achievable goal.

Finally the timescales of canopy cover targets are by their nature longer, with new trees not often maturing for many years after planting. Indeed with ongoing development and removal of trees particularly on private land, simply retaining existing canopy overall in short term would be a big achievement in an urban context. Therefore any canopy cover targets need to reflect this timescale.

Parks and reserves

Port Phillip has excellent canopy cover in many parks and reserves. While the overall canopy coverage of parks and reserves sits at 13.95%, that calculation includes sports fields and areas of open space that is unlikely to be planted with dense trees. When sports fields and other functional wide open spaces, for example, beach foreshore areas are taken into account (see Table 8 and Figure 18) the canopy cover on public open space is 29%. Further feasibility is required, but there is strong potential to set a target for 40% with no net loss of canopy at any individual park or reserve, excluding sporting fields and foreshore areas.

Table 8 Average Canopy Cover per Neighbourhood of Parks and Reserves excluding sports fields, community gardens and foreshore areas at 2022.

Neighbourhood	Average Canopy Cover	Neighbourhood	Average Canopy Cover
Albert Park / Middle Park	44.38%	Sandridge / Wirraway	36.16%
Balaclava / St Kilda East	54.71%	South Melbourne	50.62%
Elwood / Ripponlea	54.25	St Kilda / St Kilda West	51.36%
Montague	n/a	St Kilda Road	62.76%
Port Melbourne	41.09%		

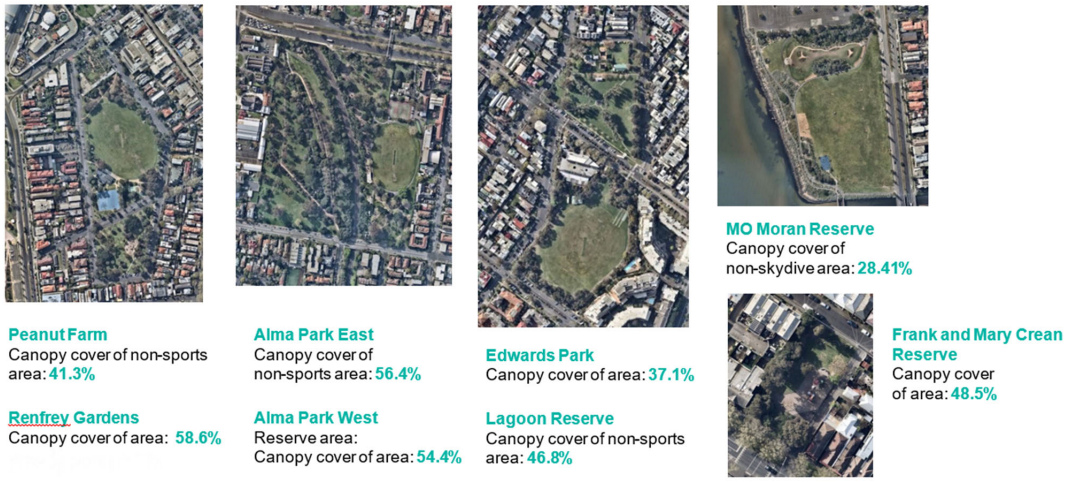


Figure 18. Examples of current canopy cover in Parks and Reserves excluding sports fields.

Potential overall canopy targets:

- **Net increase overall and in each neighbourhood from an overall baseline of 17.17%**
- **30% canopy cover for streets from a baseline of 25.53%**
- **No overall decline canopy on private land from baseline of 12.45%**
- **Minimum 800 new trees planted by Council per year**
- **40% canopy coverage in parks and reserves from a baseline of 29% (non-sports field, community gardens, foreshore and beach areas)**

How: Consistent summer capture aerial imagery and analysis every 5 years.

12.2.2. Urban Heat Reduction

Trees and plants in urban areas must work together with the hardscapes around them and the many functions such as transport routes and open space recreation. It needs a wholistic design and consideration of greening in all projects.

To mitigate urban heat, greening and cooling should be prioritised in areas where it will address the key factors of surface temperature (heat exposure), more vulnerable members of society (vulnerability to heat), and areas with high pedestrian activity (behavioural exposure).

Social justice is a critical greening issue because higher levels of disadvantage are generally correlated with lower levels of greening and higher levels of urban heat. As tree canopy mapping has improved, Councils have increasingly been overlaying social vulnerability and urban heat data on canopy data to better understand the priority areas to target more greening. In Port Phillip, the hotspots are generally around our public and social housing estates.

The heat mapping and heat vulnerability index developed by the Victorian Government can track and assess urban heat within the city. High heat vulnerability is level 4 and 5 within SA1 areas.

Continuing depaving or other ways to increase permeable surfaces through councils capital and footpath programs is another practical way to track reductions in urban heat island.

Potential targets:

- **All high heat vulnerability areas have an intervention (from baseline of nine high heat areas in 2022)**
- **Continue depaving program (establish square meter baseline and target)**

How: Victorian Government heat mapping and heat vulnerability index and asset management of paving works.

12.2.3. Community

Residents and landholders play an important role in greening neighbourhoods in Port Phillip. As do the many local environmental advocates and groups that partner with Council to care for green spaces for the benefit of the whole community.

Council and community need to work together to green private land and to ensure our public spaces thrive. There are a range of Friends of groups, community gardens and groups planting in public spaces who undertake valuable roles in promoting, improving, maintaining and monitoring urban green spaces including:

- 5 licensed community gardens,
- 7 plots in public space,
- 6 Friends of groups,
- 9 community environmental groups,
- the Ecocentre
- WestGate Biodiversity (not in CoPP, but strongly linked).
- Several citizen science activities

We are proposing a target that celebrates community led greening. Setting a target that is monitored and reported on like this demonstrates that the council has a commitment to work with and support the important work that community groups and residents do.

Potential targets:

- **Number of community greening activities supported by Council (baseline of 15 Friends Of and environmental groups, 5 community gardens, 7 public space plots, the Ecocentre and WestGate Biodiversity)**
- **Case studies of urban forest projects by residential home owners, developers and community groups (baseline zero).**

12.2.4. Health and quality maintenance

Targets focused on how Council manages and maintains its urban greening assets are vital. While any actions to increase and improve urban forest quantity and type are important, maintaining existing green assets are critical and should not be forgotten in target setting.

Tree Health

Tree health is a suitable indicator for overall quality of urban forest maintenance and management.

The 46,000 Council owned trees are being audited over 2023/2024, which makes setting a target without a confident baseline challenging. Previous data suggests around 10-12% of Council trees may be in poor health and short life expectancy.

When the audit is complete, the data can be used to improve the health of tree stock and replace poor performing trees to optimise our canopy.

Tree diversity

The City of Port Phillip manages approximately 46,000 trees, 75% of which are street trees. Urban forests need good mixture of species, age classes, structural sizes, species suitability and functional diversity (eg. habitat, shade, flowering) for overall forest health. Diversity in the urban forest reduces risks from pests, diseases and climate change.

Figures 3-5 in chapter 7.4 Tree Population of this report show that the public tree population of Port Phillip is assessed for diversity against the US Forest Service ratings of fair (10/20/30) and good (5/10/15)[157].

High diversity is recommended to avoid the large loss of any species or close related group of trees due to pest or diseases, reduce the spread of pest and disease and limit the impact of any one species due to climate change.

Many urban streets, especially boulevards, are lined with single species, often all planted at the same time. These kinds of tree populations are most at risk, especially when the species is not suited to the changing climate.

Overall, current tree diversity in Port Phillip is good. Tree species diversity is generally good. Only one species, the London Plane, is above 5% of the total tree population (at 9%). Tree genera diversity is good, with all tree genera making up ≤ 10% of the total tree population. The Myrtaceae family makes up 31% of trees, slightly above the fair rate of 30%. All other families are in the good range, making up less than 15% each of the tree population.

Tree species diversity

Tree species diversity is currently good, with all below 5% except for the London Plane which make up 9% of our tree population. These trees are not distributed evenly and provide 75% of the street canopy coverage in Elwood.

Existing Plane Trees (like all existing trees) are a priority to retain in the first instance. As outlined in Chapter 7.5.1, Plane Trees have specific fungal, pest and heat stress threats which need to be actively managed to protect these assets.

[157] Data and analysis supplied by City of Port Phillip, June 2023

In addition to lessening the risk to canopy loss, particularly in Elwood, that could occur through disease and heat stress, a gradual introduction of other species could be introduced as existing reach the end of their useful life expectancy with a more diverse species mix that provide the same highly valued canopy and colour (such as maples and oaks). This would likely be very slow process over decades.

Tree genus diversity

Current diversity of genus is good (10% or less) and no improvement actions or considerations required.

Tree family diversity

Family diversity is currently good (less 15% each) for all families except for the Myrtaceae family which is 31%.

The standard 10/20/30 rule was developed in the United States, however many Councils have adapted the species mix to better suit Australian plant diversity range, with the myrtaceae family dominant (gums, bottlebrush etc). Increasing native and indigenous tree planting will increase the percent of trees in the myrtaceae family could create conflicting priorities and targets.

Potential targets:

- **Maintain council tree species diversity rating of good to fair**
- **90% trees healthy by 2039 from 2024 tree health audit (results pending)**
- **90% survival rate of new Council tree plantings at two years old (new baseline required)**
- **90% Palm Tree Management plan actions on-track**

How: Annual tree audit, compliance of audit requirements.

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12.2.5. Biodiversity

Biodiversity is complex, and difficult to capture in a single indicator. However, there are examples of cities using indicators based on flagship species or groups, like the number of birds, pollinators, native fauna species or native flora species present in the city. Other metrics could include species richness, number of unique ecosystems, and extent of key biodiversity areas.

City of Port Phillip have 20 native vegetation sites, including six remnant indigenous flora sites, marked with a *, including Coastal Dune Scrub and Grassy Woodland Plains ecosystems.

Foreshore sites:

- Sandridge Beach; *
- First Point;
- Princes Street Dunes;
- Pickle Street Dunes;
- Middle Park Dunes;
- Fraser Street Dunes;
- West Beach; *
- MO Moran Reserve;
- Point Ormond Reserve; *
- Elwood Teatree; *
- Elwood Foreshore and Reserve; *
- St Kilda Breakwater.

Hinterland sites:

- Lagoon Reserve;
- Canterbury Road Urban Forest; *
- HR Johnson Reserve; *
- Elwood Canal;
- Alma Park;
- Danks Street Medians;
- Port Melbourne Light Rail;
- Bothwell Street Medians;
- St Kilda Botanical Gardens. *

The **Biodiversity Study in 2020** found that the biodiversity values remaining in the City are significant and require protection and enhancement for future generations. Please refer to the biodiversity study for more detail.

Foreshore and hinterland native vegetation sites are currently surveyed every 5 years. Other valuable native and indigenous vegetation sites in Port Phillip have undergone extensive revegetation efforts utilising a combination of locally native, Australian native, and introduced species. As a result, the remaining ecosystems are largely novel, characterised by unique species compositions and structures that differ from those observed prior to 1750, often representing distinct Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs).

With the biodiversity survey in 2020 and the regular surveys we conduct every 5 years of our foreshore and hinterland sites, we have good data to set a baseline for biodiversity, and for ongoing monitoring.

Proposed target:

- **At least 50% of all new plantings to have biodiversity plantings per year (32,000 new plants in 2022 supported biodiversity)**
- **Increase overall area of native vegetation sites from baseline in 2022 of 261,997m2**
- **Maintain six remnant indigenous flora sites across the city.**

How: Every 5 years through existing monitoring actions and in combination with habitat corridor mapping.

13. Global and local guidance

Urban greening research and practice has advanced significantly since Greening Port Phillip was adopted in 2010. There is now substantial, high-quality guidance available both locally and globally, especially from the European Union and United States. These guides provide advice on the planning process, common and emerging opportunities and threats, and how to measure success. They are not templates, but guides to be adapted and integrated according to the local context.

Some of the key local and global guidance documents include (in reverse chronological order):

- **Urban Greening Plan Guidance** (European Union, 2022)
- **Trees for Cooler and Greener Spaces: Guidelines for Streetscape Planning and Design** (Victorian DELWP, 2019)
- **Planning a Green-Blue City** (Victorian DELWP, 2017)
- **Urban Green Infrastructure Planning – a Guide for Practitioners** (EU, 2017)
- **The Sustainable Urban Forest: A Step-by-Step Approach** (Davey Institute & USDA Forest Service, 2016)
- **Guidelines on urban and peri-urban forestry** (FAO, 2016)
- **How to Grow an Urban Forest** (Greener Spaces Better Places, 2015)
- **Planning the Urban Forest: Ecology, Economy, and Community Development** (APA, 2009)

Brief summaries of these guides are provided below for further reading.

European Union Urban Greening Plan Guidance[158]

The European Union Biodiversity Strategy for 2030[159] calls on cities with over 20,000 inhabitants to develop Urban Greening Plans (UGP). To help cities implement this strategic direction, the European Commission worked with Eurocities and ICLEI to develop draft Urban Greening Plan Guidance (2022), based on discussions with local authorities that have implemented successful UGPs. This short paper guides municipalities through the process of developing, implementing and monitoring a UGP. A toolkit is also being developed.

Key takeaways from European cities

Successful implementation of urban greening plans requires:

- commitment and support from elected members
- consistent messaging to enable stakeholder buy-in
- prioritisation of nature over competing land uses, and integration with the entire city planning process
- close inter-departmental co-creation and collaboration
- financing mechanisms that recognise co-benefits and potential revenue generation
- a concrete plan for delivery, with timeframes, responsibilities, and budget estimates assigned.

Vision should be long-term (20-50 years), with interim greening goals (10-15 years), allowing time for trees to grow.

Objectives and actions should target the ecosystem services (benefits) the city wants to prioritise.

Targets should be SMART and include (at least): % of green space (public and private), % of canopy cover, number of newly planted trees, and % of protected natural areas on public land.

[158] European Commission (2022), *European Union Urban Greening Plan Guidance*, accessed at: https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/urban-environment/urban-greening-platform_en

[159] European Union (2021), *Biodiversity Strategy for 2030*, accessed at: https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2779/677548

Trees for Cooler and Greener Spaces: Guidelines for Streetscape Planning and Design[160]

Guidelines developed to help councils, road project managers, and streetscape designers overcome the challenges associated with prioritising trees in streetscapes, to encourage adequate growing conditions for tree health and longevity.

The guidelines include:

- Guidance on strategic planning to prioritise trees in streets, create healthy growing conditions, and tailor design solutions to site conditions
- Solutions for common streetscapes including pedestrian zones, urban streets, neighbourhood zones, suburban and activity streets, boulevards, major thoroughfares and freeways (see Table *9*)
- A design component catalogue to guide implementation.

Table 9. Design response matrix, providing guidance on greening solutions for common streetscapes.

Green = Suitable Yellow = May be suitable [–] = Unlikely to be suitable

Increasing space for green infrastructure

Generally increasing movement significance

Generally increasing place significance

	A. Grated tree pits	B. Trees with permeable paving	C. Open tree pits	D. Infiltration trenches and wells	E. Trees in raingardens	F. Trees in grass verges	G. Sheet flow* to grass and trees
1. Pedestrian zone	●	●	–	–	●	–	–
2. Neighbour-hood zone	●	●	●	–	●	–	–
3. Urban street	●	●	●	–	–	–	–
4. Suburban street	–	–	●	●	●	●	–
5. Activity street	●	●	–	–	●	●	–
6. Boulevard	–	–	–	●	●	●	–
7. Major thoroughfare	–	–	–	●	–	●	●
8. Freeway	–	–	–	–	–	●	●

* Sheet flow refers to wide shallow movement of water across a surface, as distinct from concentrated overland flow in channels or narrow flow paths. In this context, sheet flow refers to water that spreads across the length of the roadway into the adjacent verge, rather than flowing through dedicated channels, inlets and entry points.

Source: DELWP (2019), Trees for Cooler and Greener Spaces

[160] E2Designlab for the Victoria Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2019), *Trees for Cooler and Greener Streetscapes Guidelines for Streetscape Planning and Design*, accessed at: https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0034/439297/Trees-for-Cooler-and-Greener-Streetscapes-21112019.pdf

Planning a Green-Blue City[161]

This Victorian Government guide makes the case for integrating planning of 'green' (trees, parks, gardens) and 'blue' infrastructure (WSUD, drainage areas and flood storage), in order to enhance delivery of ten shared objectives (see Image *18*) while benefiting from more efficient infrastructure and greater collaboration. It provides step by step guidance for Councils in how to develop and structure a Green-Blue Infrastructure Plan, including workshop tools and key questions to discuss.

The guide provides a useful set of objectives. However, integration of green and blue infrastructure planning does not appear to have occurred widely in Greater Melbourne Councils.



Image 18. Ten shared objectives from Planning a Green Blue City, DELWP 2017

Urban Green Infrastructure Planning – a Guide for Practitioners[162]

Approachable and easily digestible guidance combining well-structured concepts and practical steps, supported by case studies, checklists and a toolkit. Guidance is based on extensive research on best practice urban green infrastructure (UGI) planning and implementation in 20 European cities, and has been refined through a round of field testing. Developed under the EU's Green Surge project.

The planning approach outlined is based on four core principles, which have been reflected in the New South Wales Green Places Framework[163]:

1. **Green-grey integration** – combining green and grey infrastructures
2. **Connectivity** – creating green space networks
3. **Multifunctionality** – delivering and enhancing multiple functions and services
4. **Social inclusion** – collaborative and participatory planning

Useful guidance is provided on how to structure the strategic thinking process, cross-referencing the four core principles with four core urban challenges (climate change, biodiversity, green economy and social cohesion), as well as a useful planning checklist (pp61-67).

[161] Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (then DELWP) (2017), Planning an Green-Blue City, accessed at: https://www.water.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0029/89606/Green-blue-Infrastructure-Guidelines-Feb17.pdf

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[163] Government Architect New South Wales (2020) *Greener Places Framework*, accessed at https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/policies/greener-places

The Sustainable Urban Forest: A Step-by-Step Approach[164]

A comprehensive and step-by-step guide for municipalities developing urban forest strategies, covering trees in both public and private realms. While US-focused, its detailed advice, checklists, case studies and resources are also useful for Australian Councils. This guide's particular contribution is detailed guidance on how to measure success, including recommended performance indicators across three categories: tree quantity and quality; stakeholder perceptions, engagement and collaboration; and how the urban forest is managed.

Vibrant Cities Lab

The US Forest Service and American Forests also has an online toolkit providing guides, research and case studies for all the outcomes trees provide (better health, equity, transport, etc), as well as a limited and US-focused step-by-step urban forestry toolkit for councils.

https://www.vibrantcitieslab.com/

Guidelines on Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry[165]

This FAO report takes a global approach, covering urban forestry in developed and developing contexts. This dense but useful guide's major contribution is the list of practical ideas to consider on an issue-by-issue basis. It provides guidance on:

- The **types and benefits** of urban forests.
- Establishing the **enabling environment** (governance, policy, legal framework, planning–design–management continuum).
- **Key actions, monitoring criteria, competencies, knowledge gaps and helpful facts** for advocacy under each key urban issue. The issues covered are health & wellbeing, climate change, biodiversity & landscapes, economic benefits & the green economy, risk management, mitigating land & soil degradation, water & watersheds, food & nutrition security, water security, wood security, and sociocultural values.
- **Support measures** (communication and awareness-raising, community engagement, alliances and partnerships, and identifying research needs and perspectives).

How to Grow an Urban Forest[166]

A basic, practical ten-step workbook guiding Australian Councils through the process of urban forest planning. The guide attempts to synthesise a how-to guide of best practice urban forest planning in Australia – based principally on Melbourne's 2012 Melbourne's Urban Forest Strategy, alongside other leading Australian Councils (now a little dated).

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[165] Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (2016), *Guidelines on Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry*, accessed at: http://www.fao.org/3/i6210e/i6210e.pdf

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Planning the Urban Forest: Ecology, Economy, and Community Development[167]

Seminal work outlining the what, who, why and how of urban forestry, with guiding principles and extensive US case studies. Based on a two-day symposium in 2006 (between invited experts and four partner organisations the APA, American Forests, the International Society of Arboriculture, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service), the guide defines a suite of principles to guide planners. While the document is now a little dated, the principles remain largely relevant.

The strategic principles are:

1. Get trees to the forefront of the planning/visioning process
2. Know where you came from to know where you are going
3. Seek out private and civic partners
4. Investing in trees makes economic sense
5. Urban forestry must be sustainable financially.

Planning Principles

1. Incorporate the tree ordinance (local policy) in the development code and ensure consistency with other codes
2. Collaborate with developers, environmentalists, and other stakeholders to draft ordinances
3. Planned Unit Development regulations should include an urban forestry evaluation checklist or guidelines
4. Ordinances must include provisions for enforcement personnel
5. Take an adaptive management approach to resources
6. Plan for long-term maintenance of trees.

Design Principles

1. Use urban forestry to support other planning goals
2. Include a green infrastructure element in the local comprehensive plan, but link it to other elements in the plan
3. The natural environment makes neighbourhoods more liveable
4. Make the place right for trees and then pick the right trees.

The report also makes five recommendations based on the case studies:

1. Create stable and adequate funding
2. Identify a big enough vision
3. Make the urban forest an asset
4. Pay attention to the details
5. Seize the opportunities of the day.

[167] American Planning Association (J. Schwab) (2009), *Planning the Urban Forest: Ecology, Economy, and Community Development*, accessed at: https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy_resources/research/forestry/pdf/555.pdf

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DRAFT

11.2 COMMUNITY ELECTRIC VEHICLE(EV) PROGRAM

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 To recommend options to progress the delivery of the Community Electric Vehicle (EV) Program.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 Demand for electric vehicles (EVs) in Port Phillip is growing, but uptake is hampered by the lack of charging infrastructure, residents without off-street parking, and in multi-unit apartment blocks cannot install private chargers on their property.

2.2 Council is supporting the uptake of EVs by investigating, trialling and facilitating the installation of public and private charging infrastructure and removing barriers to charging infrastructure in developments (Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2023-28, Initiative 30).

2.3 Council is working with providers to install fast public charges and pole-mounted chargers and has received an MoU from a provider (EVX Pty Ltd) to investigate pole-mounted chargers. Over 50 sites are being assessed for technical feasibility.

2.4 Due to the absence of public charging infrastructure, and to support residents with no off-street parking access private EV charging, Council in mid-2021 endorsed a pilot to permit up to 10 EV charges in the public footpath for individual households. Between March 2022 and February 2024 eight private chargers were installed.

2.5 The pilot demonstrated that private EV charges can fill a gap until public chargers are delivered. However, an independent review found that the program can only be accessed by a small portion of the community, is resource intensive for Council to administer and had several risks for Council. The identified risks associated with private EV infrastructure include liability and insurance concerns, potential constraints to future Council public works on Council roads and footpaths, lack of competition in procurement, and the appropriateness of Council's local laws to facilitate the installation of private EV chargers on a permanent basis. The potential impact of these risks increases as more charges are installed.

2.6 Subsequently, at the 1 May 2024 Council meeting (Attachment 1) Officers recommended only progressing with the delivery of public charging infrastructure and not proceeding with the private EV charger pilot. At the meeting, Council deferred consideration of the private EV charger pilot resolution to the 5 June 2024 meeting.

2.7 In response to the Council resolution on 1 May 2024, Officers further examined options for continuing to permit private EV chargers and progress public chargers. This report considers three options.

2.8 **Option 1** is to cease the private kerbside EV charger pilot and focus on public EV infrastructure initiatives. While Council is yet to deliver public EV chargers, a public EV charging model is a better policy outcome. This option is recommended because of limited Council resources and the risks and limitations associated with a private model.

2.9 **Option 2** involves Council continuing with private EV charging **and** progressing public infrastructure. Under option 2, existing Council resources would focus on delivering public infrastructure and an additional $80,000 is required for 2024/25 to partially offset the cost of continuing with the private infrastructure model ($50k for staff (0.4FTE) to administer applications, and $30k for legal and other advice). Funding for 2025/26 will be considered as part of the 2025/26 budget process.

2.10 Under the trial of private EV Chargers, Council relied on Council's Local Law (Clause 28) to permit private EV chargers. Council's legal advice is that, Clause 28:

2.10.1 is not intended to regulate the installation, use and ultimate removal of EV chargers.

2.10.2 is unsuited for regulating assets of a more permanent nature.

2.10.3 cannot address all issues of risk and liability (considered below).

2.11 The legal advice is that, should Council pursue private EV chargers on a more permanent basis, a combination of a new bespoke local law, EV charger policy and/or the use of Section 121 Agreements (recorded on a property title) should be considered.

2.12 The implementation of Section 121 Agreements will add significant costs to the permit applicant and Council. Similarly, a new local law is a resource intensive legalistic process that will require extensive community engagement and 18 months to 2 years to complete. Instead, to mitigate the risk associated with the current local law, this report recommends that the delivery of private EV infrastructure should be a timebound temporary measure pending the delivery of public EV infrastructure.

2.13 Council's legal advice and an independent report identified other risks to Council and the community associated with the delivery of private infrastructure projects. To help manage the identified risks (as detailed in section 6.2) the following requirements are recommended:

- To manage limited Council resources and noting that demand for private EV chargers is uncertain, Council would consider permit applications in batches. New calls for applications will be made as existing batches are completed. Under this approach, if there is a large number of applications, there may be delays meeting demand. The adequacy of the funding will be considered as part of the 2025/26 budget or earlier if applications cannot adequately be assessed with existing resourcing. Officers will continue to investigate ways to make the assessment process more efficient.
- In response to Council's legal advice that existing local laws are not designed to permit permanent private charger infrastructure, it is recommended that Council review the need for private EV infrastructure after 4 years OR the installation of

100 private EV chargers to see if private EV chargers are still necessary or if Council can stop supporting private EV chargers because there are viable alternative public charging models.

- Permits will be renewed annually, with audits to ensure compliance of permit conditions. Permit renewals could be declined if the location of private EV chargers constrains Council works on Council roads and footpaths.
- Permit holders will be strongly encouraged to hold appropriate insurance cover and are made aware by Council of the risks and their legal liability in the absence of appropriate cover.
- All current and future permit holders will be required to register their chargers with Before You Dig Australia and renew their registration as required.
- Applications for properties in flood prone areas, will not be considered until relevant authorities' recommend approval.
- To partially offset Council costs, permit application fees to be increased from $132 to $500 (with changes considered as part of the annual council budget process). Noting that this will not significantly recover the costs to Council to assess and enforce permit applications. All other fees outlined above remain the same.
- Under the pilot a bond of $500 is paid and refunded within upon completion of installation and reinstatement of footpaths as per Council standards. A separate bond of $500 is recommended to ensure removal of charger and reinstatement of the footpath. The bond value will be assessed and increased if required based on site conditions.

2.14 **Option 3** is for Council resources to be allocated to deliver private EV charger infrastructure (only). This option delays the delivery of public charging infrastructure which has a greater public benefit compared to private EV chargers. Conditions for Private EV chargers identified in option 2 above will be applied to this option.

Recommended option

2.15 In the absence of public EV charger infrastructure, private EV charger infrastructure provides access to EV chargers to a small section of the community. However, an independent review of the private EV trial found that the delivery, installation, operation and removal of private EV infrastructure is resource intensive for Council and imposes risks for Council. The independent review recommended that Council discontinue the EV charger pilot and focus on public EV charging infrastructure that will benefit a greater proportion of the community.

2.16 In this report officers have considered ways to mitigate the risks imposed by private EV chargers and considered the resources required to deliver both public and private EV infrastructure. However, in view of the ongoing risks associated with EV chargers and the requirement for additional resources to administer both public and private EV charger infrastructure, this report recommends that Council only pursue Option 1, Public EV infrastructure.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Notes the decision at the 1 May 2024 Council meeting to "support the continued exploration and installation of on-street **Public** Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger technology including using the following criteria to determine the locations for on-street EV Chargers:

3.1.1 Prioritise street locations outside Permit Zones unless the Permit Zone street has no access to off-street parking and there is high demand for EV chargers.

3.1.2 Consider safety implications in determining the location of on-street EV Chargers.

3.1.3 Prioritise the spread of locations across the City of Port Phillip to provide access to EV charging across the municipality.

3.1.4 Consider the outcome of community engagement with residents in the streets where on-street EV chargers are proposed to be installed."

3.1.5 And delegates authority to the CEO to enter agreements with EVX Pty. Ltd to deliver public EV charging infrastructure based on above endorsed criteria.

3.2 Authorises the CEO or their delegate to enter agreements with public EV charger providers that meet the criteria in 3.1.

3.3 Endorse the discontinuation of the private electric vehicle (EV) charger pilot and cease accepting new permit applications and will:

3.3.1 Allow the permitted private chargers to remain for a minimum five years, starting from the date of their installation subject to compliance with permit and other conditions.

3.3.2 Undertake a review prior to the expiry of the 5 year permit period to determine if the permits should be extended and, if yes, for how long.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

4.1 Of Port Phillip's community greenhouse gas emissions, 13% come from transport releasing 172,000 tons of CO2 annually. 82% of dwellings in Port Phillip have at least one car. Vehicles powered by fossil fuels contribute significantly to urban air pollution which impacts human health.

4.2 Council's commitment in the Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2023-28 is to 'accelerate support for the uptake of electric vehicles (EV) in the community by investigating, trialling and facilitating the installation of public charging stations, private charging infrastructure and removing barriers to charging infrastructure in new developments and existing buildings'. (Initiative 30)

4.3 Electric vehicle ownership is growing and the number of EVs registered in Port Phillip has almost doubled since 2019 with almost 340 EVs registered in 2022. Independent consultants estimate that demand for EVs in Port Phillip will continue to accelerate. (*source: Institute of Sensible Transport 2023)*

4.4 In Port Phillip, it is estimated that 90% of dwellings may have challenges charging EVs at their homes, due to limited off-street parking and limited access to infrastructure in multi-unit dwellings.

Timeline

May 2024	Council considered the Private Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Pilot and the Public Utility Pole-mounted and Kerbside Chargers resolved that: • Council defer consideration of the Private Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot to the 5 June Council Meeting. • Council support the continued exploration and installation of on-street Public Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger technology.
November 2023	Council endorsed the Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2023-2028 and committed to support uptake of EVs and explore installation of public charging stations in CoPP. (Initiative 30)
November 2021	Council supported Public Fast EV charging project and an agreement with preferred supplier EVIE Networks.
September 2021	Council endorsed the Kerbside EV Charger Pilot to permit up to ten residents with no off-street parking to install private kerb chargers.
June 2018	Council's 2018 Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy committed to support uptake of EVs and explore installation of public charging stations in CoPP. (Action 21)

4.5 The status of key projects underway within the Community EV program include:

4.6 **Public** Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger Project (11kW - 22kW)

4.6.1 Council supported the exploration and installation of on-street Public Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger technology in May 2024. Council adopted the following criteria to locate on-street EV Chargers:

- Prioritise street locations outside Permit Zones unless the Permit Zone Street has no access to off-street parking and there is high demand for EV chargers.
- Consider safety implications in determining the location of on-street EV Chargers.
- Prioritise the spread of locations across the City of Port Phillip to provide access to EV charging across the municipality.
- Consider the outcome of community engagement with residents in the streets where on-street EV chargers are proposed to be installed.

4.6.2 Installation of utility pole-mounted public chargers may not require specific licences / lease agreements as they are installed on poles owned by Distribution Network Service Providers (CitiPower/Powercor/United Energy). Council's role is engagement with the community as part of the approval to access adjacent parking bays and manage changes to parking restrictions.

4.6.3 Utility pole-mounted public chargers have been installed in NSW Councils (Northern Beaches Council, City of Newcastle, and others). In Victoria, Bayside, Merri-bek, Yarra and Stonnington Councils are exploring utility pole-mounted chargers.

4.6.4 Council is working with Intellihub, who received a grant of $1.35m from the Victorian Government's Zero Emissions Vehicle Emerging Technologies (ZEVET) program to install 100 EV chargers mounted on power poles across three inner city local government areas, including the City of Port Phillip.

4.6.5 Council is working with EVX Australia Pty Ltd to investigate pole-mounted chargers. Council has received an MoU from EVX. Under this MoU, council's obligations are to:

- Facilitate changes to parking, signage and line marking for the mutually agreed sites.
- Undertake community engagement to inform and obtain feedback on proposed sites for installation of pole-mounted EV chargers.
- Provide data and reporting on the installed chargers including community feedback to EVX.

4.6.6 Over 50 sites have been shortlisted and are being assessed for technical feasibility by the two suppliers (EVX and Intellihub).

4.6.7 Costs associated with implementing Council's obligations under the MoU to deliver pole-mounted chargers can be funded from within the existing Community EV Program budget. (see section 7.1)

4.6.8 Noting that the Council obligations under the EVX MoU are aligned with the criteria adopted by Council at its 1 May 2024 meeting and that Council's obligations can be delivered with existing resources, this report recommends that Council delegates to the CEO approval to enter into the MoU.

4.7 **Public** Fast EV Charging Infrastructure Project (50kW -120 kW)

4.7.1 Council supported an agreement with a preferred supplier of EV charging (EVIE Networks) to install public 'fast' charging infrastructure at no cost to Council in November 2021. This project focuses on investigating off-street car parks on Council and Crown land.

4.7.2 The installation of public EV charger infrastructure requires a lease and / licence with the EV charging suppliers to install public EV chargers in Council off-street car parks. This mechanism has been applied in several Australian LGAs to install public EV infrastructure on public car parks.

4.7.3 Officers are working with EVIE Networks to investigate two locations on Council and Crown land viable locations for EV charging infrastructure including resolving issues such as flooding risk, upcoming redevelopment, inadequate power supply and Crown land leases. The outcome of the technical suitability investigations is expected in 2024.

4.8 **Private** Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot (7kW)

4.8.1 Council endorsed the Private Kerbside EV Charger Pilot on 1 September 2021. The pilot offered residents without off-street parking an opportunity to charge

their EV outside their home using their own electricity. The pilot permitted the installation of up to 10 kerbside charger units.

4.8.2 The pilot received fifty Expressions of Interest and twelve applications were submitted between March 2022 and February 2024.Two applications were rejected due to their location within a flood zone and ten applications were approved with permits issued. Eight chargers have been installed to date.

4.8.3 Users of the pilot chargers are reportedly satisfied with the infrastructure which provides convenient access to a charger.

4.8.4 Council engaged the Institute of Sensible Transport to review the pilot. While the report (Attachment 2) found some benefits, the overall recommendation was that 'the pilot cease accepting new applications and all resources be reallocated towards facilitating a public charging network.'

4.8.5 The report found that the Pilot limited Council's ability to meet its objectives to support the 'whole' community to access EV charging infrastructure. Instead, the report recommended public EV charger initiatives because they might have broader application; demonstrate greater capability to respond to the anticipated uptake in demand; are less complex to administer and do not involve the same degree of legal complexity and risk. Identifying and addressing risks and complexities is detailed in section 6.2.

4.9 Officers identified three options for the future delivery of the EV charging infrastructure.

	OPTION 1 (recommended) **Focus exclusively on public EV chargers & cease private EV charger installations**	**OPTION 2** **Pursue both public EV charging infrastructure and private EV charger models**	**OPTION 3** **Focus exclusively on private EV chargers and cease development of Public EV charging models**
Detail	Continue working with providers to install public EV charging stations.	Continue to collaborate with public EV charging providers **and** accept private EV charger applications.	Continue to assess private EV charger applications to enable individuals to install private EV chargers
Risks **Refer section 6 for more detail**	1. Some risks associated with permitting infrastructure on Council land can be mitigated through agreements and insurance held by public providers. 2. Focusing only on public charges means the community will have limited EV charging infrastructure option until public chargers are delivered.	1. Without additional resources, delivery of private charging will continue to delay delivery of public charging programs. 2. Council's legal advice recommends that Council not pursue private EV chargers on a permanent basis.	1. Council's legal advice is that the current mechanism to permit private chargers on Council footpaths is not appropriate for more permanent assets. 2. Further delaying publicly accessible pole-mounted and fast charging will make it difficult for most of the municipality to access EV charging infrastructure. 3. Increased risk from legacy EV chargers: management

		3. Specific risks outlined in Options 1 and 3 also apply to Option 2	of abandoned chargers in the longer term, impact on proposed Council footpath and street works.
Benefits	Enables broader community access to EV charging infrastructure. One charger can service a number of users.	Benefits of 1 and 3 apply.	Provides a convenient charging option for an eligible individual households to charge a vehicle on a parking bay outside their property.
Next steps	Public EV charging model Council enters MoU with EVX to progress Public EV chargers and continues to work with Intellihub and Evie to finalise site locations. Public infrastructure model is developed, tested and implemented. Private EV charging model Discontinue the private electric vehicle (EV) charger pilot and cease accepting new permit applications and: ○ Allow the permitted private chargers to remain for a minimum 5 years, starting from the date of their installation subject to compliance with permit and other conditions. ○ Undertake a review prior to the expiry of the 5 year permit period to determine if the permits should be extended and, if yes, for how long.	As per option 1 and 3.	Assess and where appropriate approve private EV charger permit applications. Private EV charging permits will be renewed annually and a review will be undertaken after 4 years, OR when 100 chargers have been installed or sooner if there are adequate alternative public EV chargers are available. Adoption of an appropriate mechanism to deliver private chargers to mitigate risks. Refer section 6.2.4

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

Each Community EV Program project has involved project specific engagement with stakeholders:

5.1 **Public** Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger Project

5.1.1 Officers:

- Engaged with councils in NSW that participated in a Utility Pole-Mounted Charger Trial to consider key learnings.
- Had ongoing discussions with charging technology providers Intellihub and EVX to identify opportunities.
- Advocated to regulatory authorities and the Victorian Government (DECCA) to enable faster resolution of issues.

5.1.2 In November/December 2023 Council undertook community consultation via our 'Have your say' webpage to seek suggestions on the locations of utility pole-mounted EV chargers. Council heard from 89 contributors mostly from Port Melbourne, St. Kilda and South Melbourne. 173 locations were suggested and 51% of respondents suggested more than one location.

5.2 **Public** Fast EV Charging Infrastructure Project

Officers have:

5.2.1 Engaged across Council to identify opportunities, risks, future plans of potential sites for public EV charging.

5.2.2 Ongoing discussions and advocacy to Melbourne Water and the Victorian Government (DECCA) regarding flood impact, risks, safety and regulations associated with EV chargers.

5.2.3 Discussions with EVIE Networks regarding potential opportunities and learnings.

5.2.4 Investigated private partnership opportunities with Ampol, Coles, etc to facilitate public EV charging.

5.3 **Private** Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot

Officers have had:

5.3.1 Updated the webpage (Electric vehicles - City of Port Phillip) regularly to include the key messages and latest information regarding the pilot.

5.3.2 Communicated the eligibility requirements, application process and timeframes for permit decisions to the community (including applicants) and the supplier of the private charging technology.

5.3.3 Provided information in response to enquiries from residents on the pilot.

5.3.4 Continued discussions with Council's insurance broker, MAV on insurance related matters.

5.3.5 Obtained legal advice on Council's risk exposure due to kerb chargers and the process of permitting private infrastructure on Council footpaths on a permanent basis.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 **Public** EV charging projects (Utility Pole-Mounted, Kerbside and Fast Chargers)

6.1.1 The public EV charging projects have experienced ongoing delays due to complex negotiations between preferred suppliers and Distribution Network Service providers (CitiPower/ Powercor/ United Energy) to approve installation of EV chargers on utility poles.

6.1.2 Several off-street car parks are not appropriate locations for installation of EV chargers due to risk of flooding and associated public safety risks. A lack of appropriate Victorian Government policy/guidance means that only sites not impacted by flood overlays are being considered.

6.1.3 Installation of public EV chargers could hamper redevelopment proposed for carparks. This risk can be mitigated by entering leases/ licences with providers with an appropriate termination clause.

6.2 **Private** Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot

6.2.1 The private kerbside electric vehicle charger pilot has several limitations and risks. These are outlined in the 1 May 2024 Council Report (Attachment 1). To better understand these limitations and risks, in May 2024 Council obtained legal advice in relation to the private kerbside EV Charger Pilot.

6.2.2 The legal advice notes that the risks associated with the delivery of private EV chargers increase exponentially with the growth in the number of chargers, and the rollout of the program on a permanent basis.

6.2.3 Legal advice confirmed that the Clause 28 of Council's Local Laws, currently used to issue Street Occupation Permits are unsuited to permit residents to install private kerb chargers permanently on Council footpaths. Council can mitigate these risks by limiting the number of chargers, reviewing the need for and benefits of the model after four years or sooner if public charging infrastructure becomes available.

6.2.4 To mitigate the risks of a permanent private EV charger model, Council could enter Section 121 agreements with landowners pursuant to the *Road Management Act 2004,* and/ or draft a bespoke local law and EV charger policy.

- Section 121 agreements, included on the land title, would confirm Council ownership of the land and that obligations relating to the private EV infrastructure would transfer to the landowner. The agreement would cover public liability insurance, inspection, maintenance and reinstatement requirements. These matters are currently addressed in the permit issued pursuant to clause 28 of the Local Laws. Clause 28 is not suited for regulating assets of a more permanent nature. Section 121 agreements are necessary should Council support private EV chargers on a permanent basis. However, Section 121 agreements cannot address any inadequacy in insurance coverage for Council or residents. In addition, Section 121 Agreement's would add to the cost of delivering private EV infrastructure. Development of the template and implementation would incur approximately $7k in the first year and each permit applicant could incur costs (estimated at $2k) to get advice and lodge the required documentation. This report does not recommend the installation of permanent private EV infrastructure.
- Draft new Local Law: Council's legal advice is that a purpose-drafted Local Law with an overarching policy should be considered if Council pursues a permanent private EV charger model. A Local Law review would require extensive delays, additional resources and community engagement.

6.2.5 Future road and urban forest management:

- Installation of private kerb chargers across Port Phillip can inhibit future changes to streets including planting new trees, traffic management and WSUD infrastructure. Inclusion of requirements in the permit to remove the chargers where necessary may mitigate the risk. Removing kerb chargers could be resisted by permit holders due their capital investment in installing

the charger, and a VCAT challenge is possible. This risk can be mitigated by not renewing the annual permits as required.

- There is a risk of private chargers being abandoned leaving Council to pay for removal and footpath reinstatement. This can be mitigated by securing an appropriate bond. Under the current private EV charger trial, a bond is collected and returned upon completion of works on Council footpaths to Council's satisfaction. It does not cover cost associated with abandonment of the chargers or their faulty removal.
- A separate bond of $500 to ensure removal of charger and reinstatement of the footpath. The bond value will be reviewed and amended if required.

6.2.6 Flooding risk:

- A third of the municipality is impacted by flood overlays. This is expected to increase as water authorities and others review current flood modelling. Updated flood mapping may put some existing kerb chargers inside flood overlays.
- Melbourne Water recommendations and Council's legal advice on the risks to council and the community needs to be considered when considering new permit applications or considering renewing existing applications.
- This report recommends that Council not accept or renew permit applications for properties in flood prone areas, until relevant Victorian Government policy guidance becomes available.

6.2.7 Sole Supplier Risk:

- Suppliers with other design options did not participate in the Pilot. The current model accommodates the only one supplier and its technology.
- This risk can be mitigated by encouraging other EV charging providers to participate in the delivery of private chargers.

6.2.8 Maintenance and Compliance Risk:

- To ensure the installation and removal of private EV chargers on Council footpaths meet Council standards, Council will ensure installers have Council's engineering standards. In the event of noncompliance, Council will utilise the bond of $500 to reinstate the footpath.
- To obtain a private EV charger permit, applicants will need a Before You Dig Australia registration to protect service providers (NBN, gas, water etc) and / or Council when undertaking works in the vicinity of a charger.
- In addition, Council will audit compliance with permit conditions, including maintenance of the charger.

6.2.9 Liability and Insurance Risk:

- MAV Insurance has confirmed that Council's Insurance will provide protection against the public liability risk exposure to Council caused by kerb chargers. This insurance protection does not indemnify the permit holder.

- Public liability hazards include property damage, or a member of the public being injured due to tripping, fire or electrocution.
- Permitholders may be exposed to a legal liability that arises from the Council permitted installation of a kerb charger. To mitigate this risk Council will strongly encourage permit holders to obtain appropriate insurance cover and ensure permit holders are aware of the risks, in the absence of insurance cover.
- MAV Insurance has advised Council that Council's policy premium may increase if the claims arising from the kerb chargers reflects negatively on the loss ratio.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 Option 1 Public EV charger models

- It is not proposed that Council will contribute to the costs to install, operate and maintain the proposed public charging infrastructure. These costs will be incurred by the provider.
- Council's EV program has budget allocated to accommodate costs associated with community engagement activities ($5k) and changes to parking ($1.5k per charger for signage installation, line marking etc).
- Council's EV Program's budget will cover costs for legal advice, electricity distribution network fees and other minor infrastructure upgrades.

7.2 Option 2 Implement both Private and Public charging models

7.2.1 Processing applications and administration of the private charger program is resource intensive. To deliver both Public and Private EV charger models will require additional resources.

7.2.2 The cost to implement a private charging model is:

- A resource of 0.4 FTE ($50k) to develop and administer private EV charger permits including managing applications from residents, coordination across Council teams (Sustainability, Assets, Transport, Arborist, Development permits, and Local Laws teams) and liaise with stakeholders (water authorities etc.).
- $30k for legal and consultant fees.
- To offset part of the council costs, this report recommends increasing the Permit application fee to $500 from $132.
- To work within the proposed additional resource constraints, applications will be assessed in batches. Requests for new applications will be made once the existing batch has been processed. Officers will continue to investigate ways to make the assessment process more efficient.
- The adequacy of the funding will be reviewed as part of the 2025/26 budget or earlier if applications cannot adequately be assessed with existing resourcing.

7.2.3 Costs associated with development of a new Local Law and section 121 Agreements will need to be considered if Council proposes more permanent private EV infrastructure.

7.3 **Option 3 Private Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger**

7.3.1 The estimated costs associated with continuing to offer private EV chargers are described above as part of Option 2. If only Private EV chargers are pursued, existing resources could administer the program.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 Lower community greenhouse gas emissions and improved air quality through transition to EVs if charged using renewable energy (residential solar or green power).

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 **Option 1 Public EV charger models**

9.1.1 Chargers are publicly accessible.

9.1.2 Public EV charging can contribute to improved economic activity for businesses around the vicinity of charging locations as the EV owners are likely to visit a nearby café, supermarket, etc while charging their EV.

9.1.3 No EV infrastructure will be available until public EV infrastructure is delivered.

9.2 **Option 2 Implement both Private and Public charging models**

9.2.1 Provides an interim solution to early EV adopters via private charging while the public infrastructure options are being delivered.

9.3 **Option 3 Private Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger**

9.3.1 Provides access to convenient and private charging to a small number of residents.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 Community Electric Vehicle Program aligns with Strategic Action 3 – Sustainable Port Phillip of the adopted Council Plan 2012-31.

10.1 The Act and Adapt Strategy, adopted in 2018 and reviewed in 2023 includes commitments to support uptake of EVs and explore installation of public charging stations in CoPP.

10.1 The Council Plan 2021-31 includes a Community Electric Vehicle Charging Program operating project to facilitate uptake of electric vehicle ownership. This action supports the Council and Victorian Government targets to achieve net zero community emissions by 2050.

10.1 Move, Connect, Live Action 42 say that Council will ‘Support the use of electric vehicles through a variety of measures including the investigation of options to use the planning scheme to facilitate electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new developments’.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

	OPTION 1 (recommended) Public EV chargers & cease private EV charger installations	OPTION 2 Both public and private EV charger models	OPTION 3 Private EV chargers & cease Public EV charging models
Timeline	Public charging model Mid 2024: Shortlisted sites assessed for technical feasibility by providers. June 2024: MoU executed by Council to progress utility pole mounted chargers June 2024. Late 2024 Community engagement on feasible locations Private charging model June 2024: Council will not accept new permit applications and existing private EV chargers will be reviewed after 5 years.	Public charging model Same as Option 1 Private charging model Same as Option 3	Public charging model MoU will not be executed by Council and progress of public EV infrastructure will be delayed. Private charging model June 2024: Adoption of an appropriate mechanism to deliver private chargers to mitigate risks. Refer section 6.2.4 Private EV charging permits will be renewed annually, and a review will be undertaken after 4 years, OR when 100 chargers have been installed or sooner if there are adequate alternative public EV chargers are available, whichever comes sooner.
Communication	Public charging model Another community engagement will take place after finalising locations for EV chargers. This will involve a letter drop to residents and businesses in the vicinity of the nominated EV charger locations. Private charging model Officers will communicate and assist in enquiries regarding the Council decision to the community and each applicant / permit holder.	Public charging model Same as Option 1 Private charging model Same as option 2	Public charging model Officers will inform community about council decision to cease public charging infrastructure projects. Private charging model Residents will be invited to nominate to participate in the private EV charging.

12. OFFICER MATERIAL OR GENERAL INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. **May24 Council report**
2. **Independent report private EV charger pilot**

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL – 01 MAY 2024

11.1 COMMUNITY ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: **BRIAN TEE, GENERAL MANAGER, CITY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

PREPARED BY: **SOWMYA NAGARAJ, SENIOR SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE OFFICER**
BETH MCLACHLAN, HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To consider the proposed next steps for the **Private** Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot and **Public** Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger Project.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 A significant portion of the Port Phillip community (~90%) are likely to face challenges installing charging infrastructure for electric vehicles (EV) as they reside in multi-unit dwellings and / or there is a lack of off-street parking.

2.2 A lack of accessible EV charging infrastructure prevents or postpones the decision to purchase an EV. Council has an opportunity to support the uptake of EVs by supporting the installation of charging infrastructure.

2.3 Development of a good public EV charging network will include a diverse range of charging models and technologies (i.e. a mix of slow and fast chargers) to meet various charging requirements. (section 4.5 & 4.6)

2.4 Council officers have been working on projects to support the community's transition to EVs and to incorporate multiple models of charging infrastructure (Section 4.8). The key actions include:

- 2.4.1 Piloting installation of **private kerbside chargers** for residents with no off-street parking through a permit process.
- 2.4.2 Investigating installation of **public utility pole-mounted and kerbside chargers** on on-street car parks.
- 2.4.3 Exploring off-street car parks for installation of **public fast EV chargers**.
- 2.4.4 Advocating private businesses and new developments to provide public charging infrastructure.
- 2.4.5 Development of an EV Infrastructure Policy.

2.5 This paper considers,

- 2.5.1 Council's **Private** Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot and highlights the pilot's key outcomes, benefits, barriers, and the proposed next steps. The proposed recommendation is to discontinue the pilot project and cease accepting new permit applications.
- 2.5.2 Considers on-street **Public** Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Chargers and recommends their installation. These chargers are slow chargers, designed to offer charging solutions similar to home charging options and provide charging opportunities to residents in close proximity to their homes.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Endorse the discontinuation of the **Private** Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot and cease accepting new permit applications and will:

3.1.1 Allow the installed kerb chargers to remain for a minimum 5 years, starting from the date of their installation subject to compliance with permit and other conditions.

3.1.2 Undertake a review prior to the expiry of the 5 year permit period to determine if the kerb charger permits should be extended and, if yes, for how long.

3.2 Support the continued exploration and installation of on-street **Public** Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger technology including using the following criteria to determine the locations for on-street EV Chargers:

3.2.1 Prioritise street locations outside Permit Zones unless the Permit Zone street has no access to off-street parking and there is high demand for EV chargers.

3.2.2 Consider safety implications in determining the location of on-street EV Chargers.

3.2.3 Prioritise the spread of locations across the City of Port Phillip to provide access to EV charging across the municipality.

3.2.4 Consider the outcome of community engagement with residents in the streets where on-street EV chargers are proposed to be installed.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

4.1 Previous Council Notes, Briefings and Meetings

- **June 2018** – Council's *2018 Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy* committed to support uptake of EVs and explore installation of public charging stations in CoPP. (Action 21)
- **June 2021** - Council was briefed on updates of the overall EV program including release of an EOI to install public fast chargers and seek feedback on proposed Kerbside EV Charger Pilot.
- **September 2021** - Council endorsed the Kerbside EV Charger Pilot to permit up to ten residents with no off-street parking to install private kerb chargers. The resolution is below:
  - Council endorses a trial of a 'Kerb Charging Permit' for residents and businesses with no off-street parking to install electric vehicle chargers on Council land.
  - Council authorises the CEO or delegate to provide a 'Kerb Charging Permit' to up to ten properties on a rolling six months basis, up to a maximum permit period of 31 December 2023. At the conclusion of the first six months, the CEO will arrange for a review of the progress of the trial and report back to

Council at the earliest possible opportunity to help shape future policy direction in this area.

- Council endorses the Kerb Charging Facility Application Guidelines as outlined in Attachment 1 and delegates to the CEO the ability to make minor amendments to this document that do not alter its substantive intent, including reflecting any changes required as a result of this Council resolution, prior to publishing them.
- Council notes the next steps associated with implementation and evaluation of the trial.

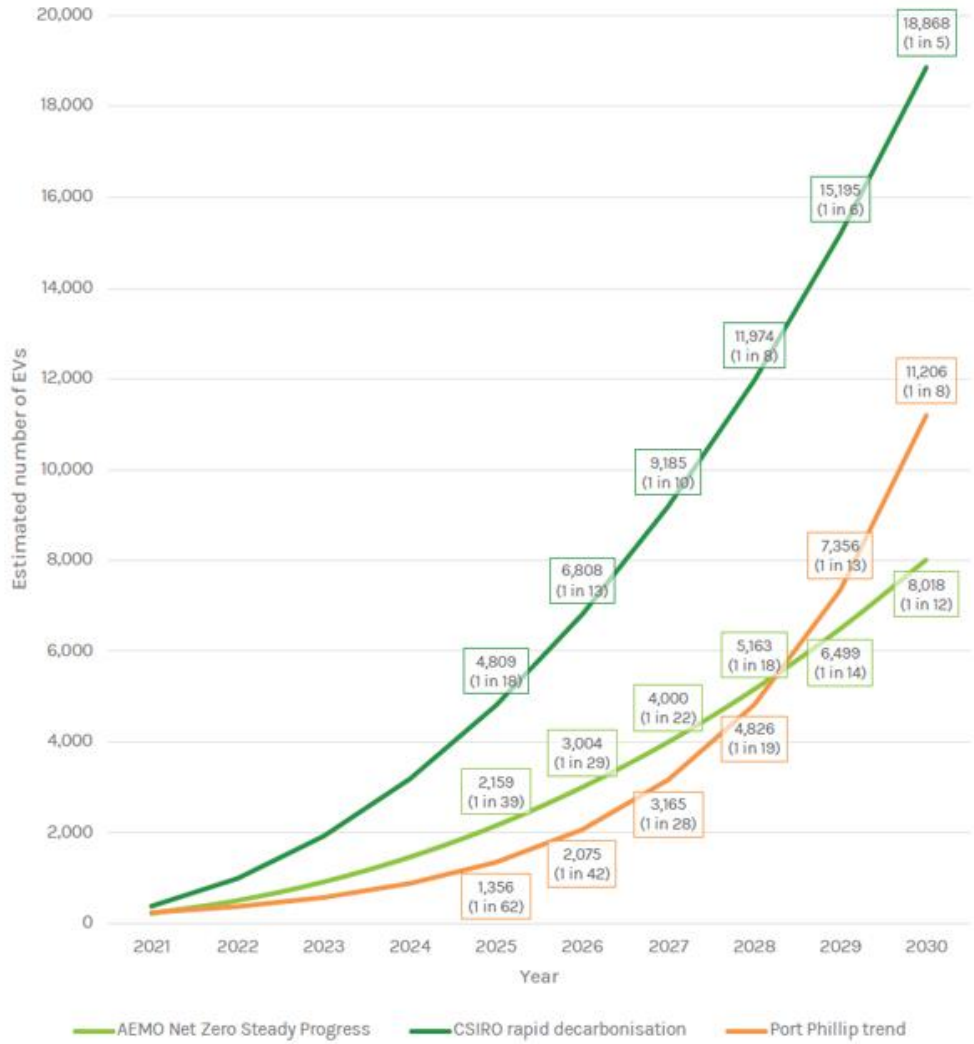
- **November 2021** - Council was briefed on the Public Fast EV charging project and supported an agreement with preferred supplier EVIE Networks.
- **June 2023** - Council was briefed on progress, barriers, and opportunities regarding the EV program.
- **October & November 2023** – Councillors have been notified about the Utility pole mounted charger project via two separate Cr notes.
- **November 2023** – Council endorsed the *Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy* 2023-2028 and committed to support uptake of EVs and explore installation of public charging stations in CoPP. (Initiative 30)
- **March 2024** – Council was briefed on the overall EV program and recommended next steps for the Private Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot and Public Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger Project.

4.2 Of Port Phillip's community greenhouse gas emissions, 13% comes from transport releasing 172,000 tons of CO2 annually. 82% of dwellings in Port Phillip have at least one car. Vehicles powered by fossil fuels contribute significantly to urban air pollution which impacts human health.

4.3 Council's commitment in the *Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2023-28* is to 'accelerate support for the uptake of electric vehicles (EV) in the community by investigating, trialling and facilitating the installation of public charging stations, private charging infrastructure and removing barriers to charging infrastructure in new developments and existing buildings'. (Initiative 30)

4.4 EV Charging Demand

Electric vehicle ownership is growing and the number of EVs registered in Port Phillip has almost doubled since 2019 with almost 340 EVs registered in 2022. Independent consultants estimate that there will be around 11,000 EVs in Port Phillip by 2030. The figure below indicates the forecasted EVs in Port Phillip by 2030. (*source: Institute of Sensible Transport 2023)*



Projected EVs in Port Phillip (Ref: Institute of Sensible Transport 2023)

4.5 Each region will require a mix of different EV charging models for different purposes. The below figure provides an overview of the various EV charging models and charging needs of an EV owner:



(Ref: Institute of Sensible Transport 2023)

4.5.1 Passing through motorist – EV owners requiring a quick charge as the priority is to reach their destination with minimum delays. Super and Ultra-fast chargers (150kW- 350kW) are preferred in these situations and EVs can be charged under 30 minutes. They are most suitable close to high volume arterial roads and motorways with abundant parking space and are often located around petrol stations, roadside amenities etc.

4.5.2 Opportunistic - EV owner travelling to a particular location (e.g., shopping centres, etc) and topping up their car battery while shopping. Fast chargers (25kW – 50kW) are usually located at off-street car parks near supermarkets, activity centres and shopping centres where EVs can be fully charged in an hour.

4.5.3 Local resident – EV owner will rely mostly on charging at home or work and, in the absence of an off-street carpark to install a home charger, will require a slow public charger (7kW – 11kW) usually on on-street car parks located close to their residence.

4.6 EV owners will move between the three different charging categories described above on different occasions. A good public EV charging network comprises of a diversity of charging models to enable strategic land use for installation of EV chargers and accommodate various charging needs of EV owners.

4.7 In Port Phillip, it is estimated that 90% of dwellings may have challenges charging EVs at their homes, due to limited off-street parking and access to infrastructure in multi-unit dwellings.

4.8 CoPP is investigating opportunities to include various types of charging infrastructure as described in section 4.5 to increase the EV charging options in the municipality, including:

4.8.1 **Private** Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot (~7kW)

- Council endorsed the Private Kerbside EV Charger Pilot at its meeting of 1 September 2021. The pilot was designed to offer residents without off-street parking an opportunity to charge their EV outside their home using their own electricity. The pilot aimed to permit the installation of up to 10 kerbside charger units.
- The key highlights of the pilot are:
  a. 50 Expressions of Interest were received, and 12 residents submitted applications which were assessed by Council from March 2022 to February 2024.
  b. 2 applications were rejected due to their location within a flood zone and 10 applications were approved with permits issued.
  c. A total of 8 installations of the kerb charger were completed between September 2022 and March 2024 and 2 are yet to be installed.
- The September 2021 Council resolution provided for a review of the pilot at the end of the six months i.e., in February 2022. While internal monitoring and review was ongoing, including a Councillor briefing in June 2023, overcoming technical requirements associated with the pilot detailed in this report relating to ownership of stranded assets on public land, insurance, legal and other Council risks delayed the issuing of permits and the review. Consequently, the first kerbside charger permit was not issued until October 2022 and, the tenth (final) permit was issued in February 2024 and is yet to be installed. Therefore, the formal review did not commence until February 2024 to allow for a fair understanding and assessment of the pilot outcomes.
- Council engaged the Institute of Sensible Transport (IST) to independently review the pilot. (Attachment 1)
- While the review recognised some benefits of the pilot, the overall recommendation was that 'the pilot cease accepting new applications and all resources be reallocated towards facilitating a public charging network.'
- The recommendation to cease permitting the installation of private kerbside chargers is based on the following:
  a. The pilot guidelines and key requirements exclude a significant portion (over 90%) of the municipality in accessing this charging solution. For instance, multi-dwelling units, renters, and properties in flood overlays are not eligible to participate. This impacts scalability of this type of charging infrastructure across Port Phillip.
  b. Use of limited officer time and resources to administer a complex project for a small percent (~7%) of eligible Port Phillip residents, when

resources could be focussed on facilitating public charging infrastructure for the whole municipality.

c. Public spaces (car parks) are being utilised on an ad hoc basis to permit installation of private kerb chargers.

d. Following discussions with Council's insurance broker (MAV), Council's insurance policy covers Council for any claims related to a kerb charger, however this doesn't extend to installations outside of the pilot. Further discussions and potential premium increase negotiations with MAV will be required to understand the insurance requirements beyond the pilot.

e. Ownership status of the kerbcharger is ambiguous as the current arrangement assigns ownership and responsibility of the kerbcharger to the applicant via a permit condition. However, this doesn't apply when property is sold and poses issues for Council in managing legacy kerbchargers.

f. There is currently only one supplier of the kerbcharger device (compliant equipment for the pilot), which has the potential to restrict market competition and can also pose potential uncertainties in resolving any future maintenance issues.

g. The solution is for an individual household only, which excludes multiple users from using the same asset leading to low asset utilisation.

h. While applicants can charge their EVs at low costs (standard residential electricity rates), they are subject to high capital costs to install the charger in front of their home.

4.8.2 **Public** Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger Project (11kW – 22kW)

- Utility pole chargers are installed on existing street power poles and are generally located adjacent to on-street parking spaces. They can provide single or dual charging ports depending on the type of technology.
- Kerbside chargers are installed close to an existing utility pole on the nature strip/ footpath. The electricity supply is obtained from the utility pole either via underground or overhead connection point.
- These are slow chargers taking anywhere between 2 - 5 hours to obtain a full charge in comparison to around 1 hour or less with a fast charger.
- EV owners can charge their EVs for a fee (via a phone app) by parking at a parking space next to the nominated pole or kerbside charger.
- These technologies can play a significant role especially in medium – high density residential areas where most properties don't have capacity to install private chargers.
- Pole-Mounted chargers also sit a few metres off the ground and, meaning there is less likelihood of flooding associated risks and challenges.



Intellihub's Power pole charger in NSW (ARENA Trial Project)



EVX's Pole mounted charging technology - Dual charging ports which allows for charging of two EVs from the same pole.



Kerbside (off pole) charger with both single and dual charge ports

- Several cities (London, Oslo, Amsterdam, etc) have, for over a decade, managed the provision of kerbside and/ utility pole-mounted public chargers for households that are unable to charge at their residence.
- In the Australian context, on-street utility pole-mounted chargers have been implemented across 9 Council areas in NSW providing charging for residents with no off-street parking via the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) funded trial.
- Council is working with Intellihub, who were awarded a grant of $1.35M by the Victorian Government's Zero Emissions Vehicle Emerging Technologies (ZEVET) program to install 100 EV chargers mounted on power poles across three inner city local government areas, including City of Port Phillip. This program was due to be completed by end of 2024.
- Council is also working with EVX Australia Pty Ltd to investigate pole-mounted chargers.

- Officers have developed the following criteria to determine on-street parking locations for installation of utility pole-mounted or kerbside EV charging infrastructure:
  a. Prioritise streets outside Permit Zones unless the Permit Zone street has no access to off-street parking and there is high demand for EV chargers.
  b. Consider safety implications in determining the location of on-street EV Chargers.
  c. Prioritise the spread of locations across the City of Port Phillip to provide access to EV charging across the municipality.
  d. Consider the outcome of community engagement with residents in the streets where on-street EV chargers are proposed to be installed.
- Following community engagement around 50 sites have been identified across the municipality to provide an equitable spread of EV charging infrastructure in CoPP.These sites will be shared with providers for further technical investigation. It is estimated that of the 50 sites around 30 will meet the feasibility requirements.

4.8.3 **Public** Fast EV Charging Infrastructure Project (50kW -120 kW)

- In November 2021, Council supported an agreement with a preferred supplier of EV charging (EVIE Networks) to install public 'fast' charging infrastructure at no cost to Council. This project focused on identifying sites in off-street car parks to allow the community to charge their vehicle.
- Council off-street car parks have been explored and challenges such as flooding risk and upcoming redevelopment have been identified for several locations. Officers are continuing to explore viable sites and working through these challenges with EVIE Networks.
- Crown land off-street car parks were investigated initially and eliminated due to issues around leasing challenges, flood overlays and inadequate power supply. Discussions with EVIE Networks in early February 2024 confirmed that the restrictions associated with lease agreements on Crown land have been resolved and therefore, this opportunity is being revisited.

4.8.4 EV Infrastructure Policy Development

- Officers are developing a draft Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy. The policy seeks to identify and clarify Council's role in the roll out of EV charging infrastructure to support the uptake of EVs in the community.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

Each Community EV Program project has involved project specific engagement with relevant stakeholders:

5.1 **Private** Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot

Officers have:

5.1.1 updated the webpage (Electric vehicles - City of Port Phillip) regularly to include the key messages and latest information regarding the pilot.

5.1.2 communicated the eligibility requirements, application process and timeframes for permit decisions to the community (including applicants) and the supplier of the Kerb Charger technology.

5.1.3 provided information in response to enquiries from residents regarding the pilot.

5.1.4 continued discussions with MAV to resolve insurance related matters and agreed a model that is acceptable for the period of pilot. (see section 4.8.1)

5.1.5 obtained legal advice on ownership concerns regarding a private asset on public land and other risks associated with the pilot. (see section 4.8.1)

5.2 **Public** Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger Project

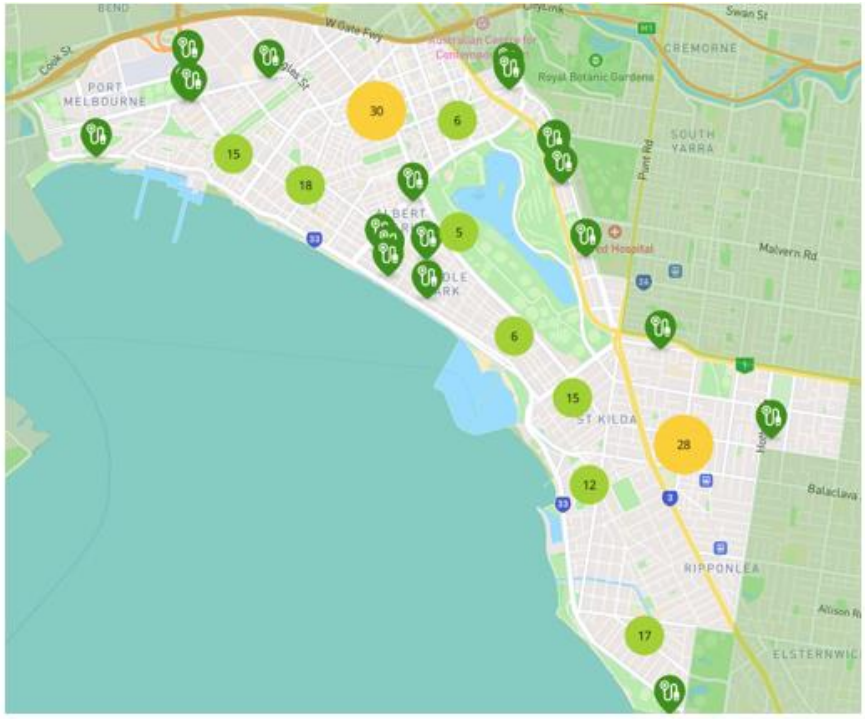
5.2.1 Officers continue to engage with Councils in NSW that participated in their Utility Pole-Mounted Charger Trial to consider key learnings and feedback from community and other key stakeholders.

5.2.2 Officers have:

- Had regular internal engagement to finalise locations, parking restrictions and signage requirements.
- Had ongoing discussions with charging technology providers Intellihub and EVX to identify opportunities.
- Advocated to regulatory authorities and State government departments (DECCA) to enable faster resolution of issues.

5.2.3 In November/December 2023 Council undertook Community consultation via our 'Have your say' webpage to seek suggestions on the locations of utility pole-mounted EV chargers. (Attachment 2).

5.2.4 Council heard from 89 contributors from most suburbs in Port Phillip. Most contributions were from Port Melbourne, St. Kilda and South Melbourne. 173 locations were suggested and 51% of respondents suggested more than one location. (see below figure)



Community consultation feedback on potential charging locations in CoPP

5.3 **Public** Fast EV Charging Infrastructure Project

Officers have had:

5.3.1 Regular internal engagements with key teams to identify opportunities, risks, future plans of potential sites for public EV charging.

5.3.2 Ongoing discussions and advocacy to Melbourne Water and State Government (DECCA) regarding flood impact, risks, safety and regulations associated with EV chargers.

5.3.3 Discussions with EVIE Networks (preferred supplier) regarding potential opportunities and learnings.

5.3.4 Investigated private partnership opportunities with Ampol, Coles, etc to facilitate public EV charging with no positive response.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Legal and risk implications to Council if the Kerbside EV Charger Pilot continues beyond the pilot are listed below:

6.1.1 Council resources will not be sufficiently focused on delivering public charging network for the Port Phillip community due to the time, efforts, and complexity of the private kerbcharger installation project that meets demands of only around 7% of the community.

6.1.2 Challenges with future street planning and competition for parking spaces will need to be managed.

6.1.3 Insurance requirements remain unclear for new installations beyond the pilot which increases Council's risk exposure.

6.1.4 Uncertain ownership arrangements of kerbchargers suggest compliance, responsibility and legacy issues will remain a challenge.

6.1.5 Ambiguity regarding who is responsible (Council/ Kerbcharge provider) to register with Dial Before You Dig post installation of chargers is still unresolved.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 **Private** Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot

7.1.1 The project does not require any capital investment from Council, however, there is significant requirement of officer time in delivering this project as well as minor legal counsel costs.

7.2 **Public** Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger Project

7.2.1 There will be no capital costs to Council to install, operate and maintain the proposed public charging infrastructure. These costs will be managed by the provider of the technology.

7.2.2 Council's EV program has budget allocated to accommodate costs associated with community engagement activities and changes to parking (signage installation, line marking etc).

7.3 **Public** Fast EV Charging Infrastructure Project

7.3.1 There are no capital costs to Council to install, operate and maintain the proposed public charging infrastructure.

7.3.2 Council's EV Program's budget will cover costs for legal advice, electricity distribution network fees and other minor infrastructure upgrades.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 Lower community greenhouse gas emissions and improved air quality through transition to EVs.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 The Community Electric Vehicle Charging Program responds to demands of our community to support their uptake of EVs and seeks to provide convenient charging opportunities.

9.2 Public EV charging can contribute to improved economic activity for businesses around the vicinity of charging locations as the EV owners are likely to visit a nearby café, supermarket, etc while charging their EV.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 Community Electric Vehicle Program aligns with Strategic Action 3 – Sustainable Port Phillip of the adopted Council Plan 2012-31.

10.2 The *Act and Adapt Strategy*, adopted in 2018 and reviewed in 2023 includes commitments to support uptake of EVs and explore installation of public charging stations in CoPP.

10.3 The Council Plan 2021-31 includes a Community Electric Vehicle Charging Program operating project to facilitate uptake of electric vehicle ownership. This action supports the Council and Victorian Government targets to achieve net zero community emissions by 2050.

10.4 *Move, Connect, Live* Action 42 say that Council will 'Support the use of electric vehicles through a variety of measures including the investigation of options to use the planning scheme to facilitate electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new developments'.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

TIMELINE

11.1 **Private** Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Pilot

11.1.1 If the recommendation to not proceed with the private Kerbside EV Charger Pilot is adopted the installation of private EV infrastructure on Council land will cease at the end of the pilot. This means Council would not expand this pilot to become a broader program and will cease accepting new permit applications going forward.

11.1.2 Currently, the kerb chargers have permits valid for a period of 1 year. Below are proposed next steps for the management of existing kerb chargers permitted in the pilot.

- Allow the kerb chargers installed to remain for a minimum period of 5 years starting from the date of their installation.
- Council will issue a Street Occupation Permit ($106 + cpi p.a.) for the remainder of their 5 year permit period to each of the pilot participants.
- Council will undertake a review prior to the expiry of the 5 year permit period to consider:
    a. The level of available alternative public charging infrastructure in the municipality (specifically in the vicinity of the existing kerbside chargers)
    b. Ensure Council's insurance coverage remains valid.
    c. Any risks such as flood overlays that impact the kerb charger locations based on updated flood mapping made available during the validity period of the permit.

d. Compliance of all terms and conditions by the permit holder that are detailed in the Permits issued by Council.

e. If the property has been sold or if the owner does not want to continue with the permit.

- The above criteria will inform the decision to renew or not renew the permit. If decision is made to not renew the permit, the removal of the kerbcharger will be required in accordance with the terms and conditions in the Street Occupation Permit.

11.2 **Public** Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside EV Charger Project

11.2.1 The proposed approach for this program.

- Shortlisted and approved sites (seeking an equitable spread across the municipality) will be shared with providers to undertake technical feasibility in April - May 2024.
- Progressing the nominated locations would be informed by feedback from the impacted community via a community engagement undertaken in the affected streets / locale between June – September 2024.
- An acceptance rate of 51% of those who provided feedback will be required with a minimum 10% response rate for it to be a valid survey. This is consistent with Council's protocol for changes to on-street parking conditions.

11.3 COMMUNICATION

11.3.1 Kerbside **Private** EV Charger Pilot – Officers will communicate and assist in enquiries regarding the Council decision of the outcome of the pilot and next steps to the community and each applicant / permit holder.

11.3.2 Utility Pole-Mounted and Kerbside **Public** Charging Project – Another community engagement phase for this project will take place after finalising locations for EV chargers. This will involve a letter drop to residents and businesses in the vicinity of the nominated EV charger locations.

12. OFFICER MATERIAL OR GENERAL INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

TRIM FILE NO:
ATTACHMENTS

1. **Kerbside EV charger independent review**
2. **Community consultation summary**



Kerbside Charger Review - Final

Prepared for Port Phillip City Council 2024

Institute for Sensible Transport

The Institute for Sensible Transport acknowledges the people of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung language group of the eastern Kulin Nation on whose unceded lands we work.

We respectfully acknowledge their Ancestors and Elders, past and present.

We also acknowledge the Traditional Custodians and their Ancestors of the lands and waters across Australia where we conduct our business.

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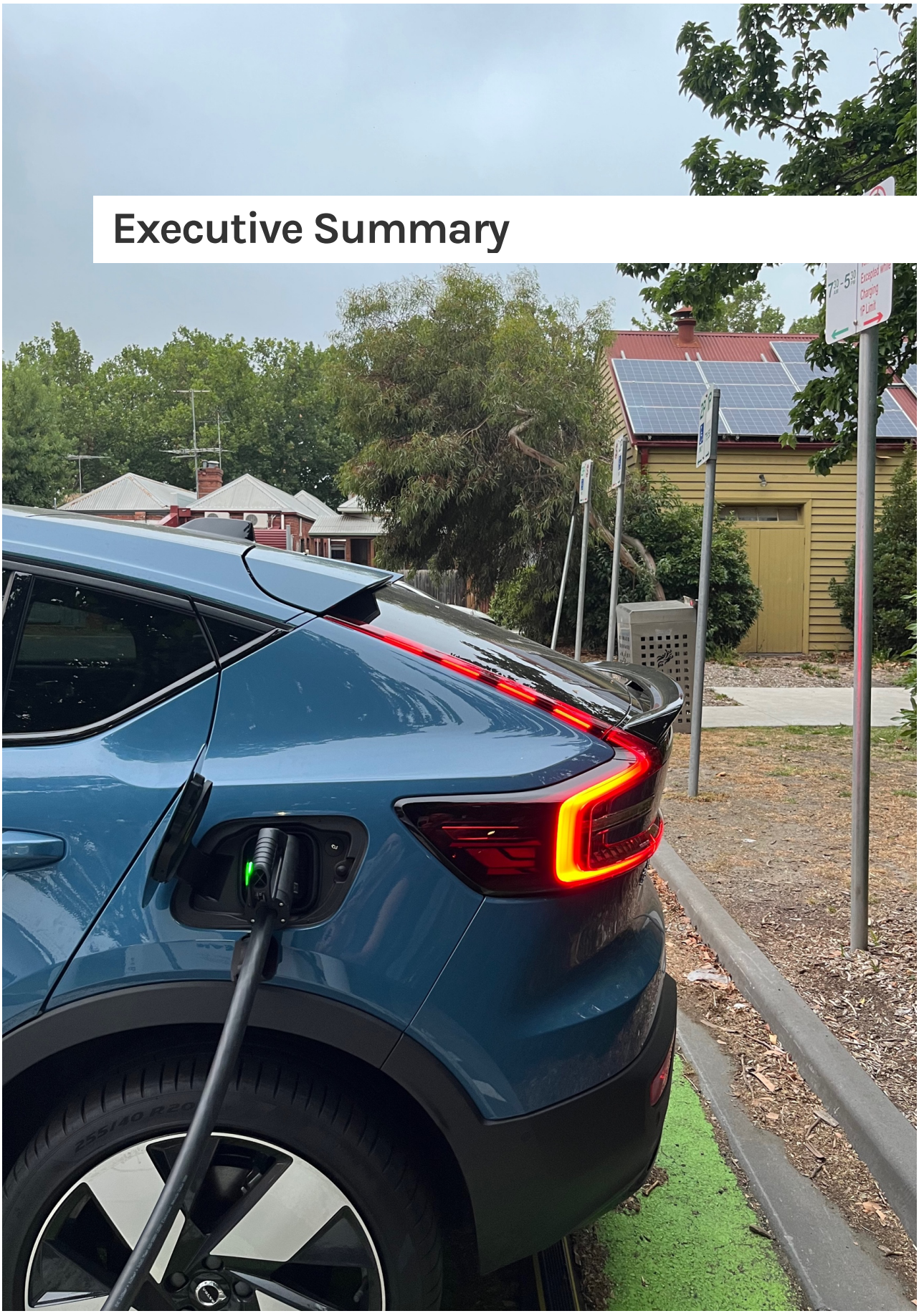
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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to assess the performance of the Kerbside Electric Vehicle (EV) charger Pilot and provide advice on the future of this Pilot. In mid-2021, the City of Port Phillip established a Kerbside Charger Pilot, as a way of offering residents living in single dwelling houses without off street parking the opportunity to connect a kerbside EV charger to their domestic power supply. To the authors knowledge, this is the first example of such a program.

Electric vehicle ownership is growing and much of Port Phillip's housing lack charging potential

Electric vehicle ownership is rising rapidly in Australia. In 2023, ~8% of new vehicles sold in Australia were EVs. These vehicles require charging, and this is most commonly undertaken in the driveway/garage of a person's dwelling. The majority of homes in Port Phillip do not have easy access to charging. As more people in Port Phillip seek to transition to an EV, a growing need to find effective solutions for this significant cohort of the Port Phillip community has become clear.

Anecdotally, some Port Phillip residents with EVs are reporting travelling to adjoining municipalities to access their charging network, and spend while charging. This has the potential to negatively impact businesses in Port Phillip.

As more people in Port Phillip seek to transition to an EV, a growing need to find effective solutions for those without a private garage has become clear.

Kerbside charging Pilot

While well intentioned, innovative and supporting a small number of households to charge directly outside their home, the program has failed in a number of important areas. It has failed to:

- Provide a cost effective solution to residents, compared to more conventional public charging opportunities;
- Scale to meet sharply rising demand for EVs;
- Cover the large number of people (~90% of the residents of Port Phillip) who do not meet the Pilot's inclusion criteria;
- Use staff time effectively. The high administrative and compliance burden of the system is not justified, based on the number of installs that have been achieved. This has also detracted the attention of staff to develop a public charging network.

Ultimately, the clear lesson from this Pilot is that installing a private electrical asset, exclusively for private use, on public land is both highly unusual and inordinately complex. This may explain why no other jurisdiction has attempted such a program.

The future Pilot was subject to Council meeting on the 1st September, 2021. During this meeting, it was apparent that there was significant ambiguity and divergent views on key aspects of the Pilot. Specifically, there was confusion among participants of the meeting as to who would bear the cost of purchase and installation of the first five Kerb Charge devices during the trial.

Cities that have been able to achieve a greater number of charging opportunities for residents have generally opted for public chargers. These chargers, which are either slow chargers (intended for long stay parking), or faster chargers in shorter duration bays, have achieved greater success at building a charging network. Importantly, these cities have been able to achieve better outcomes for residents, at lower staff costs, per charger. As public chargers, each plug may support up to 10 charging sessions per day, helping to service a much greater number of people.



1. Introduction and background



The City of Port Phillip understands the importance of supporting the community's transition to low carbon transport. The provision of electric vehicle charging is a critical element in this transition.

Approximately 12% of Port Phillip's community greenhouse gas emissions are generated by automotive transport, releasing 172,000 tonnes of CO_2 annually. Vehicles powered by fossil fuels also contribute significantly to urban air pollution, which impacts human health.

Although 70% of Port Phillip households own at least one car, approximately 90% of households are classified as medium to high density. Many properties in Port Phillip do not have off-street parking and/or the capacity to retrofit EV chargers and are unable to install EV charging infrastructure within their properties. The majority of dwellings in Port Phillip are flats and apartments, at 71% of dwellings. Around 21% of dwellings are semi-detached, according to the 2021 Census.

A lack of EV charging infrastructure prevents or postpones the decision to purchase an electric vehicle.[1] Council is committed to supporting the uptake of EVs through facilitating the installation of charging infrastructure.

In mid-2021, the City of Port Phillip established a Kerbside EV Charger Pilot, as a way of offering residents living in freestanding housing without off street parking the opportunity to connect a kerbside charger to their domestic power supply. This report reviews this Pilot.

1.1 What does this report do?

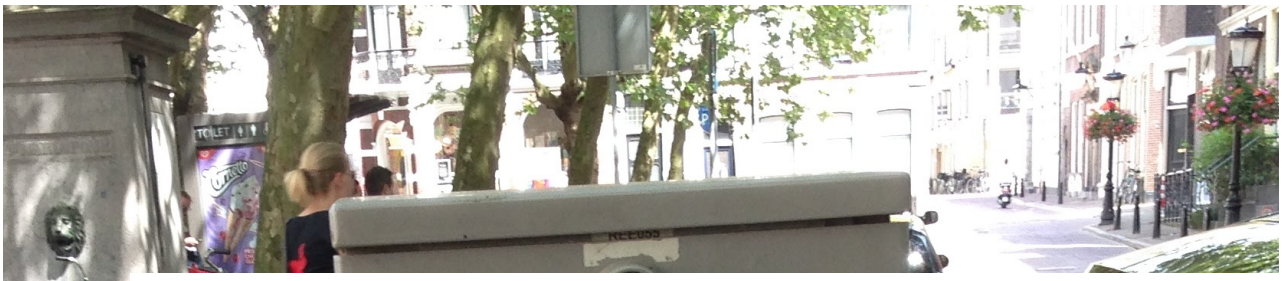
This report is focused on reviewing the kerbside charging Pilot and provides an independent and balanced review of the Pilot project including:

- The Pilot's successes, limitations and barriers.
- Assessment of potential for larger scale rollout and a recommendation for its continuation (and in what form) or cessation.

This report is designed to assist Council determine the future of the kerbside charging Pilot.

This project is important because a lack of easy to access chargers is holding back the community's transition to cleaner transport.

[1] https://electricvehiclecouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2021-EVC-carsales-Consumer-attitudes-survey-web.pdf



2. Kerbside charger Pilot: An overview



This section provides an overview of the kerbside EV charger Pilot, its benefits, limitations and potential for increasing its scale.

2.1 Our approach

A series of activities were undertaken by the authors to gain a strong understanding of the benefits and limitations of the kerbside EV charger pilot. This process involved:

- An analysis of housing typology in Port Phillip, to better understand how many households are likely to require charging infrastructure in the public domain.
- A desktop review of Council processes associated with the administration of the kerbside charging Pilot.
- Interviews with Council staff involved in the Pilot.
- A review of practices employed by other councils to provide access to charging, for those not able to charge an EV on their property.
- Interviews with households that had installed a kerbside charger to understand what they liked about the Pilot and what could be done to improve charger access in the future.

The above process will enable an assessment of the kerbside EV charger pilot in terms of its:

- Benefits/successes
- Limitations
- Barriers
- Potential for increasing its scale.

2.2 Kerbside charger Pilot – an introduction

A kerbside charging Pilot project was launched by Council in mid-2021. The Pilot was designed to offer residents of freestanding (either separated or semi-detached) homes in the City of Port Phillip without off street parking an opportunity to charge their EV outside their home using their own electricity.

Under the Pilot, residents and businesses[2] who do not have access to off-street parking may apply to install a conduit running under the footpath, to an outlet near the kerb. This connects a charging unit installed on the private property (and connected to the properties electricity supply) to their vehicle via the conduit and kerbside outlet.

Residents pay around $7,000 to have a charger placed outside their home on the kerbside, for their exclusive use. Some installations have cost more than $7,000 due to more complex electrical work, such as the upgrade of switch boards. Ten applications have been approved for installation as part of this program.

Residents pay around $7,000 to have a charger placed outside their home on the kerbside, for their exclusive use. Ten applications have been approved for installation as part of this program.



Figure 1 Kerbside EV charger for private use, with the provider Rod Walker of Kerb Charge

Source: City of Port Phillip

[2] Businesses were eligible under the trial, although no expressions of interest or applications were received from a business.

2.2.1 Criteria

The following criteria are used to exclude applicants that have a property not considered suitable for the kerbside EV charger Pilot:

- Applicants for properties which are part of a multi-property development are **ineligible**. This includes all properties with an Owners Corporation.
- Applicants who have access to off-street parking on their premise are **ineligible**.
- Applications for any installations on the following roads will be **declined**:
  - Declared Roads – map available here https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/traffic-and-road-use/road-network-and-performance/maps-of-declared-roads
  - Roads with tramways,
  - Roads with cycle lanes between the footpath and car parking, or
  - Strategic Cycling Corridors – map available here https://dtp.vic.gov.au/getting-around/walking-and-cycling/strategic-cycling-corridors .
- Applicants whose property is subject to a Special Building Overlay (which are Melbourne Water flood zones) are **ineligible**.
- Applicants whose property is subject to a Heritage Overlay are **liable for an additional $200** permit application fee.
- Can only be installed into a parking space the applicant can park in without restriction. Parking spaces must have either unlimited duration of stay, or the resident must be eligible for a residential parking permit. The parking space must not be subject to parking fees. Applicants who do not have the right to park in front of their property without restriction are **ineligible**.
- The footpath adjacent to the property must be at least 1.8 metres wide. Applications for installations in footpaths below this width are **ineligible**.

The Pilot guidelines stipulate the maximum dimensions, and operational features of devices. These stipulations limit residents to only one supplier; *Kerb Charge*, which is the only compliant device available in the Australian market, and to our knowledge, worldwide. The device itself, is also used in illustrations in the Pilot guidelines document.

The Pilot has limited residents to only one device, *Kerb Charge*, which is the only compliant device available in the Australian market.

The Pilot guidelines placed restrictions on who can apply, as identified in Section 2.2.1. This notably excluded those who live in multi-dwelling properties, and those who have off-street parking. It also placed restrictions on where units can be installed (placing exclusion buffers around many footpath and street elements).

The Pilot guidelines excluded those who live in multi-dwellings.

2.3 Council meeting discussing the Kerbside Pilot

The 'Community Electric Vehicle Charging Permit' Trial[3] was discussed at the 1 September 2021 Council meeting. Council received submissions from three individuals, including Rod Walker, the designer of the *Kerb Charge* device. Mr Walker described it as *'the first personal rather than public on-street electric vehicle charging'* facility. Mr Walker further stated that he had been informed it was unique and *'quite probably the first anywhere [worldwide]'*. Mr Walker suggested that the length of the trial, being two years, and the maximum of five residents, as both having the potential to delay EV adoption in Port Phillip. Mr Walker said that he would install the equipment for free for the trial

[3] In 2021 the kerbside charger program was known as a trial, but has subsequently been termed a Pilot.

period. According to statements by Mr Walker, after the trial, residents can elect to keep for half price, or have the equipment removed at *Kerb Charge*'s cost (this appears to be based on an assumption the trial would convert to a permanent program).

It was clear during the Council meeting that there was significant ambiguity and divergent views as to who would bear the cost of purchase and installation of the first five *Kerb Charge* devices during the trial.

Review of the transcript of the Council meeting reveals that that there was significant ambiguity and divergent views as to who would bear the cost of purchase and installation of the first five Kerb Charge devices during the trial. Our analysis of the video of the meeting shows that Councillors spoke to the motion with the understanding that Mr Walker would provide the *Kerb Charge* units installed under the trial at no cost to the residents. Council officers spoke with the understanding that this was a commercial negotiation between residents and the supplier, and should not affect the design of the trial. Put simply, Councillors were of the understanding there would be no cost to residents, while Council staff considered the cost to be determined via a negotiation between Kerb Charge and the resident. A timestamped transcript of the relevant passages is shown in Appendix 1.

To summarise debate during meeting, Councillors discussed the following items related to the Trial:

- The length of the Trial. Council officers stated that two-year timeframe was chosen due to costs incurred by residents. The cost of install and equipment is comparable to that of fuel over two years. Council officers suggested that it would be $4,000 to $5,000 per install, if the residents were expected to pay costs.
- It was stated that the Trial would end on 31 December 2023. At the end of the Trial the permits would expire, and residents would be required to remove equipment if the Trial were not continued as an ongoing process. Council did not have a position on refunds for early termination of the Trial.
- The time between application and installation. The Council officer suggested that they expected it to take between two and three months from application to installation.
- When asked why five was chosen, the Council officer responded that it was felt to be high enough to provide good data.
- One Councillor asked about the sense of entitlement which may arise to park in the bay in which the charger is positioned (anyone can park in the bay but only the householder who has installed the charger can charge their vehicle). Council officers responded that the guidelines make it clear that there are no additional rights (i.e., no exclusive use of the parking bay).
- Councillor Cunsolo suggested increasing the number as 27 people had shown interest. The Council officer responded that the only risk was that this equipment may not be wanted in the public realm. Mr Walker suggested he would provide for up to five. Councillor Pearl moved an amendment to increase the number from five to ten. Councillor Cunsolo seconded the motion. This was justified due to perceived demand and to better understand community attitudes and desires.
- Councillors spoke on an understanding that Mr Walker would not charge up-front costs to the first five residents. This was based on statements he gave earlier in the meeting, discussed above.

Under the Pilot, the City of Port Phillip charges $124 for a permit application; $100 per year to retain the permit; and a $500 bond. Despite Officers' estimations of installation costs of between $4,000 to $5,000, the installation of equipment cost has been reported as around $7,000. Over a ten-year period (with 0% discount rate) the annual cost is approx. $812, excluding electricity use, maintenance and insurance.

Over a ten-year period the annual cost is approx. $812, excluding use costs.

Box 1 provides a summary of the key numbers related to the kerbside Pilot.

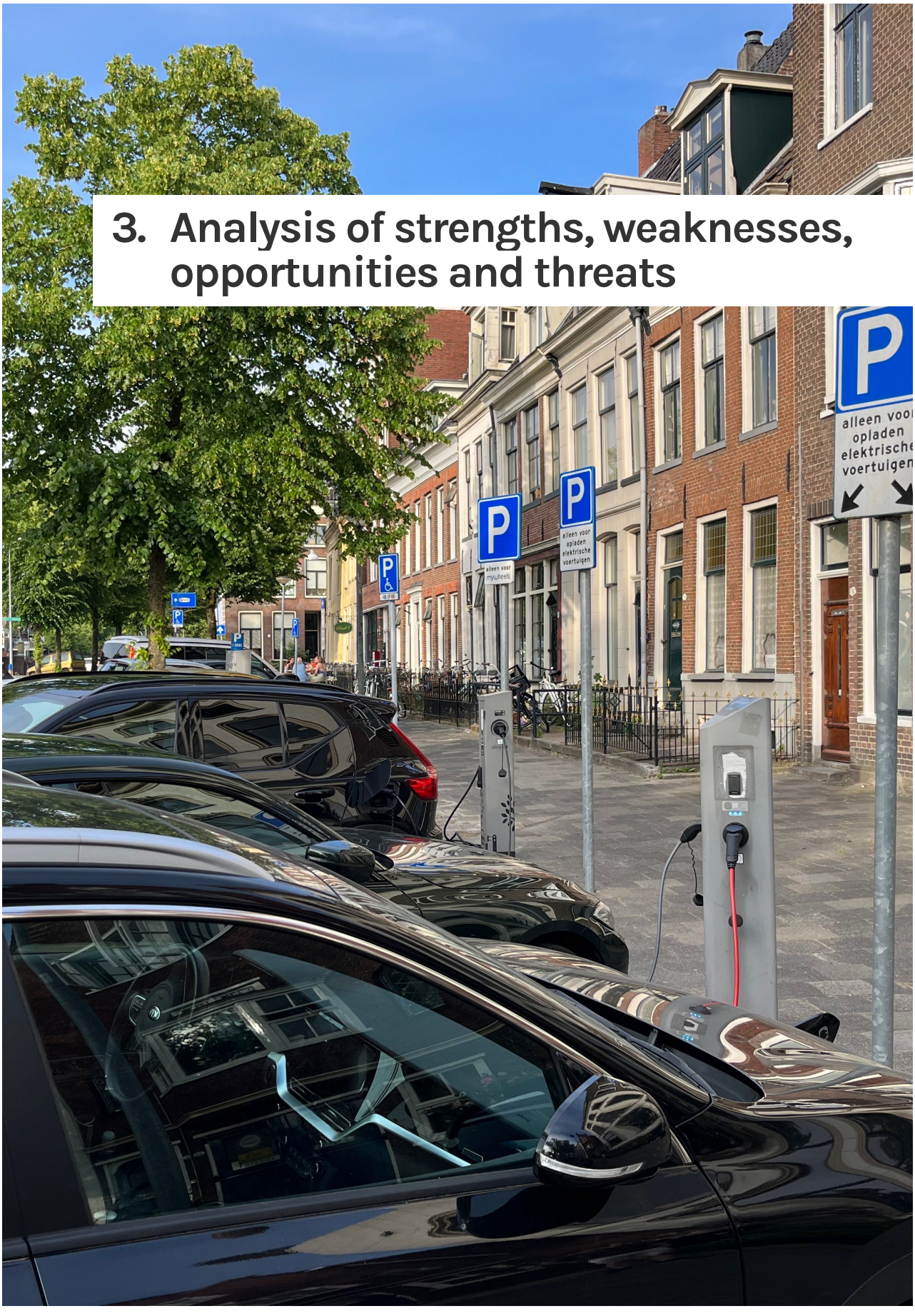
Kerbside Pilot – key numbers

As of March, 2024, the kerbside Pilot has had:

- ~50 Expressions of Interest from the community over more than 2.5 years.
- 12 applications from interested residents.
- 10 approved applications, with two rejected due to their location within a flood zone.
- Seven installations have been completed.

Box 1 Kerbside Pilot - key numbers

Application times for the first four applications were six or more months, which is far longer than estimated by Council officers. This was due to unexpected issues and delays, however, more recent applications were processed quicker.



3. Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

This section provides a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

A SWOT analysis of the kerbside charging Pilot shown in Figure 2.

3.1 Benefits of the Pilot

The Pilot's most significant benefit is that it has provided Council an opportunity to understand the complexities of installing a private use object in the public realm. This benefit has the potential to expand beyond the City of Port Phillip, by helping other local governments, in Victoria and elsewhere, of the complexity associated with the approvals and management process. Following the completion of the Pilot, it is likely many local governments will ask the City of Port Phillip of their experience, to assist them in making decisions regarding their own actions regarding EV charging.

Additionally, the Pilot benefited seven Port Phillip households by providing them with the opportunity to charge their EV directly outside their home.

3.1.1 Interviews with residents with a Kerb Charge device

All residents that have had a Kerb Charge installed were invited to participate in an interview with the report authors. The key themes to emerge from these discussions were highly consistent. Key findings:

- Enjoy the convenience of charging outside their home.
- Found Kerb Charge easily to deal with. Most spoke very highly of Rod Walker.
- Only in rare instances was the resident blocked from their charger by another vehicle.
- Participants of the Pilot would have liked the approval process to be faster and more transparent about the key steps and costs.

Strengths/benefits	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
• Very convenient to participating residents, as they can charge from their own equipment, in front of their house. • Capability to reduce instances of residents running electricty cables from their property across the footpath to their vehicle. • Very low cost for electricity as they can use standard tariff electricity (or solar, where applicable). • Low capital cost to Council. • Provided Council wih a first hand experience of managing a program in which a private use device is installed in the public domain.	• High capital costs to residents. • Multi-dwelling units excluded from participation. • Renters unlikely to be able to participate. • Low capacity to scale, due to most dwellings being ineligible. • Individual solution, which excludes multiple users from using the same asset (low asset utilisation) • Not all properties will be able to participate due to exclusion criteria (e.g., flood zones). • Highly complex for Council to administer, due to time consuming and non-automated processes to assess applications. • Council having to provide insurance coverage and associated risks. • Insurance coverage remains unclear ofr installations beyond the Pilot.	• Can support households without off-street car parking to charge their EVs. • Allows Vehicle to Home connections, so households may be able to power their home via their vehicle's battery in the future.	• Council can lose some control of decision making in public realm, as parking spaces are legally subject to private interest. • Potential for those who install equipment to feel a sense of entitlement or ownership over the space in front of their home. • Potential for unreliability in circumstances where residents are unable to access the space connected to their charging equipment, at the time they need to charge. • Only one compliant supplier could be seen to weaken market competition and limit resolution of any installation or maintenance issues in the future. • Ground level devices have increased susceptibility to flooding while in use. • Limited environmental benefit if users do not by 100% renewable energy. • Lack of certainty regarding long term asset ownership/responsibility.

Figure 2 SWOT Analysis of the kerbside Pilot

3.1.2 Unrealised benefits

The Pilot had several potential benefits which were not realised, including being a low cost, simple way for home owners to access kerbside charging.

Unfortunately, these purported benefits remain largely unrealised. The complexity of the scheme has been a drain on Council resources, requiring a larger than anticipated staffing. This has regrettably hampered Council's ability to facilitate a public charging network. Similarly, installation costs have been around 40% higher than envisaged ($7,000 compared to $5,000), reducing the financial benefits to residents.

3.2 Limitations of the Pilot

Council's experience since mid-2021 has demonstrated a number of important limitations exist with the kerbside Pilot. The magnitude of these limitations is difficult to overstate, as they fundamentally limit the City of Port Phillip's ability to meet its objectives related to the enabling residents to transition their vehicles to EV.

The following provides a brief discussion of the key limitations associated with the kerbside Pilot.

3.2.1 Excludes a large number of residents due to housing type

Only households that live in single dwelling homes are eligible to apply. This excludes a significant proportion of Port Phillip's residents. In fact, it is estimated as little as 11% of Port Phillip's dwellings meet the criteria (i.e., owner-occupied detached or semi-detached dwellings). As highlighted below, this drops to around 7% when considering flood zones. As will be discussed below, siting requirements and provision of off-street car parking is likely to exclude many of these.

Renters are essentially excluded from the Pilot, as are any residents living in a multi-dwelling development, even if they lack off-street parking.

3.2.2 Excludes a large proportion of the City of Port Phillip

Flood zones cover a significant proportion of the City of Port Phillip. These areas are excluded from the Pilot. When accounting for flood zones, it is likely that only around 7% of dwellings meet the criteria of the Pilot. Additionally, households that live near a tram stop, intersection or other context in which it makes it difficult to install a charger, are excluded from the Pilot. Finally, renters, which constitute 44% of the Port Phillip population are effectively excluded from the program due to the lack of long term certainty regarding their residential address. Compounding this, even in the unlikely event that a renter was willing to invest in a kerbside charger, landlord approval (and insurance) represents an additional barrier. Figure 3 shows the areas liable for flooding in the City of Port Phillip.

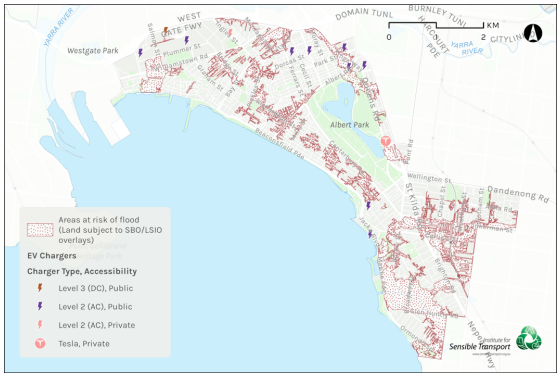


Figure 3 Areas liable to flooding in the City of Port Phillip

Source: DPE, Plugshare

The Pilot excludes most of the 90% of dwellings which may have difficulty in accessing off-street charging, limiting its ability to scale.

3.2.3 Time consuming for Council staff

There are few, if any, programs that allow a resident to install electrical infrastructure for their exclusive use, in the public realm. This is what the kerbside charger Pilot involves. The complexities associated

with the Pilot has resulted in staff time being diverted away from establishing more effective, public charging opportunities.

Additionally, the existing permit based system is highly complex for enforcement of permit conditions. This must take place at multiple points in the process (pre, during and post installation). Ultimately, the staff time must be measured against the Pilot's outcomes (i.e., how many installations it achieves).

3.2.4 Ownership challenges

Despite having a condition in the permit that the ownership and responsibility of charger sits with the permit holder, there is ambiguity of ownership especially when a home is sold that has participated in the Pilot.

Establishing ownership of charger to applicant is legally possible through section 121 agreement. Although this has the benefit to tie the asset to the property, it involves considerable administrative work, requirement of legal counsel to draft all paper work and associated costs. Council received legal advice and based on this advice, it was determined there would be a condition (no. 13) in the street occupation permit that states:

"Upon installation of the kerbside charger, ownership and responsibility of the kerbside charger rests solely with the permit holder for the duration the permit is valid."

3.2.5 Insurance requirements beyond the Pilot

The current arrangement Council have with the MAV will not be applicable for any installations beyond the Pilot. The insurance coverage will continue for the kerbside chargers installed as part of the Pilot however.

3.2.6 Upfront costs

Even for those residents who do meet all the criteria may not be able to participate due to the upfront costs. The current costs are more than 10% of the cost of purchasing a new EV (BYD ATTO 3), and represents the equivalent of buying enough electricity to travel over 80,000km at 40 cents per kWh. It is highly likely that some residents chose not to participate due to the high upfront costs associated with installing the kerb charger including permit costs. The authors are not aware of any other program, anywhere in the world, in which a household or individual is faced with these costs when seeking to charge their EV.

3.2.7 One supplier

There is only one supplier of compliant equipment, which can be seen to limit market competition. The Pilot appears to be built around a single product from a single supplier. This has locked in a single design, locked to a single product, and weakens the ability for competitors with different designs.

3.2.8 Potential conflict between residents

The installation of privately accessibly charging equipment into the public realm, at high cost to the individual, may generate a sense of entitlement to use that space exclusively. Community attitudes surrounding on-street parking are already fraught, with changes to parking management being a contentious issue. This has the potential to cause conflict. User reliability is related to this, with anyone able to park in any spot, but EV owners only able to charge in one particular spot. EV owners, who desperately need a charge may be in a dilemma, of waiting and hoping, or travelling to fast-charging which could be some distance away (increasing vehicle kilometres travelled and user cost).

3.3 Potential to increase scale

This analysis has found that only around 7% of Port Phillip's dwellings are likely to meet the criteria of the kerbside Pilot (due to dwelling criteria combined with flood zones). Given the sharp increase in demand for EVs over the next decade, the Pilot cannot increase in scale necessary to meet expected demand.

The Pilot is likely to face significant hurdles in transforming into a large-scale project.

Figure 4 provides an indication of the growth rate for EVs owned by Port Phillip residents. Given the introduction of lower cost EVs into the Australian market, coupled with the new fuel efficiency standards for new vehicles expected to take effect from early 2025, the demand for EVs among Port Phillip residents is expected to continue its sharp rise. By 2030, it can be expected that there may be at least 11,000 EVs in Port Phillip. It should be noted that this is twice as many cars as are currently owned by separated housing households, and therefore at least half would be owned by people living in a dwelling with constrained EV charging capability.

The rapid rise in demand for EVs in Port Phillip will further expose the serious limitations in the ability of the kerbside Pilot to scale.

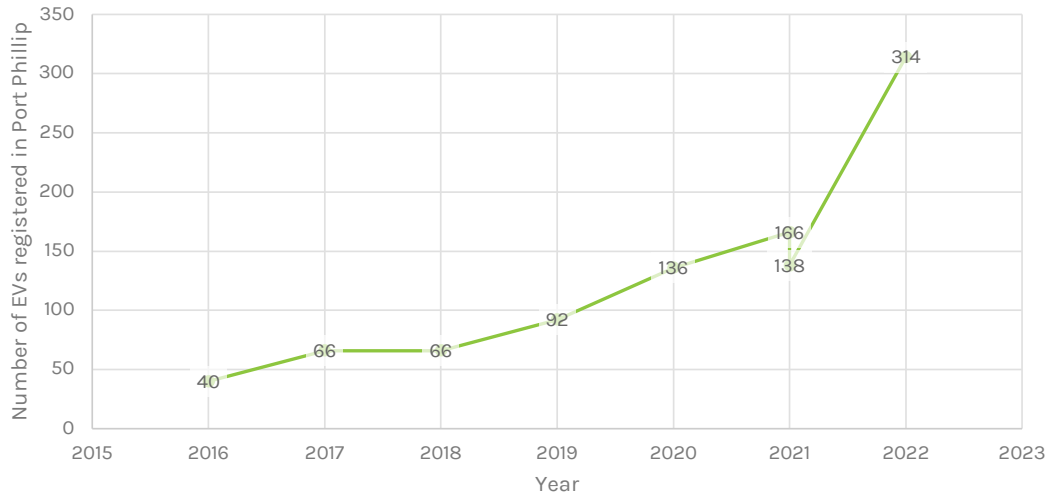


Figure 4 Growth of EV ownership among Port Phillip residents

Projected levels of EV ownership are shown in Figure 5.

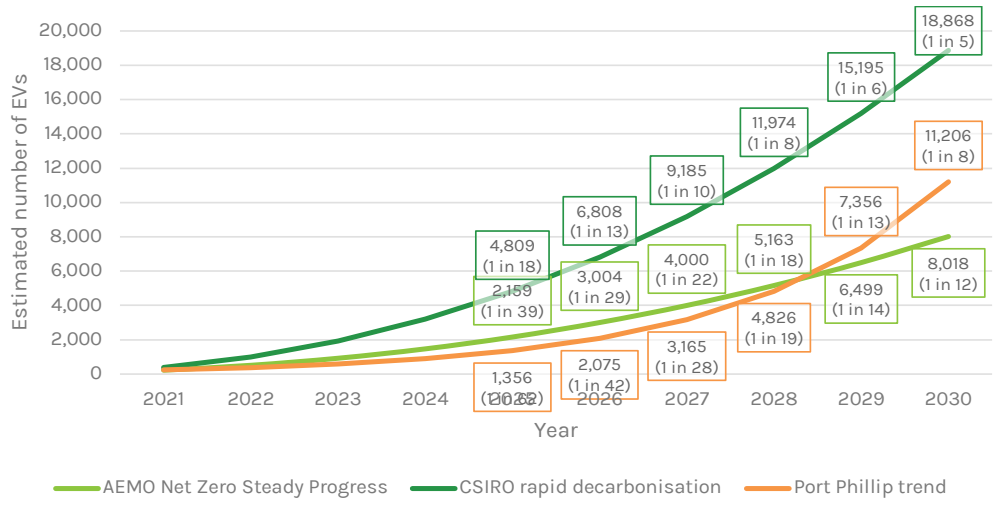
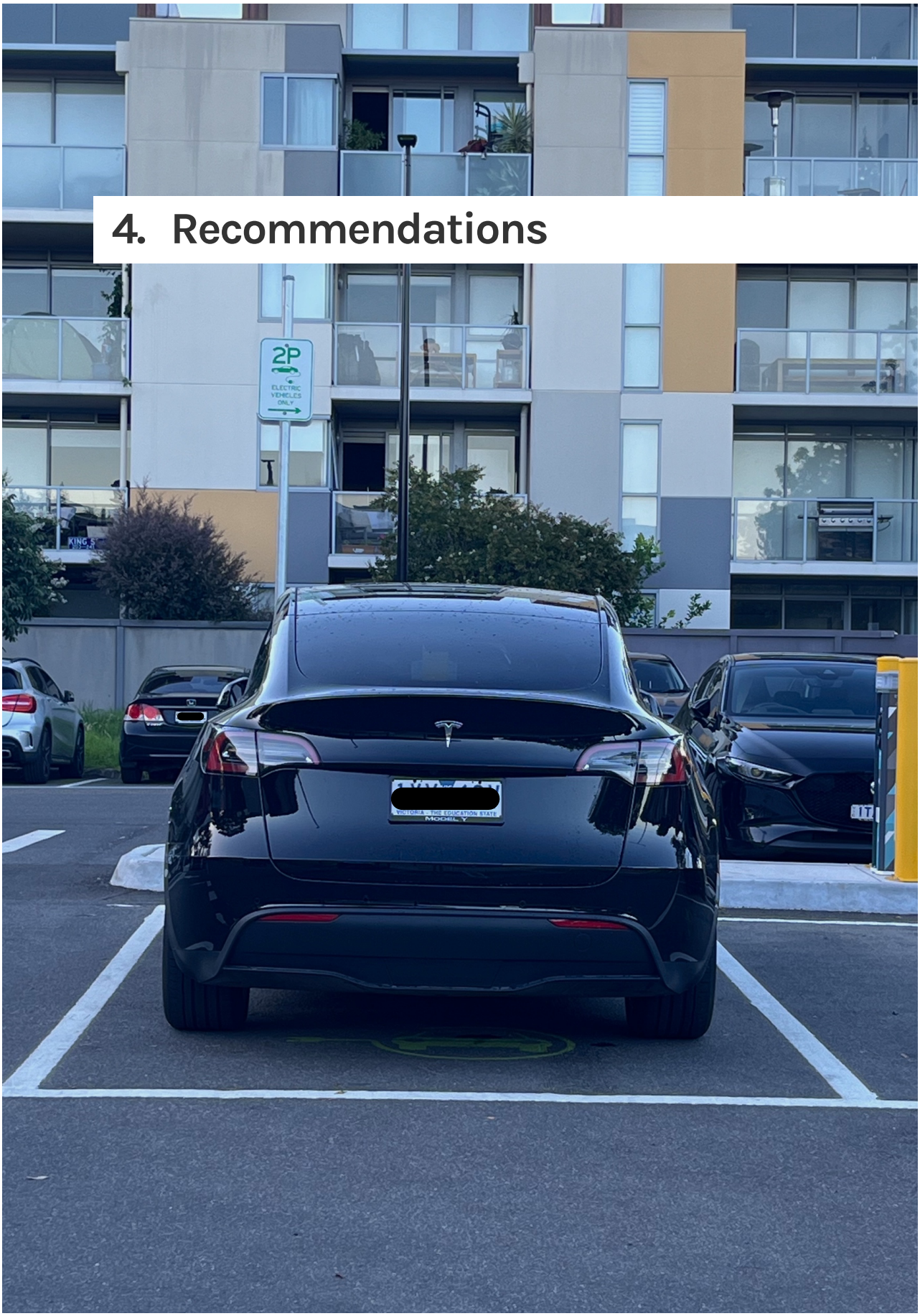


Figure 5 Projected EVs in Port Phillip, 2021 to 2030

The kerbside trial is likely to face significant hurdles in transforming into a large-scale project. In particular, the trial guidelines exclude most of the 90% of dwellings which may have difficulty accessing off-street charging.

4. Recommendations



This section offers recommendations to Council regarding the existing kerbside charger Pilot. It is based on an analysis of the performance of the current Pilot, interviews with staff and residents who installed chargers through the Pilot, analysis of best practice, both in Australia and aboard, as well as its ability to scale to meet projected demand.

4.1 Recommendation for future of the Pilot

It is strongly recommended that the Pilot cease accepting new applications and all resources be reallocated towards facilitating a public charging network. Closing the Pilot is the first step in Council achieving a more efficient outcome for residents and staff, and opening up charging possibilities for a wider proportion of the community.

By following a more conventional approach of facilitating a publicly accessible charging network to supporting residents without off-street parking to charge an EV, the City of Port Phillip will:

- Reduce costs to households;
- Expand the number of residents able to charge an EV in the City of Port Phillip;
- Reduce the negative economic impact when EV owners travel outside the LGA boundary to charge and spend while charging;
- Reduce the time burden on Council officers who administer the complexities of the current Pilot. This will free up time, which can be dedicated to more effective charging options.

Ultimately, the administrative burden the current Pilot places on Council staff is not achieving the required output, in terms of the number of chargers in Port Phillip. A more conventional approach, in which Council facilitates the development of public charging options is a better use of Council resources, that will result in cheaper, more plentiful charging opportunities for the Port Phillip community.

It is strongly recommended that the Pilot cease accepting new applications and all resources be reallocated towards facilitating a public charging network.

It is noteworthy that all jurisdictions with high EV adoption rates, including those with heavily constrained at-home charging, have embarked on public charging networks. Not one has attempted a wide-scale 'personal rather than public on-street electric vehicle charging' approach.

Only a public charging network has the potential to support all members of the Port Phillip community in participating in the transition to EVs.

All jurisdictions with high EV adoption rates, including those with heavily constrained at-home charging, have embarked on public charging networks.

4.2 Plan for legacy installs

While it is recommended that the Pilot comes to an end, it is also important to ensure that this does not place adverse impacts on those that have already had a charger installed as part of the Pilot.

If Council ends the Pilot without continuing to allow private charging equipment to be installed in the public realm (private kerbside charging), the following recommendations are made:

Existing installs should remain in place until:

- The owner breaches the terms and conditions of the permit;
- The owner decides not to continue with the permit;
- The property is sold;

- A period of five or more years has elapsed from installation *and* a publicly accessible charger has been installed within close proximity (100m) of the residence. This allows the resident to have enjoyed the majority, if not all of the expected life of the device and ensures they have a convenient place to charge near their home. This approach also mitigates against the risk to Council of having legacy chargers once a network of public chargers has become available.

It should be noted that the provider of Kerb Charge has informed Council that if the Pilot is not continued, the chargers they have installed will be removed and all costs will be refunded. This is not seen as a good use of the asset and is unlikely to be viewed favourably by those households that have gone to the effort of having the charger installed.

When the charger is removed, Council should give fair warning to the owner, allowing them reasonable time to remove the equipment and restore the footpath to the previous condition. If the owner does not remove the equipment and/or restore footpath within a reasonable time, Council should use the bond to pay for such works.

Private individuals commissioning footpath repair works is a highly unusual situation, and Council should provide support to the owner to assist in removing the equipment and restoring the footpath in a manner that meets Council's expectations. A list of approved providers should be developed and provided to the private individuals. Only approved contractors should be able to complete the works.

4.3 Next steps

Council will continue to explore effective approaches to enabling people to transition to EVs in the City of Port Phillip.


5. Appendix 1 Council meeting
P
60° ANGLE
PERMIT ZONE
goget
AUTHORISED CAR SHARE VEHICLES ONLY
No Camping Penalties Apply
PERMIT ZONE
goget
P
ONLY
goget .com.au
CAR SHARE ONLY

This section is intended to highlight an important departure between the understanding of Councillors and officers regarding the costs associated with the Kerb Charge device to the resident. It uses transcript excerpts from Council Meeting held on 1 September 2021[4]

During public question time and submissions

30:20 Mr Walker: ...this change calls for a two-year trial period with a maximum of five residents for those two years. If adopted it will have the unintended consequence of delaying electric vehicle adoption and significantly disadvantage Port Philip residents in their desire to change, to charge their electric vehicles from the standpoint of cost convenience and importantly safety. We expected and anticipated a trial to run for a maximum of three months and would install *Kerb Charge* for free for the trial period. At the end of which the trial participants could either continue with *Kerb Charge* in which case they would be given a bill for half the price of installation or elect to discontinue use and we would return the footpath or nature along with the residents property to its original condition.

During debate on the motion

2:13:00 Cr Sirakoff: Can council please clarify, with the trial of five charging points? I thought these were free those who were applying, those five homes who applied for it and there was no charge during the trial period of $5,000 or that $4,000 to $5,000.

Council Officer: The proposal is for the applicants to cover the cost of procuring and installing the infrastructure, which is likely to be, depending on where it is, in the region of $4,000 to $5,000 depending what kind of works are required. It is also proposed to charge a fee for those permits so an initial application fee for $124 with an annual renewal fee of $100 per year.

Cr Sirakoff: But during the trial period?

Cr Crawford: Can I clarify that it is depending on the applicant who is putting the infrastructure in. It is nothing to do with council. The cost, the free parts...

Cr Sirakoff: I thought the company which was supplying the EV charging points was going to supply for free. The installation and the product itself.

Cr Crawford: Kylie Bennetts is going to clarify.

Council Officer: I think council for the purposes of deciding whether to issue a permit or not needs to, so council wouldn't be involved in commercial discussion or negotiations that a resident might have with any provider. So, what officers have done is put forward a recommendation based on the average cost and given the average cost and the investment that council, sorry a resident may need to make a reasonable return on that investment in terms of setting the required permit. The reason we have done that is that we don't think that it is appropriate for us to get into individual negotiations residents might have with providers and if that negotiation changed we would not want that to be a risk to council which is why we have looked at it in terms of cost of if someone were to pay the full cost, making sure that they are getting a reasonable return on investment both in terms of a financial and also an environmental perspective.

2:15:54 Cr Consolo: Thank you. I have two questions clarify what we were just talking about. My understanding is that there are two costs essentially for this. If you were starting out you, the resident, would need to buy the battery that charges, and then there is the cost that is the connection that we are

[4] Video of the meeting can be found at: https://webcast.portphillip.vic.gov.au/archive/video21-0901.php

talking about for this permit tonight. So that would be what would be covered by the *Kerb Charge* company. Is that correct?

Cr Crawford: I think as Kylie indicated, a lot of that is to do with the commercial element, is it not Kylie?

Council Officer: So, there is the cost in terms of purchasing the charger but also the installation costs as well and that would not be council or council officers were party to so that would be potential a cost to the resident depending on what arrangement they made strike with the party provider. There is also a cost in terms of a permit cost to council. And that was proposed through the council plan and budget process so there was a legal basis from which to charge that in the event that council would issue a permit at this time or some time into the future. So, you are right in that there are two costs, but there is only one cost in that it relates to council, the permit fees and a bond to cover any potential damage to the public realm that hopefully won't occur, but in the unfortunate event that it did, the bond is there to cover that cost.

In debate about increasing the number of participants

2:18:55 Cr Consolo: Was there a number provided by *Kerb Charge* that they would be prepared to bring the trial up to at their cost.

Council Officer: I believe that the number stated by Mr Walker earlier was that he would be willing to negotiate directly with community members to provide some infrastructure for up to five. But regardless of that negotiation it could, we could increase that number, if other community members were willing to pay for it or if they could come to some other arrangement.

2:19:45 Cr Clark: I think this is a question, but it feels like we are negotiating into the commercial realms of the negotiation around this from what the company may be prepared to provide and the community and what that price may be subject to how many we may. So, I am just not sure we can move an amendment to the motion or request more information or expand it potentially on the motion. You know. Subject to that, I would have thought that council officers would need to reengage with the company to ensure that that is something that they could provide.

Cr Crawford recaps question to Council Officer due to Cr Clark's poor internet quality

2:21:15 Council Officer: It wasn't the officers' intention to be engaged with any commercial negotiations between any individual and provider.

In moving the motion

2:24:55 Cr Crawford: …this really is in bringing it into line with addressing the climate emergency, looking at the keenness of our community and especially given the knowledge we have around for the first five there is not a cost, an upfront cost to them, so the payback period isn't an issue in these early stages for the people that participate in this trial, so I am asking you to support this so we can get this on the road and see if this can be the first in Australia to make a huge difference in inner city councils across the country.

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Institute for
Sensible Transport

12. VIBRANT PORT PHILLIP

Nil

13. WELL GOVERNED PORT PHILLIP

13.1 Proposal to Lease - 129 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park 380

13.2 City of Port Phillip Strategic Memberships Review 2024 386

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13.1 PROPOSAL TO LEASE - 129 BEACONSFIELD PARADE, ALBERT PARK

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: **LACHLAN JOHNSON, GENERAL MANAGER, OPERATIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

PREPARED BY: **VICKI TUCHTAN, ACTING MANAGER PROPERTY AND ASSETS**

ANTHONY SAVENKOV, HEAD OF REAL ESTATE PORTFOLIO (DEVELOPMENT & TRANSACTIONS)

JAMES ACKROYD, PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the process for establishing a tenant for a new lease of the building at 129 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park, and to inform of key milestones involved in the process.

1.2 It is recommended that Council seek Expressions of Interest (EOI) to identify a preferred tenant and undertake the legislative processes to establish a new lease.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 129 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park ('the Property') is a picturesque Edwardian era building, approximately 279 sqm in size.

2.2 Council manages the Property as Committee of Management for the Crown, and the Land on which it is located is reserved for Public Recreation.

2.3 The Property is in the central road reserve, opposite Kerferd Road Beach, as shown in Image 1 below.



Image 1 - 129 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park located in the central road reserve.

2.4 The Property is of local historical representative and aesthetic significance to the City of Port Phillip. It once served as the Municipal Refreshment Rooms, known as the Kerferd Road Tea Rooms.

2.5 The Property is currently vacant.

2.6 In line with Council's *Property Policy* (September 2019), officers propose to lease the Property through an open and competitive Expression of Interest (EOI) process.

2.7 This approach is consistent with the *Leasing Policy for Victorian Crown Land 2023*, which requires that all lease allocation processes must be fair, open, and impartial. To comply, Council should apply a competitive selection process to commercial leases unless direct negotiations would achieve an outcome that better serves the community interest.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Undertakes an Expression of Interest process to determine a preferred tenant for a long-term lease of 129 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park that seeks to maximise the benefits of a commercial lease for Council.

3.2 Evaluates submissions made in response to the Expression of Interest in accordance with the published Assessment Criteria.

3.3 Authorises officers to consult with the community on the lease proposal in accordance with Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) and Council's Community Engagement Policy by:

3.3.1 Advertising a Notice of Intention to Lease inviting submissions from interested persons and allowing 28 days for submissions to be received, and

3.3.2 Notifying submitters that they can speak in support of their submission at a future meeting of Council before submissions are considered and a final decision is made by Council on whether or not to grant a lease.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

4.1 It is proposed that Council commence an EOI process to establish a new lease for 129 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park ('the Property'). This would aim to:

- Create an open and competitive process in order to maximise the commercial benefits to Council through leasing that would include rent and tenant investment in upgrades of Council assets;
- Offer a long-term lease to encourage investment in the Property so it is well presented and maintained to satisfy the needs of the community; and
- Ensure any proposed new lease holder operates in a way that is sympathetic and complementary to the surrounds.

4.2 The Property is currently vacant.

4.3 Council manages the Property as Committee of Management for the Crown, and the Land on which it is located is reserved for Public Recreation.

4.4 The Property is approximately 118 years old and in fair condition, with internal dimensions of around 279 sqm.

4.5 The Property has been subject to a range of uses since its construction, including café's confectioner, restaurant, and most recently a hair and beauty training salon.

4.6 The proposed lease area is shown in Image 2 below.

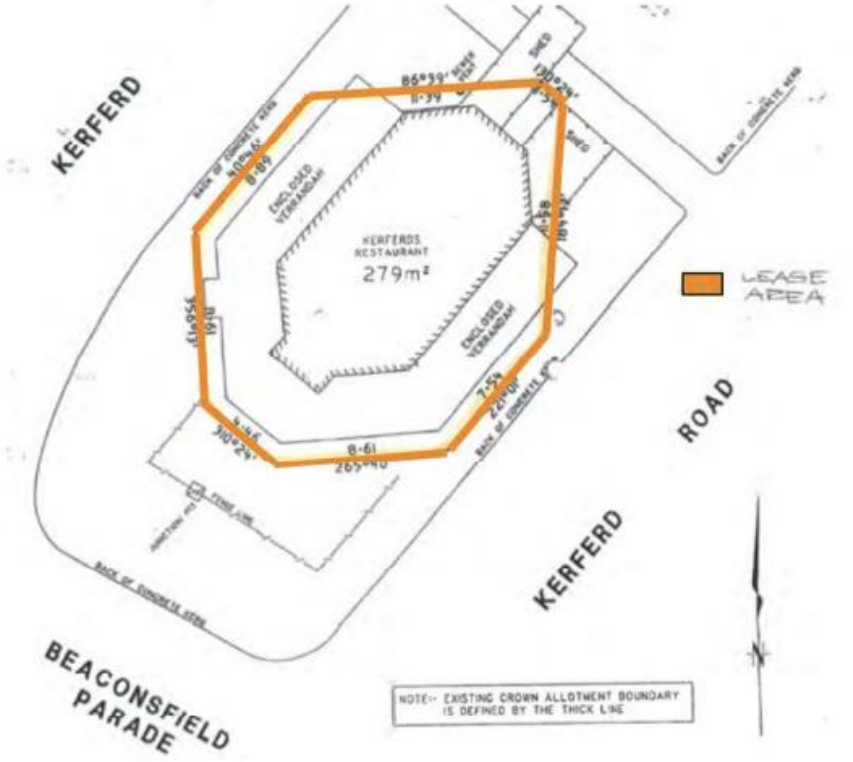


Image 2 – Proposed lease area of 129 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park.

4.7 The details of the most recent lease over the Property are shown in Table 1 below.

Tenant	Inner Melbourne VET Cluster Inc. T/A Avidity Salon
Commencement Date	2 June 2022
Expiry Date	31 December 2023
Rental	$104.00 per annum plus

Table 1 – Summary of most recent lease: 129 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park.

4.8 Officers propose that the Property be offered for lease as a development opportunity, to allow heritage sensitive adaptation of the building.

4.9 In terms of the Property's heritage value:

- It is not currently listed in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme as an individually significant place;
- It is a contributory graded property within the Middle Park/St Kilda West Precinct (Heritage Overlay HO444);
- It is not identified on the Victorian Heritage Register, the Victorian Heritage Inventory, the National Heritage List, or by the National Trust of Australia; and
- Its Conservation Management Plan (Extent Heritage, 2022) identifies it as being of local historical, representative, and aesthetic significance to the municipality.

4.10 Given the significant capital investment that would likely be required for adaptation for a new occupier, a long-term lease would be appropriate to make the investment feasible.

4.11 Officers propose to offer a long-term lease no greater than 21 years in duration.

4.12 Leasing the Property on this basis is intended to secure a sustainable long-term use of the building and increase its public visitation.

4.13 In accordance with Council's *Property Policy* (September 2019), it is proposed that the lease be offered to the market under an open, competitive, EOI process, and this be marketed to adequately achieve the best outcome – giving due weight in the evaluation to a future occupier's long-term vision for the Property, and community benefit.

4.14 Through a competitive, open market process, the opportunity to lease would be open to a variety of submitters, including community organisations and commercial operators.

4.15 When evaluating submissions made in response to the EOI, officers will score against the following Assessment Criteria:

- Vision – including the proposed development and operation of the site and it complements the existing surrounds.
- Financial and any other commercial terms – including the financial investment in the asset.
- Relevant experience and track record – including what involvement and success the respondent has had with the development and operation of similar ventures.
- Capability and capacity to comply with the Lease – including an assessed level of risk associated with non-compliances.
- Social responsibility and environmental sustainability performance obligations – including alignment with Council's community, quality, and environmental objectives.

4.16 To ensure Council achieves the aims of the EOI process, it is proposed submissions are evaluated in accordance with the Assessment Criteria described above.

4.17 Parties interested in submitting an EOI would receive details of the selection criteria as part of the process.

4.18 Submitters will be required to submit a lease proposal including length of term and commencing rent.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 Internal stakeholders such as Heritage, City Development and Partnerships and Transport have been consulted in considering a potential leasing of the Property.

5.2 The Act requires that Council seek and consider community feedback prior to entering such a lease.

5.3 In accordance with Council's *Property Policy* (September 2019), it is intended that the lease be offered to the market under an open, competitive, expression of interest process, and this be marketed to adequately achieve the best outcome – giving due weight in the evaluation to a future occupier's long-term vision for the Property, and community benefit.

5.4 It is intended to offer the lease opportunity through a competitive open market process, and so would be open to responses from community organisations as well as commercial operators.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 As the Property is Crown land, this falls under the purview of the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), and any new lease or licence is subject to the approval by the responsible Minister (or their delegate).

6.2 For any new lease longer than the prescribed term, or above a prescribed value, or leases requiring building or improvement, Council is required to comply with Section 115 of the Act, which requires Council to give public notice of its intention to enter a lease and to consider any submissions received prior to resolving whether to enter into a lease.

6.3 A change of use or development of the site will require consent under the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018* (Vic), which will likely be deemed to also satisfy the requirements for consent under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic). It will also require City of Port Phillip's consent, as landlord.

6.4 Management of, and change to, the Property is also impacted by the:

- National Construction Code;
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth); and
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* (Vic).

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 Under a long-term lease, a tenant would be likely to undertake capital investment to improve and/or repurpose the building. Such investment offsets cost that Council might otherwise incur undertaking works.

7.2 In the event of a future community user, Council may need to undertake or fund the works to make the Property suitable for specific future community organisation use. The extent of work needed would be dependent on the requirements of the end user.

7.3 Costs associated with the EOI process include advertising and legal fees, estimated to be around $10-15k. Provision has been made for this in the operational budget.

7.4 A competitive EOI process should establish a true market rent, offset by any capital works program carried out by the tenant at their expense, to improve Council assets.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 This paper is not considered to raise any material environmental sustainability implications.

8.2 It is noted that the area surrounding the Property is likely to be impacted by development associated with the proposed Shrine to Sea project. Planned works include vegetation of the central road reserve.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 Development of the site under a lease is likely to improve the quality of the place, and therefore support a Liveable Port Phillip.

9.2 This proposed consultation initiative promotes transparent governance and an actively engaged community.

9.3 Stakeholders include:

- Council.

- DEECA.
- Surrounding business operators.
- Local residents and ratepayers.
- Visitors to the local area.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 This report directly supports Council Plan Strategic Direction *Well Governed Port Phillip.*

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Timeline

11.1 Should Council support the EOI process, key milestones include:

- June 2024 – Legislative process for proposed lease commences.
- July 2024 – Hearing and consideration of any submissions in relation to the proposed lease.
- October 2024 – EOI process commences with approach to market.
- December 2024 – Approach to market closes.
- February 2025 – Council considers outcome of EOI process and concludes legislative process for lease.
- February 2025 – Council executes lease and requests approval of new lease by the appropriate Minister.

Communication

11.2 Council actively manages its property portfolio, including leasing out property assets. When doing so, it observes the relevant statutory obligations.

11.3 The EOI process would be publicly advertised.

11.4 The proposed lease is subject to Council's Community Engagement Policy. The *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) requires that public notice of the proposed lease be advertised inviting submissions from interested persons. Having received, heard, and considered submissions Council may then make a decision about whether to grant a lease or not grant a lease. The process would run concurrently with the EOI process.

12. OFFICER MATERIAL OR GENERAL INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS **Nil**

13.2 CITY OF PORT PHILLIP STRATEGIC MEMBERSHIPS REVIEW 2024

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: **BRIAN TEE, GENERAL MANAGER, CITY GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

PREPARED BY: **CHRIS BRAYNE, COORDINATOR ADVOCACY, GRANTS & PARTNERSHIP**
JAMES GULLAN, HEAD OF ADVOCACY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To consider the outcome of the 2024 review of Council's strategic memberships.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 'Strategic memberships' assist Council in leveraging advocacy and strategic outcomes through being part of a collective. By being a member, Council is supporting these organisations to advocate and undertake work on Council's behalf on key issues of mutual importance. They provide knowledge sharing, advocacy, policy development, policy implementation and other support opportunities.

2.2 Council is a member of seven organisations considered 'strategic memberships'.

2.3 Council has undertaken strategic membership reviews in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. Over this period, Council has withdrawn from 9 memberships. Council has not taken on any new strategic memberships in this period (noting that IMAP transitioned to M9).

2.4 Council currently conducts a biannual review to determine the ongoing value of retaining specific membership.

2.5 The 2024 review drew on a range of sources, including information provided by the organisation, publicly available information from the organisations' webpages and annual reports, Councillor feedback and advice from Council officers.

2.6 The outcome of the Membership Review 2024 is included in Attachment 1.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Notes the findings of the 2024 Membership Review as outlined in Attachment 1.

3.2 Maintains membership to the following organisations:

3.2.1 Association of Bayside Municipalities

3.2.2 M9

3.2.3 Metro Transport Forum (MTF)

3.2.4 Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

3.2.5 Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA)

3.3 Maintains its membership to Committee for Melbourne but moves to a corporate level membership.

3.4 Maintains its membership to South East Councils Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA) at a rate of $40,000 for membership and an additional $38,000 for projects that are to

be funded from the Act and Adapt budget. If SECCCA do not support Council's continued membership at the proposed rate, Council investigates membership of alternative change alliances such as Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA).

3.5 Notes that the next strategic membership review will occur in 2026 as part of the Advocacy Priorities report due that year.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

Background of review:

4.1 Council priorities are identified in the Council Plan and core strategies including Move, Connect, Live Integrated Transport Strategy; Creative and Prosperous City Strategy; Act and Adapt Strategy; and Don't Waste It Waste Management Strategy. The Council Plan specifies working with partners to develop, implement and evaluate projects, programs and policies that deliver our vision and improve the health and wellbeing of our people and place.

4.2 Strategic Memberships allow Council to leverage and pool resources to deliver shared priorities identified in our Council Plan and core strategies that Council may not be able to achieve by itself.

4.3 The Strategic Membership Review was first implemented in 2019 to ensure that Council periodically reviewed its memberships to ensure that they continued to provide benefit for the cost participation.

4.4 Council has undertaken strategic membership reviews in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. Over this period council has withdrawn from 9 memberships (five in 2019, four in 2020), saving over $94,000 annually in membership fees.

What is a Strategic Membership?

4.5 'Strategic' memberships are "memberships where Council is joining for primary purpose of leveraging advocacy and strategic outcomes through being part of a collective. By being a member, Council is supporting these groups to advocate and undertake work on Council's behalf on key issues of mutual importance."

4.6 These memberships are distinct from 'Operational and Professional' memberships, which is where councils primarily receive services and tools that supports delivery of core Council functions and development of staff (i.e. these memberships do not act on members behalf in advocacy)".

4.7 Where a membership provides a mixture of strategic, operational, and professional services - officers have considered whether the 'strategic' function is one of the primary purposes/benefits. Where that is the case, the membership has been considered as part of the review (i.e. ABM, MAV, VLGA).

2024 Strategic Membership Review:

4.8 In May 2024, Councillors supported an update to the Strategic Membership review format that included,

4.8.1 Updating definition of 'strategic membership' to ensure the difference between strategic and operational memberships was more clearly defined. As a result of this change to definition, memberships such as CASBE, BESS and LGPro, which have previously been considered under the Strategic Membership

Review, will now be considered in line with other operational and professional memberships.

4.8.2 Limiting the Strategic Memberships Review to memberships that have annual fees of $2000 or more. This recognises that the membership review can be resource intensive. Review of these membership will be undertaken by relevant council officers periodically. Examples of strategic memberships that fall under $2,000 include Mainstreet Australia, Stormwater Victoria, Australian Disability Network, Victorian Tourism Industry Council.

4.8.3 Consolidating the membership review with the advocacy priorities report in 2026. The alignment will provide councillors a holistic overview of council individual and collective advocacy, as noted in the recently endorsed Advocacy Strategy.

4.9 The updated review engaged relevant council officers and membership organisations to collate the information on each strategic membership to inform recommendations. Information includes sections - about the membership/area of expertise; achievements including benefits to Council and training/development opportunities; alignment to Council Plan; cost; and plans and priorities for 2024/25.

4.10 Council officers will conduct the next Strategic Membership Review in June 2026.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 As part of the 2024 Strategic Membership review, 20+ Council Officers were consulted.

5.2 Strategic memberships were notified of the membership review and invited to engage with this process through submitting information for consideration.

5.3 All memberships have been notified of the opportunity to present at this Council meeting on 5 June 2024.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Council officers will contact organisations to inform of Council decision around their membership.

6.2 Council officers will provide the required notice to each Strategic Membership where a decision is made to not continue the memberships.

6.3 Attachment 1 identifies the risks to Council should Council withdrawal from relevant memberships.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 Should the above recommendations be endorsed, this will result in a potential annual $48,000+ in savings for council.

7.2 See Attachment 1 for the estimated annual membership fees and associated costs of each Strategic Membership.

7.3 For some organisations, these fees are yet to be determined and officers will need to check in with organisations to clarify these.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 Several strategic memberships advocate for actions that support the environment. These are identified in Attachment 1.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 Attachment 1 describes each organisation's priority areas of advocacy and relevant community impact.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 Attachment 1 includes the alignment of each Strategic membership to the Council Plan/Priorities.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

11.1.1 Attachment 1 includes upcoming renewal dates for Strategic Memberships and links to find further information on the relevant contacts within these organisations.

11.1.2 For some organisations, renewal dates have not yet been determined and officers will need to check in with organisations to clarify these.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

11.2.1 Where appropriate, Council will notify the strategic membership organisations of the outcome of the Council meeting.

12. OFFICER MATERIAL OR GENERAL INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS **1. Strategic Membership Review 2024**

City of Port Phillip

Strategic Membership Review 2024



City of Port Phillip **Strategic Membership Review 2024**

proudly port phillip

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Association of Bayside Municipalities (ABM)

About Membership/Area of Expertise:

The Association of Bayside Municipalities (ABM) is "the voice of local government for Port Phillip Bay". The ABM is made up of nine Port Phillip Bay Councils, including Hobsons Bay City Council, Bayside City Council, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, City of Greater Geelong, Frankston City Council, Kingston City Council, Borough of Queenscliffe, Wyndham City Council and Port Phillip City Council. The ABM works to create understanding within councils of the issues impacting their municipalities, coastline and part of the Bay. The councils of the ABM work together to advocate on priority issues, share knowledge and directly influence regional and state programs and investment in the planning and management of the Bay.

ABM's priorities include:

- Ecosystem protection - ecology and vegetation
- Traditional Owner Engagement - cultural heritage protection
- Coastal Climate Adaptation
- Coastal Assets - maintenance and management
- Access and Use | Safety and Amenity - foreshore and marine
- Investment and Funding

Achievements:

Projects and advocacy that have provided benefit to the City of Port Phillip:

ABM has been focused on the release of the Port Phillip Bay Coastal Hazard Assessment including media messaging and advocacy for a state led planning scheme amendment. Member updates are provided via e-newsletter, as well as community facing updates being provided via the ABM website.

The ABM have also delivered a variety of events and projects that have been supported the City of Port Phillips officers, including:

- Summer Preparedness Forum
- Port Phillip Integrated Management Forum
- Nature of Change series webinars and site tour
- ABM Member advocacy meetings
- Nature of Change in Port Phillip Bay
- Partnership program with Life Saving Victoria and Victorian National Parks Association to deliver an event series about the impacts of climate change around the bay (funded by a Coastcare grant).
- Partnership project with University of Melbourne's National Centre for Coasts and Climate, Parks Victoria as well as Councils and community groups around Port Phillip Bay to assess and reduce impacts of night-time lighting on marine and coastal animals (funded by the Port Phillip Bay Fund).

Staff Development/Training:

ABM offers regular events for Councillors and officers in professional development, knowledge sharing and capacity building opportunities.
This has included:

- Port Phillip Bay Coastal Hazard Assessment ABM Member Catch Up
- Forum: Summer Preparedness in Port Phillip Bay
- ABM Member Meeting
- ABM Walk & Talk Field Trip

Alignment to Council Plan and Strategies:

The membership aligns with the 'Sustainable Port Phillip' and 'Liveable Port Phillip' strategic directions.

- *Sustainable Port Phillip: A City that has a sustainable future, where our environmentally aware and active community benefits from living in a bayside city that is greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient.*
- *Liveable Port Phillip: A City that is a great place to live, where our community has access to high quality public space, development and growth are well-managed, and it is safer and easy to connect and travel within.*

There is further alignment with:

- *Act and Adapt - Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2018-28.*

Cost:

24/25 fees are still being considered. The MAV (who host the position) have circulated an options paper to Councillor representatives regarding a fee structure. In 23/24 fees were $11,039.75 + GST in 23/24.

Plans and priorities for 2024-25:

The projects / priorities of the ABM are determined by the Member Councils and outlined in the ABM Strategic Priorities 2022-2025.

The ABM is working to:

- Build capacity to implement nature-based solutions, including partnership projects to support a suite of case studies in the bay.
- Advocate for and coordinate partnerships in adaptation planning and public consultation
- Support completion and effective dissemination of a Coastal Hazard Assessment for Port Phillip Bay, including communication and community engagement.
- Advocate for risk assessment and hazard response planning to support the Coastal Hazard Assessment.
- Advocate for state-led planning scheme amendments / overlays where applicable.
- Build knowledge and capacity in coastal asset management approaches such as nature-based defence, ecoengineering, etc.
- Continue advocacy to improve personal watercraft (e.g., jet ski) licensing, education, monitoring and enforcement during summer peak.
- Advocate for funding to support local government coastal climate adaptation planning and implementation.
- Coordinate funding bids and investment opportunities with new and existing partnerships e.g., Coast care, Port Phillip Bay Fund, Victoria's Resilient Coast.

More Information:

https://abm.org.au/

Recommendation:

That Council resolves to maintain its membership to the Association of Bayside Municipalities.

The membership saves Council time and resources by sharing project delivery responsibilities. Collectively, ABM enhances advocacy outcomes and provides valuable training forums for staff.

If Council withdraws from the Association of Bayside Municipalities, this will result in increased demand for Council's time and resources as Port Phillip would be working in isolation from all other Councils around the Bay and State agencies. This would also increase project delivery costs and responsibilities, reduce advocacy outcomes, and reduce access to training and support to Council.

Committee for Melbourne (CfM)

About Membership/Area of Expertise:

The Committee for Melbourne (CfM) is a not-for-profit, member funded entity that is politically independent and impartial and advocates for a range of important issues within Melbourne. With more than 150 members from major corporations, small and medium business, academic institutions, local government and not-for-profit entities, CfM works with organisations in shaping Melbourne as a leading global city in the world's fastest-growing region, the Asia-Pacific.

The Committee has an elected board (10 members), and focuses on future economy, liveability, urban optimisation, infrastructure and sustainability as its primary pillars of focus. The organisation works to ensure Melbourne's challenges and opportunities are addressed to keep Melbourne vital, inclusive, progressive and sustainable.

Current Council members include:

- Foundation Members: City of Port Phillip, City of Melbourne, Moonee Valley City Council
- Corporate Members: Hume City Council

Achievements:

Projects and advocacy that have provided benefit to the City of Port Phillip:

The Committee for Melbourne has held many opportunities for engagement with leading political figures, and industry leaders, which have been attended by the mayor and council officers. This has enabled the City of Port Phillip to raise relevant advocacy priorities and undertake greater stakeholder engagement.

In particular, the Committee for Melbourne has worked to highlight opportunities to develop Fishermans Bend with the preparation of a Fishermans Bend event. The CfM wrote a submission on Fishermans Bend to the Developer Contribution Plan to assist the City of Port Phillip's contribution. CfM work closely on many aligned agenda items and continue to advocate for priorities including infrastructure investments (e.g., the MM2), transport in Fishermans Bend. Council is currently working with the Committee in the organisation of a forum on Fishermans Bend, with the expectation that this will be held in June 2024. This forum will include the opportunity to talk about the future of Transport Infrastructure in Fishermans Bend, housing growth in the precinct and the Developer Contribution Plan and the critical function it plays in funding the future.

The CEO of City of Port Phillip participates on the Liveability & Urban Optimisation Standing Committee. The Liveability and Urban Optimisation Standing Committee continues to advocate for housing targets and policies to address supply of a mix of housing and are now involved in the development of Plan Victoria in conjunction with the Victorian Government.

Staff Development/Training:

The CfM facilitate 30+ events for members each year across the 3 key pillars of focus, which are attended by council officers.

At an additional cost, the CfM also host a Future Focus Group program is and Annual Dinner, however the Council have not part-taken in either of these opportunities.

Alignment to Council Plan and Strategies:

Membership with Committee for Melbourne aligns with the 'Well-Governed Port Phillip' strategic direction.

- *Well-Governed Port Phillip: A City that is a leading local government authority, where our community and our organisation are in a better place as a result of our collective efforts.*

Cost:

Foundation membership (for major international and national organisations): $16,500 (plus GST).
Corporate membership (for small and medium businesses): $8,200 (plus GST)
The key differences that the Foundation Membership offers over Corporate Membership are:

- Voting rights in the organisation
- Two invitations to the State Budget briefing with the Treasurer
- Committee's Foundation members' Annual Parliamentary Drinks
- 2x tickets to the Future Melbourne Summit
- Foundational members receive priority consideration for positions on panels and hosting events (i.e., FB Forum).

Membership fees are due July 2024.
Further information on membership benefits can be found at: https://melbourne.org.au/membership/

Plans and priorities for 2024-25:

The Committee for Melbourne's three pillars and areas of focus are: Future Economy, Infrastructure & Sustainability, Liveability & Urban Optimization.
Each year the Committee produces a Benchmarking Melbourne Report, which compares Melbourne against 20 global peer cities. The report highlights areas where greater Melbourne requires focus, such as Housing Affordability, Infrastructure & Transport and Connectivity.
The CfM has upcoming events scheduled including meeting federal and Victorian ministers, shadow ministers and members and discussing housing affordability, underground infrastructure, place making and AI.

More Information:

https://melbourne.org.au/

Recommendation:

That Council resolves to maintain a membership with the Committee for Melbourne. The Committee continues to offer benefits through a collaborative approach to important issues for the City of Port Phillip. The Committee also offers opportunities for direct and regular engagement with Senior Ministers and key leadership figures.
Given the differentiation between membership offerings is minor, Council officers are recommending an ongoing membership as a Corporate Member. This change in membership level will not impact the CEO's position on the Liveability & Urban Optimisation Standing Committee.

M9

About Membership/Area of Expertise:

M9 is an alliance of nine inner-metropolitan councils who work collectively to advocate for issues and projects of mutual interest.
M9's Council members include Darebin City Council, Hobson's Bay City Council, Maribyrnong City Council, City of Melbourne, Merri-bek City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, City of Port Phillip, City of Stonnington and City of Yarra.
The M9 objectives are to:

- Undertake strategic, evidence-based, targeted and effective advocacy campaigns.
- Engage strategically with key decision-makers to advocate on priority areas and build partnership with government representatives.
- Enable best practice to be shared across Greater Melbourne Councils
- Undertake joint partnerships and collective action, particularly where there are market failures and/or policy gaps.

M9's strategic priorities are active transport, affordable housing, economic recovery, community resilience, waste and circular economy, and renewable energy.

Achievements:

Projects and advocacy that have provided benefit to the City of Port Phillip:

M9 has been working on the M9 Circular Economy Project, including further advocacy around support for local FOGO processing options and other innovative projects that enhance the circular economy, drive local markets and divert material out of the landfill stream.
Considerable work has been done in the housing space including the development of a draft regional agreement and submission on the draft social affordable housing compact.
M9 recently applied for the Federal Government's Disaster Ready Fund, submitting a joint grant application for the 'Resilient Asset Management Investment' project. The outcome will be known in the second half of 2024.
M9 has recently appointed an Executive Officer to drive and support the group's work. A formalised scheduled has been developed for 2024 and the M9 Advocacy Strategy has recently been developed.

Staff Development/Training:

M9's Council CEOs meet once every 2 months. Mayors and CEO meetings are held 6 times a year.
These meetings have included guest speakers, along with providing a regular opportunity to CEO's and Mayor's for dialogue around relevant and timely advocacy areas.
M9 members will have the opportunity to host an event at Parliament House in 2024 to meet with Minister's and MPs for all sides of politics.
Council Directors and/or Managers are also actively engaged in a series of working groups relating to a range of advocacy areas including waste, housing and planning. These working groups operate to drive M9s advocacy platform but also provide an opportunity for knowledge sharing.

Alignment to Council Plan and Strategies:

Membership with Committee for Melbourne aligns with the 'Well-Governed Port Phillip' strategic direction.

- *Well-Governed Port Phillip: A City that is a leading local government authority, where our community and our organisation are in a better place as a result of our collective efforts.*

Cost:

$0 for 2024/25 (anticipated to be $10,000 in future years).

Plans and priorities for 2024-25:

M9 will continue to focus on developing position papers, providing inquiry submissions and research projects where appropriate.
M9's key priorities for 2024 are Waste and Sustainability; Housing and planning; and Transport. Lead councils have been allocated for each priority area.
Port Phillip will take the lead role for housing and planning. The group will work to contribute to the State Government's new Plan Victoria and continue to advocate for the region in relation to planning matters.
The group will also look at additional advocacy in relation to Infrastructure; Climate emergency; Governance and leadership; and Community resilience.
In addition to the group's advocacy work, a major project for M9 is the Circular Economy Project which aims to drive change in the waste and recycling sector.
Post local government elections in October 2024, M9's strategic plan will be reviewed, and a set of goals will be established for the new council term.

More Information:

https://m9.org.au/

Recommendation:

That Council resolves to retain its membership of M9.
M9 has provided regular opportunity for the Mayor and CEO to engage with other Metropolitan Melbourne council areas, creating shared advocacy outcomes and collectively working to advance these with key State and Federal Government stakeholders.

Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF)

About Membership/Area of Expertise:

The Metropolitan Transport Forum is comprised of 26 metropolitan member councils, a collaborative professional development and advocacy forum.
The membership meets monthly to provide opportunity for Councillors and transport officers to listen to speakers on transport related subjects including trains, trams, accessibility, bicycles, walking, and buses. Working with senior strategic transport planners, engineers and invited transport experts, MTF provides an opportunity to understand the greater transport network impacts and develops advocacy opportunities for Councils interested in transport outcomes.

Achievements:

Projects and advocacy that have provided benefit to the City of Port Phillip:

The MTF meet monthly from February to December.
Benefits of MTF's priorities for Port Phillip are:

- Opportunities for direct engagement with international transport experts and advocates, Gender Equality and Transport Accessibility Advocate, academic researchers, industry experts, and local government officer panels.
- Advocacy for improved public and active transport outcomes through the State Budget process.
- MTF has advocated for the need for further investment to retrofit existing assets.
- Council has participated in the MTF's Love Buses campaign focusing on our goals to improve bus network connectivity, coverage, and frequency. The City's presence in this space is important as Victoria heads towards its upcoming statewide bus network reform, and leverages opportunities to improve cross city connectivity and coverage to Fishermans Bend.
- The MTF also provides a forum for aligning with other local government areas to continue to advocate for a business case for Melbourne Metro 2 (MM2). This proposed cross city rail infrastructure project is essential to provide the Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Area with the transport connectivity it needs to ensure it is liveable and well-connected addition to Port Phillip.

Staff Development/Training:

The MTF's monthly meetings allow active participation from member attendees and these presentations are also available online after the event.
In October 2023, the MTF held a seminar entitled 'MTF Loves Buses' and at the last State election, MTF held a Town Hall Forums (in conjunction with City of Port Phillip), providing an opportunity for community members to meet the candidates and ask questions concerning transport policies.

Alignment to Council Plan and Strategies:

Membership of MTF aligns with the *'Liveable Port Phillip'* strategic direction.

- *Liveable Port Phillip:* a city that is a great place to live, where our community has access to high quality public spaces, development and growth are well managed, and it is safer and easy to connect and travel within.

There is further alignment with:

- *Move Connect Live – Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-2028.*

Cost:

$3000 (TBC in August 2024). Membership fees are due 30 September 24.

Plans and priorities for 2024-25:

MTF's three strategic areas are *Active*, *Buses* and *Choice:*

- On **Active** Transport, the top priority is securing State government funding to implement the Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28.
    - This benefits the council through including active transport in the scope of investment of major projects occurring in the municipality (for example, St Kilda Road).
- For **Buses**, the focus is on lifting bus patronage through better services, and additional state funding of buses to support their own ambitious patronage goals.
    - This benefits council by pushing DTP to progress bus reform, a policy development which will provide significant strategic guidance on the future of bus investment in Port Phillip (and in particularly Port Phillip communities only served by buses: Fishermans Bend, Garden City, and Elwood). Council can further leverage off its membership to MTF to improve services in these areas.
- On **Choices**, the MTF remains committed to giving all Melbournians competitive alternatives to private cars as the transport mode of choice [for commuting, leisure and education].
    - As an inner-city municipality connected by state arterial roads and highways, reducing Melbourne's car dependence will have a benefit on Port Phillip's amenity, ensuring visitors and workers from outside the municipality are not adding to pressures on our parking and local road networks.

Additionally in 2024/25 the MTF will:

- Have Council representative ambassadors for Walking, Cycling, Trains, Trams and Accessibility. The Ambassadors aim to improve the links to other organisations with similar focus. (e.g., Walking - Victoria Walks).
- Continue to conduct further seminars with subject matter experts.
- Continue to submit to DTP on major upcoming state strategic pieces including Plan Victoria, Fishermans Bend Tram Link Business Case, and Bus Reform updates.

More Information:

https://mtf.org.au/

Recommendation:

That Council resolve to retain membership of Metropolitan Transport Forum.
This membership is important for the ongoing delivery of transport strategy outcomes and to provide officers and Councillors a resource and platform to leverage better transport outcomes for Port Phillip.

Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

About Membership/Area of Expertise:

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is a membership association and the legislated peak body for local government in Victoria.
MAV offers diverse business services to our council members including specialist policy and advocacy, governance and legislative advice, sector development, insurance and procurement services.
MAV takes a leadership role on advocating for issues impacting the sector, providing training opportunities for Councillors, and building networks between Councils. They also provide policy and strategy advice and hold regular workshops for officers.

Achievements:

Projects and advocacy that have provided benefit to the City of Port Phillip:

MAV has continued its policy advocacy, procurement and insurance services, and sector support throughout the 2022/23 years.
Advocacy highlights have included work on emergency management and disaster recovery funding, continued spotlight on MCH services, the Older Not Alone campaign and the implementation of the Local Government Guide to Preventing Family Violence.
Over the last few years, MAV has held conferences and events including 'Smart Urban, Rural and Regional Planning' and its twice annual MAV State Council. Port Phillip attended MAV State Council in May 2023, October 2023 and May 2024.
Membership with MAV also includes MAV Procurement which is a not-for-profit unit focused on achieving better procurement outcomes for local government in Victoria by leveraging the combined purchasing power of councils to achieve better value on products and services.
MAV has continued to represent member Councils through engagement with Ministers and their offices and State and Federal Departments. Its advocacy can be seen through media and social media channels.
Additionally, MAV advocates through regular submissions to inquiries and discussion papers including the 'Parliamentary Inquiry into securing the Victorian food supply' and the 'Parliamentary Inquiry into the Rental and Housing Affordability Crisis'.
The complete list of submissions that MAV has made over recent years can be found at: https://www.mav.asn.au/news-resources/publications/submissions.

Staff Development/Training:

Council officers and councillors have participated in many events and training opportunities.
Council has regularly attended the twice annual MAV State Councils.

Alignment to Council Plan and Strategies:

Membership with MAV aligns with the 'Well Governed Port Phillip' strategic direction.

- *Well Governed Port Phillip: A City that is a leading local government authority, where our community and our organisation are in a better place as a result of our collective efforts.*

Cost:

$65,380 + GST. Membership fees are due 30 June 2024.

Plans and priorities for 2024-25:

The MAV board, executive and staff have undergone a process to relaunch the Strategic Plan 2024-2027.

MAV's Strategic Plan 2024-2027 provides an outlook on the organisation's direction moving forward. The Plan is underpinned by the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and includes the following enabling priorities, or areas of focus, to shape future actions:

- Active local democracy
- Connected places
- Health & wellbeing
- Sustainable economy
- FutureGen
- First Peoples local government relations
- Climate & regenerative design
- Diversity, equity & inclusion
- Resilience & recovery
- Intergenerational infrastructure

More Information:

https://www.mav.asn.au/

Recommendation:

That Council resolve to maintain membership with MAV.
Councillors and Council officers have received benefit from attending MAV workshops, and the twice annual MAV State Council provides a key opportunity to advocate for Port Phillip priorities.
MAV's Governance network has contributed to effective planning for the 2024 local government elections. Incoming Councillors will benefit from utilising MAV credits to participate in professional development opportunities that will enable them to succeed on Council.

South East Council's Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA)

About Membership/Area of Expertise:

The South East Council's Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA) is a local government organisation made up of nine councils located in Melbourne's south east. City of Port Phillip forms part of the regional collaboration that SECCCA facilitates.
SECCCA is solely owned and managed by its council members, through a governance structure with the Management Committee developing and overseeing the implementation of SECCCA's strategic plan.
For the past 20 years, SECCCA has helped its member councils address climate change risk by undertaking mitigation and adaptation projects to deliver outcomes for councils and communities.

Achievements:

Projects and advocacy that have provided benefit to the City of Port Phillip:

SECCCA has delivered 23 of the 26 projects listed in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan with other projects expected to be completed in 2024.
Key Projects completed in 2023/24 include:

- 'Enhancing Community Resilience' - developing tools to identify and visualise the community services, demographics, locations, and communities vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, funded with $1M from Minderoo Foundation.
- A comprehensive Zero Carbon Roadmap for the South East Melbourne region, in partnership with GSEM, detailing the cost-effective opportunities and timeframes for all sectors to reduce emissions to net zero by 2050.
- A Climate Change Adaptation Toolkit for Small Businesses in the region.
- A Carbon Sink Study investigating the carbon sequestration opportunities for the south east Melbourne region.
- an online Electrification Guide for Local Government, to help councils replace gas appliances with electric in council buildings, as well as costs and savings.
- an updated 'BriefEzy' tool to develop a brief for the sustainability requirements of council projects for tender documentation.

Staff Development/Training:

SECCCA supports Council officers in the development and delivery of projects. The annual SECCCA Leaders Breakfast in August 2023 launched its new Strategic Plan and advocacy platform to senior Council executives, Councillors and regional politicians.
SECCCA co-organised the annual Victorian Greenhouse Alliances Conference in August 2023. SECCCA has developed toolkits for Council officers, such as 'POWERING UP: A Guide for Conversion of Council Assets from Gas to Electric'. Training and capacity building are being embedded into future projects beyond funded delivery to increase the utilization of project outputs and maximise value for member Councils.

Alignment to Council Plan and Strategies:

Membership with SECCCA aligns with the 'Sustainable Port Phillip' Strategic Direction.

- *Sustainable Port Phillip: A City that has a sustainable future, where our environmentally aware and active community benefits from living in a bayside city that is greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient.*

There is further alignment with:

- *Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-28*

Cost:

The SECCCA Strategic Plan 24-28 has a new membership fee model, which has membership ($40,000) and project components ($75,000), to a total of $115,000. Membership fees are due August/September 2024.
As SECCCA had instituted a new fee structure model, Council approached SECCA with a reduced fee alternative. At the time of writing this proposal was not accepted.

Plans and priorities for 2024-25:

SECCCA's Strategic Plan 2024-2028 includes 9 priority projects, including:

- Phase 2 of the Asset Vulnerability Assessment tool project, to assist members with capacity building to understand how buildings, roads and drainage will be impacted by climate change and ensure the value of this tool is maximised.
- Developing a Community Resilience Communications Plan template to support community awareness and increase preparedness to climate change.
- Workshops for senior Council managers to raise awareness of the need for councils to respond to climate risk.
- Developing and trialling a Residential Resilience Ratings Pilot tool to assess and rate a home's ability to withstand climate impacts, such as fire, floods, heat and storms along with recommendations for improvements.
- Direct support to Small Businesses to prepare for the impacts of climate change, including practical guides, tools and resources to embed the Small Business Climate Adaptation Toolkit.
- Further investigation of regional opportunities for carbon sequestration.
- Intensification of SECCCA's advocacy and communications efforts - SECCCA will build upon the delegations and relationships built with key state and federal stakeholders over the last 2 years.

More Information:

https://seccca.org.au/

Recommendation:

SECCCA offers access to a range of valuable tools and resources, used by council officers.
The *SECCCA Strategic Plan 24-28* has a new membership fee model, which has membership ($40,000) and project components ($75,000), to a total of $115,000.
Officers recommend allocation of $38,000 for projects (in addition to the $40,000 membership fee) to be drawn from the Act and Adapt Budget for SECCCA projects that align with the delivery of Act and Adapt projects. SECCCA are yet to confirm if this model is an acceptable outcome. Officers do not recommend payment of the $40,000 and the $78,000.

Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA)

About Membership/Area of Expertise:

The Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) is an independent governance organisation supporting councils and councillors.
VLGA provide opportunities for councillor networking, professional development and information exchange and actively engages with key policymakers and broader stakeholders to inform, influence and lead the conversations that determine the priorities for the local government sector in Victoria and support good governance at the local level.
The VLGA Constitution is framed to support the organisation to:

- be a peak body for councils.
- protect, advance, and advocate for the importance of the role of effective local government.
- to support and assist councillors to do their job well.
- to provide resources, information, and education, and undertake projects to support good governance and leadership.
- be a sustainable, focused and values driven organisation.

Achievements:

Projects and advocacy that have provided benefit to the City of Port Phillip:

The VLGA has positioned itself as a key organisation to support governance across local government.
It has offered VLGA Connect - a series of interviews with prominent people in the sector and beyond, including the highly subscribed Local Leader series which comprises interviews with VLGA member Mayors and CEOs. It has also offered the weekly TGU – The Governance Update program.

Staff Development/Training:

Over the past two years, the membership has held regular stakeholder engagement opportunities.
This has included:

- Building Community Wealth: VLGA & LGiU Australia Global Live Panel Forum (attended by Councillor Sirakoff)
- Victorian Local Government Women's Charter Afternoon Tea (attended by Councillor Crawford)
- LGV
- FinPro
- VLGA Connect Live Panel Discussion: In Conversation with Victoria's Local Government Policy and Integrity Agencies (attended by Councillor Crawford)
- International Women's Day 2022 - Morning Tea (attended by Councillor Cunsolo and former Councillor Copsey)
- FastTrack 2022 - Trust - The Foundation of Your Leadership Journey (attended by Councillor Baxter)
- Global Executive Panel: Harmonious council decision making – Setting up councils for success (attended by Councillor Nyaguy)
- FastTrack: Civility in Local Government (attended by Councillor Crawford)

Alignment to Council Plan and Strategies:

This membership aligns with the ‘Well Governed Port Phillip’ strategic direction.

- *Well Governed Port Phillip: A City that is a leading local government authority, where our community and our organisation are in a better place as a result of our collective efforts.*

Cost:

$30,146.00 plus GST. Membership fees are due on 1 July 2024.
Clause 13 of the 'Rules' (Constitution) of the VLGA provides that a resignation from a member Council does not take effect until 6 months after it is received by the VLGA.

Plans and priorities for 2024-25:

The VLGA released its Strategic Plan 2023-27 at FastTrack 2023, held in March 2023.
This Plan aims to address some of the challenges faced by councils and indicates a commitment to provide programs, support and guidance to ensure good governance and make decisions which optimise community success. Priorities identified by the VLGA for particular attention in the short to medium term include:

- a continued focus on governance, including responses to the review into culture to build community confidence in government and governance development (e.g., community leadership and staff new to local government) pre-election candidate and councillor induction training.
- continued innovation and improvement in local government, including supporting the implementation of values-based and positive-action legislation (i.e., Local Government Act 2020; Gender Equality Act 2020) through workshops, briefings, and advisory committees; and highlighting examples of excellence or best-practice policy and service delivery in local government.
- Inclusion & Diversity program – a continued role in supporting women; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; Victorians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and young people to take up community leadership roles, creating potential pathways to local government.
- strengthened relationships with stakeholders (including Ministers), extended networks; and
- development of councillors seeking to deliver effective outcomes for their communities in increasingly complex environments.

More Information:

https://www.vlga.org.au/

Recommendation:

That Council resolves to retain membership of the VLGA for 2024/25.
VLGA has provided independent advocacy, engagement, and networking opportunities. The organisation has provided a level of understanding and guidance around significant changes in the governance space, including legislative reform.
As this is an election year for Local Government across Victoria, membership with VLGA will continue to support 'good governance' throughout the LG environment. This is critical to continued public trust and delivery of the important outputs of councils.



portphillip.vic.gov.au

13.3	PROPOSED DISCONTINUANCE OF ROAD (IN PART) JOHNSON STREET, SOUTH MELBOURNE
EXECUTIVE MEMBER:	**LACHLAN JOHNSON, GENERAL MANAGER, OPERATIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**
PREPARED BY:	**VICKI TUCHTAN, ACTING MANAGER PROPERTY AND ASSETS** **MICHAEL MAJOR, TEAM LEADER PROPERTY OPERATIONS**

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To consider whether a segment of Johnson Street between Normanby Road and Munro Street, South Melbourne, shown shaded red on the image below (Road), should be discontinued pursuant to the *Local Government Act 1989* (Act) and retained by Council.



2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 Fishermans Bend is Australia's largest urban renewal project, covering 480 hectares of land located in the heart of Melbourne.

2.2 Established by the State Government, the Fishermans Bend Framework is a vision for the land, including a network of parks, schools, roads, transport, and community facilities and services to be delivered over the next 30 years.

2.3 Johnson Street Park is an open space identified for delivery in the Fishermans Bend Framework.

2.4 At its meeting on 17 April 2024, Council resolved to:

- Remove the Road in question from the Register; and

- Commence the statutory procedures and give notice pursuant to sections 207A and 223 of the Act of its intention to discontinue the Road and retain the land in the Road for public open space.

2.5 On 19 April 2024, Council gave public notice by publication in The Age newspaper and on Council's website.

2.6 Council did not receive any submissions in response to the public notice.

2.7 Council is now able to consider whether to discontinue and retain the Road.

2.8 Officers recommend that Council discontinues the Road and retains the land in the Road for public open space.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

Having considered that there were no submissions in response to the public notice regarding Council's proposal to discontinue a segment of Johnson Street between Normanby Road and Munro Street, South Melbourne (Road):

3.1 Resolves to discontinue and retain the Road as it considers that the Road is not reasonably required for public use for the following reasons:

3.1.1 It is not required to maintain the urban character of the area;

3.1.2 It may result in a better use of land through the provision of public open space;

3.1.3 It is not required for access to other premises; and

3.1.4 It may result in amenity improvements through the delivery of a public park; and

3.2 Directs that a notice pursuant to clause 3 of Schedule 10 of the *Local Government Act 1989* is published in the Victorian Government Gazette.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

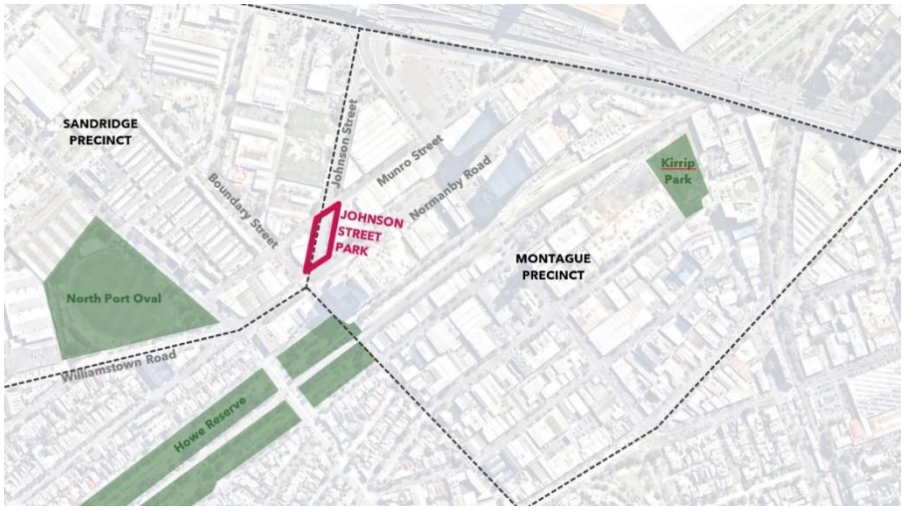
4.1 Council may support the discontinuance of a road within its municipality if it is considered in the best interest of the community.

4.2 Council can retain the land from the discontinued road for municipal purposes.

4.3 Any discontinuance of a road is to be carried out according to the provisions of clause 3 of Schedule 10 of the Act and Council's Discontinuance and Sale of Roads Policy.

4.4 As the Fishermans Bend area continues to transition to a residential and business centre, some sections of road have been identified for closure to create parks and open spaces. This will create a more liveable environment for our new community.

4.5 Johnson Street Park is an open space identified for delivery in the Fishermans Bend Framework, as shown on the image below. The Framework sets out an infrastructure delivery program that is funded in part by infrastructure and open space contributions.



4.6 The segment of Road between Normanby Road and Munro Street, South Melbourne proposed for discontinuance is shown shaded red on the image below:



4.7 Council has statutory power to consider discontinuing the Road.

4.8 If the Road is discontinued, the Road will vest in Council (section 207B of the Act).

4.9 A traffic study has indicated that the proposed Road discontinuance would have no adverse impacts on the surrounding road network or intersections in the vicinity.

4.10 The proposed road discontinuance and retention of the land in the Road will enable it to be re-purposed for community benefit as a park.

4.11 It is considered that the Road is no longer reasonably required for general public use as the Road:

4.11.1 Is not required to maintain the urban character of the area;

4.11.2 May result in a better use of land through the provision of public open space;

4.11.3 Is not required for access to other premises; and

4.11.4 May result in amenity improvements through the delivery of a public park.

4.12 Council is now able to consider whether to discontinue and retain the Road.

4.13 Officers recommend that Council discontinues the Road and retains the land in the Road for public open space.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 The proposal has been referred internally within Council and no objections have been received.

5.2 Council has notified the community of the Proposal through a public notice in The Age newspaper on 19 April 2024, and on Council's website inviting submissions in accordance with section 223 of the Act. The deadline for submissions was on 17 May 2024. No submissions were received by Council in response to the public notice.

5.3 The three adjoining property owners expressed initial support for the proposed discontinuance. Council officers wrote to the adjoining property owners, sharing the public notice. Council has not received responses from adjoining property owners.

5.4 Council officers wrote to the following stakeholders, sharing the public notice:

5.4.1 Department of Transport.

5.4.2 Statutory authorities, including:

- South East Water.
- Melbourne Water.
- Citipower.
- Multinet Gas.
- Australian Gas Networks.
- AusNet Electricity Services.
- United Energy.
- NBN.
- APA.
- Telstra Corporation.
- Optus.

5.5 Optus advised they have assets in the Road that may need to be relocated.

5.6 To date Council has not received responses from the Department of Transport or other statutory authorities. Any existing assets in the road which should be saved under section 207C of the Act will be considered appropriately.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Under Clause 3 of Schedule 10 of the Act, a council has the power to discontinue roads located within its municipality and sell the land from that road or retain the land for itself. Council must first give notices in accordance with sections 207A and 223 of that Act.

6.2 Council has a Road Discontinuance and Sale of Roads Policy that enables roads that are no longer required for public access to be discontinued.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 The proposed discontinuance of the Road has no detrimental financial implications.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 The Proposal has no detrimental environmental implications.

8.2 If the Road is discontinued, Council proposes to retain the land in the Road for public open space.

8.3 It is proposed the open space would take the form of a park that would include nature play elements for children to engage with the environment, social recreation, and water management.

8.4 Strategies to reduce the impacts of urban heat include reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, increased permeable surfaces, increased vegetation, and green spaces.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 Council will facilitate the discontinuance of roads where appropriate consultation has occurred, legislative requirements have been met and it is considered that road discontinuance is in the best interest of the wider community.

9.2 The proposed discontinuance and retention of the Road would allow for the creation of a park, and this open space would create a more liveable environment for our community.

9.3 Johnson Street Park will provide additional open space and align with Council's vision to create a well-connected network of public spaces that nurture and support the health, wellbeing, social connection, creative expression, and environment of our community.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 The proposed discontinuance of the Road aligns with the Strategic Directions:

10.1.1 Well-Governed in the Council Plan 2021-31: A City that is a leading local government authority, where our community and our organisation are in a better place as a result of our collective efforts; and

10.1.2 Liveable Port Phillip in the Council Plan 2021-31: A City that is a great place to live, where our community has access to high quality public spaces, development and growth are well-managed, and it is safer and easy to connect and travel within.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

- If the Proposal is approved:
  - a notice will shortly be published in the Victorian Government Gazette to formally discontinue the Road.
- The estimated commencement of works for the Johnson Street Park is expected late in 2024.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

- The public notification process has provided the community with the opportunity to make submissions in respect of the Proposal. Having considered that no submissions were received, Council may now determine whether to discontinue and retain the Road

12. OFFICER MATERIAL OR GENERAL INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS Nil

13.4 STATUS OF COUNCIL DECISIONS AND QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE RECORDED BY COUNCIL: 1 JANUARY - 31 MARCH 2024

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: **JOANNE MCNEILL, EXECUTIVE MANAGER, GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

PREPARED BY: **EMILY WILLIAMS, COUNCIL BUSINESS ADVISOR**

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To provide Councillors with an update on the status of all Resolutions passed by Council at Council and Planning Committee Meetings between 1 January to 31 March 2024 and the status of actions that were previously reported as outstanding in the last quarterly status report.

1.2 To provide Council with an update on the status of Questions Taken on Notice during Council Meetings from 1 January to 31 March 2024.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 Council Resolutions

2.1.1 The implementation status of Council Resolutions is a vital measure of Council's performance. This process may also assist reporting for the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework.

2.1.2 There has been a total of 45 Resolutions (decisions) that have been made by Council, in Council and Planning Committee meetings open to members of the public, between the period of 1 January to 31 March 2024. Of these, 9 decisions remain open/outstanding.

2.1.3 There has been a further 4 decisions that have been made in Council and Planning Committee meetings closed to members of the public. These confidential decisions have been completed.

2.1.4 This report includes a further 7 decisions that remain outstanding and a further 3 decisions that have been completed from previous reporting periods (that is, prior to 1 January 2024).

2.1.5 This report is a report in time and is representative of decisions made by Council in the period 1 January to 31 March 2024.

Questions taken on notice

2.1.3 At each meeting, provision is made at the beginning for members of the public and for Councillors to ask general questions. Questions relating to a topic on the agenda are not permitted during this time however can be asked prior to the discussion of that item. When a question is unable to be responded to at the time, it is taken 'on notice' for a response to be provided.

2.1.4 The response status of Questions taken on Notice during Council meetings is a measure of Council's engagement and communication with the community.

2.1.5 One question was taken on notice during the period 1 January to 31 March 2024 in Council meetings open to members of the public. A copy of the response to this question has been made available on the website and contained in Attachment 3 to this report.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Notes the implementation status of Council and Planning Committee Resolutions as contained in Attachments 1 and 2.

3.2 Notes the response status of questions taken on notice during Council Meetings as contained in Attachment 3.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

4.1 Accountability is a fundamental requirement of good governance. Council has an obligation to report, explain and be answerable for the consequences of decisions it has made on behalf of the community.

4.2 Reporting on the progress of the implementation of Council resolutions provides Council with the information it needs to demonstrate its accountability to the community.

4.3 Decisions of Council should be implemented in an effective, timely, appropriate, and responsive manner that makes the best use of the available people, resources, and time to ensure the best possible results.

4.4 **Council Resolutions**

4.4.1 A resolution made by Council is when an officer recommendation or a Councillor's motion is adopted at a Council Meeting or Planning Committee (i.e., a decision has been made). Once a decision on a recommendation has been made, it turns into a resolution. These resolutions are tracked through an internal system.

4.4.2 Attachments 1 and 2 of this report include a summary of the actions taken to implement resolutions where required, or confirmation that Council has noted items where appropriate. The summary of actions has been compiled and divided into the following categories:

- Status of Resolutions made at Council Meetings – Outstanding
- Status of Resolutions made at Council Meetings and Planning Committee Meetings – Completed

4.4.3 The Status of Resolutions documents include resolution of officer's reports, notices of motion, petitions and joint letters, and items of urgent business. Resolution of procedural motions (i.e., attendances and apologies, closing the meeting to discuss confidential items) have not been included.

4.4.4 Some of the reasons that resolutions have not been fully implemented may relate to consultation processes being undertaken, awaiting legal advice, or waiting for documents to be executed.

4.4.5 Where it is expected that a resolution may take a longer time to fully implement, the expected completion date has been extended.

4.5 **Questions taken on notice**

4.5.1 At each meeting, provision is made at the beginning for members of the public and for Councillors to ask general question/s. Questions relating to a topic on the agenda are not permitted during this time but can be asked prior to the

discussion of that item. When a question is unable to be responded to at the time, it is taken 'on notice' for a response to be provided.

4.5.2 Attachment 3 of this report includes a summary of questions asked and a link to where the responses to those questions has been published on Council's website.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 This report provides Council and the community with an update on the implementation of outcomes of council decisions.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 If decision-making is open and able to be followed by observers, it is more likely that all relevant legal requirements will be complied with.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

7.1 There are no financial impacts arising from this report.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

8.1 There are no environmental impacts arising from this report.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 Making decisions and having to account for them in an open and transparent way encourages honest consideration of issues by Councillors and promotes community confidence in the decision-making process.

9.2 Members of the community should be able to follow and understand the decision-making process. This means that they will be able to clearly see where a decision was made, and how this decision was implemented.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

10.1 Reporting on the progress of council resolutions delivers on Direction 5 of the Council Plan (Well Governed Port Phillip), by providing a transparent and good governance approach to decision making.

10.2 Good decision-making processes helps people feel that Council will act in the community's overall interest. It also encourages Councils to remember that they are acting on behalf of their community and helps them to understand the importance of having open and ethical processes which adhere to the law and stand up to scrutiny.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

Council receives ongoing reporting on the status of implementation of Council Decisions, and questions taken on notice at Council Meetings, on a quarterly basis.

12. OFFICER MATERIAL OR GENERAL INTEREST

12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have a material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. **Outstanding Decisions Council Meetings as at 31 March 2024**
2. **Completed Decisions Council and Planning Committee Meetings 1 January to 31 March 2024**
3. **Questions taken on notice 1 January to 31 March 2024**

Outstanding	**Division:**	**Date From:**	1/01/1900
	Committee: Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date To:**	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
6/04/2022	Port Melbourne Life Saving Club - Outside Showers	3.1 That Council defers this item to a future meeting:	Investigations are ongoing into a suitable option. A recent assessment has identified several challenges with accessibility to be worked through. The commitment of $250k from the State Government is for internal building modifications including installation of a lift. This funding will not enable delivery of warm showers for community groups.	Tuchtan, Vicki	30/09/2024
15/06/2022	Elevating Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) Targets Project: Planning Scheme Amendment	That Council: 3.1 Notes the outcomes of Stage 1 of the Elevating Environmentally Sustainable Development Targets Project (ESD Project) and recognises these as the strategic basis for Stage 2 of the project. 3.2 Endorses the City of Port Phillip participating in Stage 2 of the ESD Project. 3.3 Endorses the three consultant reports as shown in Attachments 1, 2 and 3 to this report, as supporting documents to an Amendment that introduces a new Particular Provision and associated changes to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme. 3.4 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to: 3.4.1 Enter into the Memorandum of Understanding for Stage 2 of the ESD Project on behalf of the City of Port Phillip. 3.4.2 Seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare and exhibit an Amendment as shown in Attachment 4 to this report, pursuant to Sections 8A and 8B of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987.* 3.4.3 Requests that the Minister for Planning establish an advisory committee to advise on the ESD Project in accordance with Section 151 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987.* 3.4.4 Finalise the documentation for the Amendment (including making minor changes to the proposed planning control that do not change its intent) and provide guidance to any Advisory Committee established by the Minister for Planning. 3.4.5 Place the Amendment to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme on exhibition, in accordance with Section 19 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, subject to Ministerial Authorisation. 3.5 Writes, through the Mayor, to the Minister for Planning and Housing, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Local Government and Suburban Development outlining the benefits to the community of introducing an elevated Environmentally Sustainable Development planning policy into the Port Phillip Planning Scheme, and requesting that this policy be adopted as a part of the State Government's Environmentally Sustainable Development planning reforms.	Council officers advised The Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) of the City of Port Phillip's further participation in Stage 2 of the project. In July 2022 letters were sent from the Mayor to the Minister for Planning, Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and Solar Homes, and Minister for Local Government and Suburban Development outlining the benefits to the community of introducing an elevated Environmentally Sustainable Development planning policy into the Port Phillip Planning Scheme, and requesting that this policy be adopted as a part of the State Government's Environmentally Sustainable Development planning reforms. As at May 2024, the Planning Scheme Amendment remains with state government for feedback.	Chapman, Alayna	31/07/2024
7/09/2022	Review of Heritage Overlay 7 and Surrounds	That Council:	Most actions in the resolution have been completed. Documentation for both	Chapman, Alayna	31/07/2024

Outstanding	**Division:**	**Date From:**	1/01/1900
	Committee: Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date To:**	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
	(Amendments C206port and C209port)	3.1 Endorses the two consultant reports (**Attachments 2** and **3**) as the strategic basis for additional and modified heritage controls proposed by Amendments C206port and C209port. 3.2 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to: 3.2.1 Seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare and exhibit Amendment C206port as shown in **Attachment 6** to this report, pursuant to Sections 8A of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act). 3.2.2 Place Amendment C206port to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme on exhibition, in accordance with Section 19 of the Act, subject to Ministerial Authorisation. 3.2.3 Request the Minister for Planning to prepare and approve Amendment C209port to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme pursuant to Section 20(4) of the Act to apply interim heritage controls to the properties identified in **Attachment 7.** 3.2.4 Write to the Minister for Planning and request that Amendment C189port be withdrawn, as the interim heritage control request for 12 Hotham Grove, Ripponlea will be included in Amendment C209port. 3.2.5 Finalise the documentation and Ministerial requests for Amendment C206port and C209port, including making minor changes that do not change its intent.	Amendments C206port and C209port have been finalised (Action 3.2.5). The request regarding AmC209port was sent to the Minister for Planning on 6 October 2022 (3.2.3), which included withdrawal request of AmC189port (3.2.4). The authorisation request regarding AmC206port was sent to the Minister for Planning on 12 October 2022 (3.2.1). Action 3.2.2 cannot be undertaken until authorisation is received resulting from 3.2.1. As of May 2024, Council is awaiting authorisation from the Minister for Planning in regard to 3.2.2. Officers are continuing to liaise with State Government seeking an update.		
16/08/2023	Discontinuation of part of Moubray Street, Albert Park (Moubray Street Community Park)	That Council, now being aware that the road known as part of Moubray Street, situated between Withers Street and Bridport Street West, Albert Park, and shown coloured in blue in Attachment 1 to this Report (**Road**), is a government road situated on Crown land: 3.1 Affirms its prior resolution on 7 December 2022 to discontinue the Road. 3.2 Notes that the effect of gazettal of the notice of road discontinuance of the Road will be that ownership of the Road will remain with the Crown (and not vest in Council in fee simple) and that no easements, rights or interests will be saved over the Road in favour of a public authority. 3.3 Will apply to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) to: 3.3.1 initiate the reservation of the Road and appoint Council as the committee of management; and 3.3.2 issue a licence pursuant to the *Land Act 1958* (Vic) (or as otherwise necessary) to enable Council to access the Road and perform any required works for the development of Moubray Street Community Park as a permanent park, pending the reservation of the land and appointment of Council as committee of management after the proposed discontinuance of the Road has been gazetted.	All submitters have been responded to directly of the Council decision and the reasons for. The process has commenced to close the road. Service authorities and emergency services have all been consulted with. The Department of Energy Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) are now involved due to Crown Land Determination. DEECA approval has been granted and the land reservation and licence request processes with DEECA are underway. The notice of road discontinuance was published in the gazette on 14 September 2023 and the Land reservation is estimated to be complete in February 2024. DEECA advised on 10 April that they are waiting on the Governor of Victoria approval.	Miller, Karen	30/06/2024
6/12/2023	St Kilda Triangle - Live Music Venue -	That Council: 3.1 Notes the release of several key project deliverables with the publication of this report on Council's web-page on 1 December 2023. These include: *The St Kilda*	To address Council's direction to further clarify the level of interest in investing in a new live music and performance venue on	Rysanek, Michelle	20/12/2023

Outstanding	**Division:**	**Date From:**	1/01/1900
	Committee: Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date To:**	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
	Outcomes of Community Consultation, Preliminary Planning Assessment, Commercial Analysis Summary and Next Steps	*Triangle – Proposal for a Live Music and Performance Venue - Engagement Summary Report* (Attachment 1) and the *St Kilda Triangle Commercial Feasibility Analysis and Development Options Report Public Summary* (Attachment 3) and the *St Kilda Triangle Planning Pathway Options Assessment* (Attachment 4). 3.2 Notes that the *St Kilda Triangle Commercial Feasibility Analysis and* Development *Options Report* has been provided confidentially to Council due to the commercially sensitive nature of the contents but that a summary of the report suitable for publication has been developed and is included in this report as noted above. 3.3 Notes that Council, at a public meeting on 6 September 2023, was presented with the *St Kilda Triangle Design Feasibility for a Live Music and Performance Venue* and the *St Kilda Triangle Potential Live Music / Performance Venue Market Sounding Report,* seeking authorisation to commence community consultation on the indicative site layout (design option 2) set out in the design feasibility report. 3.4 Notes that a community and stakeholder engagement program seeking feedback on the outcomes of the design feasibility report commenced immediately following the Council Meeting on 7 September 23 and concluded on 19 October 23, with the key outcomes of the engagement set out in the body of the report, with further details provided in the engagement summary report in Attachment 1. 3.5 Notes the outcomes of the planning pathways assessment outlined in this report and detailed in Attachment 4. 3.6 Considers the following key findings across the various components of work: • There is demand for a flexible 5000 standing live music and performance venue. • The 'proof of concept' layout shows that a venue can be effectively accommodated on the St Kilda Triangle with carparking, public realm and other uses. • There is strong industry support for a new venue to be located in St Kilda. • There is majority support for a live music and performance venue, including strong support by representatives of the Traders Associations for Acland Street and Fitzroy Street, though there is some local opposition to the idea. • There was concern expressed by destination venues immediately adjacent about a reduction in parking leading to loss of business. • Carparking and traffic movement, the scale of the building and ongoing activation of or need for the venue were raised as concerns by those who did not support the concept and there were mixed views regarding parking. • The likely cost of the 'proof of concept' idea that has been explored for a new live music and performance venue is estimated as a range between $113m-$139m, including the venue, basement carparking and public realm. • The cost estimate that has been developed is useful for understanding the type of cost for a development such as this but would need to be reassessed to reflect any key changes that have been incorporated to the final design and cost of construction at the time.	the St Kilda Triangle, including the level of funding available, an Approach to engage the live music market has been developed in consultation with Councillors and implementation has commenced. Advocacy with State and Federal government continues to be a key action and is built into the delivery plan for this project. In terms of a project to progress the upgrade of the pedestrian crossing between the St Kilda Triangle carpark and the foreshore as part of the 2024/25 budget process, this is being reviewed. Any project on the Triangle site should effectively align with a pedestrian crossing project to ensure appropriate connections to, through and from the site. In developing the Urban Forest Strategy there is a draft action to Consider the delivery of urban forest outcomes in the scope and budget for all open space and recreation outdoor capital works programs. There is no current greening project associated with the triangle but will be considered in line with this draft action through the council plan and budget process, with time in the project allocated to feasibility and design prior to construction. process, with time in the project allocated to feasibility and design prior to construction.		

Outstanding	**Division:**	**Date From:**	1/01/1900
	Committee: Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date To:**	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
		- Operators are likely to have capacity to include a capital contribution as part of a bid in a competitive procurement process for a new venue in future, with the quantum being directly related to the length of tenure. - Given the regional significance and civic nature of the project, it is likely that significant public funding or other subsidy will be required to support private investment in the development to achieve an outcome that will realise the full benefits possible for the site. 3.7 Advocate to the Victorian Government for investment in a business case for a new live music and performance venue on the St Kilda Triangle, with a possible contribution from Council to the business case to be confirmed. 3.8 Approves a project budget of $110k for Officers to engage with the market to further clarify the level of interest in investing in a new live music and performance venue on the St Kilda Triangle, and understand the level of funding contribution that is possible. This could include discussions with any interested parties that were involved in the market sounding, parties that have already expressed interest in the project and an invitation to other interested parties who haven't yet made contact with Council. 3.9 Requests officers investigate greening opportunities for the St Kilda Triangle using the existing Greening Port Phillip budget. 3.10 Consider a project to progress the upgrade of the pedestrian crossing between the St Kilda Triangle carpark and the foreshore as part of the 2024/25 budget process.			
6/12/2023	Notice of Motion - Councillor Robbie Nyaguy - Parklets	That Council: 1.1 Requests officers to review the patron and venue demand for current parklets utilising over 4 parking bays, in conjunction with the annual desktop review of the parklet guidelines.	Officers met with affected traders/permit-holders to confirm reporting arrangements, with follow-up emails to clarify reporting requirements. Reporting commenced the week beginning 8 January 2024 and will run until the week beginning 24 June 2024, to be emailed to the Footpath Trading Helpdesk, weekly., Target date revised to 30 June to accord with data capture period, and ahead of 1 October 2024 when permit review/renewals occur.	Jay, Marc	30/06/2024
6/12/2023	Queens Lane Traffic and parking review	That Council: 3.1 Notes congestion at the intersection of Queens Lane and Kings Way has been a long-standing issue and that major changes to the arterial network of roads surrounding Queens Lane are required to address congestion issues within the lane. These are State owned and managed roads which Council has limited capacity to influence. 3.2 Endorses the following initiatives to be actioned along Queens Lane to help mitigate the observed issues where possible and improve safety of all road users:	3.2.1 -Enforcement procedures are underway in accordance with Council standard practices., Request for "Tow Away powers" is currently being prepared for the Department of Transport, this request necessitates formal gazette process for Tow Away powers. 3.2.2 -Officers have engaged with Department of Transport and Planning	Mason, Thomas	30/06/2024

Outstanding	**Division:**	**Date From:**	1/01/1900
	Committee: Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date To:**	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
		3.2.1 Increase parking enforcement to improve compliance of the clearway and parking controls between Arthur Street and Kings Way and request 'Tow-Away powers' be granted from the Department of Transport and Planning 3.2.2 Seek approval from the Department of Transport and Planning to modify the 'Keep Clear' line marking on Kings Way to allow more traffic from Queens Lane to turn when traffic along Kings Way is queued. Implementation of any modification will be subject to Council's budget process. 3.2.3 As part of the Council budget process, consider the installation of kerb outstands at Leopold Street and Arthur Street intersections with Queens Lane to increase safety by improving vehicle and pedestrian sightlines, lower vehicle speeds and shorten crossing distances and provide the opportunity for landscaping. 3.2.4 Review the 40km/h signage on Queens Lane and, where there are gaps, add additional signage.	for a modification to the existing 'Keep Clear' line marking on Kings Way at the intersection of Queens Lane. , Our proposal has in principle support, we are working through received comments for further refinement., 3.2.3 -Concept designs have been prepared for the improvement of the intersections at Queens Lane with Arthur and Leopold Streets. We have sought input and feedback from key internal stakeholders. Concept design to proceed to community consultation. Consultation to occur before the end of the financial year. 3.2.4 –The installation of additional 40kph signs along Queens Lane between Arthur Street and Kings Way has been successfully executed following the completion of the work order and site investigations.		
21/02/2024	Aged Care Reforms Future Model for Endorsement	That Council: 3.1 Acknowledges the ongoing commitment to supporting older people to age positively in our community. 3.2 Notes that the Commonwealth Aged Care Reforms drive a need for Council to review the way it delivers services to older people to ensure it is viable, relevant, efficient, and demonstrates best value to the community. 3.3 Notes the feedback from staff, clients, community, advisory committees, community groups and unions received through the formal consultation process has informed and shaped the recommended future model of service delivery- the Village model. 3.4 Endorses the implementation of the Village. 3.4.1 Endorses the relinquishment of Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) funded in-home support services (domestic assistance, personal care, respite care, social support -individual, property maintenance and home modifications) back to the Commonwealth. 3.4.2 Approves notifying the Commonwealth of Council's intention to relinquish CHSP in-home services and our commitment to work together to ensure a smooth transition for clients to Commonwealth approved providers. 3.4.3 Continues to deliver Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) funded community-based services which include delivered meals, transport, and social connection programs.	The future model of service delivery known as the Village Model will be implemented by the 1 September 2024 and work has commenced on the development of this model. The Commonwealth has been notified of Council's intention to relinquish in home service (domestic assistance, personal care, respite care, social support individual, property maintenance and home modifications). Council is working closely with the Commonwealth to ensure that a smooth transition process across the new panel of approved providers is achieved for its clients. Council has also notified the State government of its intention to relinquish HACC PYP services and are also working closely with the State to ensure that a smooth transition process across to a provider is achieved for its clients. Council will continue to deliver services that are community based including transport, delivered meals and social connection programs. Council will also continue to fund	Monro-Hobbs, Bridget	31/12/2024

Outstanding	**Division:**	**Date From:**	1/01/1900
	Committee: Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date To:**	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
		3.4.4 Approves notifying the State of Council's intention to relinquish HACC/PYP funded in-home support services (domestic assistance, personal care, respite care, social support -individual) back to the State. 3.4.5 Continues to fund and deliver the hop on hop off bus service. 3.4.6 Establishes a Community Connector service that will provide older people with a single point of contact for Council to support them to navigate the aged care service system, whether that be to link them to the Commonwealth Government's support at Home Program, or to access other activities and supports in the city to assist them to age well. Council will continue to be a first point of call for community members requesting this type of support and the Community Connector service will be reviewed after 12 months to ensure it is delivering its role effectively. 3.4.7 Approves an annual budget of $0.42m in the 10-year financial plan which is an increase of $0.065k in the Community Services budget and includes the establishment of the Community Connector roles. 3.4.8 Approves one off business transition costs of $0.36m in the 2024/25 financial year for business improvement activities to establish the Village Model, in addition to the annual recurring budget of $0.42m. 3.4.9 Notes that $1.81m one-off transition costs incurred by the relinquishment of funded in-home support services will be considered as part of the budget 2024/25 development. 3.4.10 Approves the implementation of the Village model by no later than September 2024. 3.5 Notes that the Regional Assessment Service (RAS) will cease on the 30 of June 2024 at the conclusion of the contract with the Commonwealth.	the hop on hop off bus service and is in the process of implementing a new role known as the Community Connector role. The Community connectors will provide older people with a single point of contact for Councils to support them to navigate the aged care service system whether that be to link them into the Commonwealth Support at Home program or to access other services and supports in the City to assist them to age well. Council is also working with the State to ensure that the Regional Assessment Service transition by the end of June is smooth.		
21/02/2024	Stormwater Harvesting Program	That Council: 3.1 Notes the five options for the Stormwater Harvesting Program included in this report. 3.2 Pursues **option 5** to: (a) place Fitzroy Street/Catani Gardens Stormwater Harvesting Scheme on hold. (b) pursue potential partnering and funding opportunities with South East Water and other State Government partners, on the Elwood Park Expansion Stormwater Harvesting Scheme. (c) Receives a further report on the outcome of the discussions with South East Water and the State Government.	In response to the Council decision the following has been undertaken: • Fitzroy Street/Catani Gardens Stormwater Harvesting Scheme has been placed on hold. • A meeting was held with South East Water on 1st March to discuss the Elwood Park Expansion Project. We are now waiting for their grant round to open, expected in June 2024. Bayside City Council, Melbourne Water and DEECA have also been engaged since the February 21st Council Meeting. • A report will be prepared following the outcomes of the grant round with South East Water. This will likely be after Council elections.	Barron , Natalie	30/06/2024

Outstanding	**Division:**	**Date From:**	1/01/1900
	Committee: Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date To:**	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
21/02/2024	Proposed Lease of the Port Phillip EcoCentre in the St Kilda Botanical Gardens, St Kilda	That Council: 3.1 Concludes the statutory process under section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* by granting a lease over the Port Phillip EcoCentre site to Port Phillip EcoCentre Incorporated on the following key terms: 3.1.1 Length of lease – 15 years. 3.1.2 Rent – commencing at $104.00 per annum exclusive of GST. 3.1.3 The tenant to be responsible for a schedule of maintenance and for all utilities and outgoings associated with the operation of their service. 3.2 Authorise the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate, to execute the lease.	Since this resolution was passed in February, officers have been meeting with the EcoCentre to establish a funding agreement. The funding agreement is nearing completion and is very KPI / outcome based. The funding attached to this agreement forms part of the draft Budget. The EcoCentre has also been focussed on the fit-out of the new building. Discussions to finalise the lease will recommence in June, and the lease will be in place prior to occupation, which is expected in late Spring 2024.	Tuchtan, Vicki	30/09/2024
6/03/2024	Proposed Discontinuance of Road Adjoining 3-5, 7, 9, and 15 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda	That Council: Having considered that there were no submissions in response to the public notice regarding Council's proposal to discontinue the road being the land contained in certificate of title volume 2591 folio 074 (described as Road R1 on plan of subdivision LP29616) (Road): 3.1 Resolves to discontinue the Road as it considers that the Road is not reasonably required for public use for the following reasons: □ It is enclosed between the walls and fences of the adjoining properties, and only accessible on the southern boundary; □ It is only open to the general public for pedestrian access to the rear of the adjoining properties at 3-5 and 7 Fitzroy Street; □ It is not open to the general public for vehicular access; and □ It does not form part of a thoroughfare for pedestrian or vehicular traffic to any other public road; 3.2 Resolves to sell the discontinued Road for market value plus reimbursement of Council's costs to facilitate this transaction to the adjoining owner of 3-5, 7, 9, and 15 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda (Owner); 3.3 Notes that proceeds from the sale will go into Council's Strategic Property Reserves used to support the acquisition and development of the property portfolio; 3.4 Directs that a notice pursuant to clause 3 of Schedule 10 of the *Local Government Act 1989* is published in the Victorian Government Gazette; 3.5 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate to negotiate, approve, and enter into such documentation to complete the discontinuance, sale, and transfer of the Road as described; 3.6 Directs that the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate signs an authorisation allowing Council's solicitors to execute transfer documents and any other documents required to be signed on Council's behalf in connection with the transfer of the discontinued Road to the Owner;	The property team is working through these steps to finalise the discontinuance of the Road. Completion is anticipated in the coming months.	Tuchtan, Vicki	30/06/2024

Outstanding	**Division:**	**Date From:**	1/01/1900
	Committee: Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date To:**	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
		3.7 Directs that any easements, rights or interests required to be created or saved over the Road by any public authority be done so and not be affected by the discontinuance and sale of the Road; and 3.8 Directs that the Owner be required to consolidate the title to the discontinued Road with the title to the Owner's land (or such part of it approved by Council) within 12 months of the date of the transfer of the discontinued Road.			
6/03/2024	City of Port Phillip Advocacy Strategy	That Council: 3.1 Endorses the City of Port Phillip Advocacy Strategy 2024-2027 to provide Councillors, officers and the community with an advocacy process that details how Council prioritise, implement, and report on advocacy priorities. 3.2 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate to make any minor amendments that do not change the material intent of the Strategy.	The finalisation of advocacy strategy is underway, Councillors will be briefed on the strategy in June 2024, and the strategy is anticipated to be presented to a Council meeting in August 2024 for consideration.	Gullan, James	1/08/2024
6/03/2024	Petition: Protect Our Weekly Wellness Gathering: FeelGoodFlows	That Council: 1. Receives and notes the petition. 2. Thanks the petitioners for their petition. 3. Acknowledges the community benefit that Feel Good Flows provides. 4. Notes the increasing pressure on public space to support commercial operators, particularly along the foreshore, and recognises the importance of public open spaces being shared by all community users. 5. Notes the provider can continue operations in line with their current licence, as per the Fitness Training Policy, with participant numbers of no more than 15 and within the allocated locations. 6. Requests officers to work with Feel Good Flows on alternative options in line with relevant policies and guidelines.	The Coordinator Sport & Recreation and the Recreation Participation & Projects Officer have notified the petitioner of the outcome. The organiser of Feel-Good Flows is hoping to obtain a commercial Recreation Permit and will prepare a request to Councillors. Officers are working towards alternative options in line with relevant policies and guidelines.	Flett, Kahlia	30/06/2024
20/03/2024	Council Submission to the Victorian Government's Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Area Development Contributions Plan (Planning Scheme Amendment GC224)	That Council: 3.1 Endorses the City of Port Phillip submission to Draft Planning Scheme Amendment GC224 - Fishermans Bend Development Contributions Plan and Open Space Uplift mechanism (Attachment 1). 3.2 Notes that the submission will form the basis of the City of Port Phillip's engagement with the Department of Transport and Planning, in the interest of resolving issues where possible prior to a Precincts Standing Advisory Committee. 3.3 Authorises the CEO, or their delegate, to make administrative changes and correct any errors, that do not materially affect the intent of the submission, prior to submission to the Department of Transport and Planning. 3.4 Authorises the CEO, or their delegate, to make adjustments to the submission and subsequent advocacy before the Precincts Standing Advisory Committee process as necessary if further information on the draft DCP or the draft Amendment GC224 transpires through the process consistent with the thrust of Council's endorsed submission provided Council is kept briefed on those changes.	State Government was notified of Council endorsed submission and Council has been advocating and involved in the planning scheme amendment process (Items 3.1 to 3.5 complete). Council has requested the State provide further information about the DCP through the advisory committee process in accordance with the endorsed submission and relevant resolutions (items 3.5, 3.7.1 and 3.7.2 complete). The planning scheme amendment was referred by the State Government to the Precincts Standing Advisory Committee (PSAC). The PSAC had initially directed a hearings process for May-June 2024 but this has since been deferred to November-December 2024 to accommodate availability of key experts. Council has been engaging with the PSAC	Nevin, Gareth	3/04/2024

Outstanding	**Division:**	**Date From:**	1/01/1900
	Committee: Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date To:**	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
		3.5 Requests the Department of Transport and Planning to release the updated scope and cost information that has formed the basis of the draft Development Contributions Plan projects in sufficient time to enable them to be reviewed by Council and other submitters. 3.6 Requests the Mayor write to the Victorian Government seeking a commitment to the eventual funding and delivery of the Fishermans Bend Tram servicing the Sandridge and Wirraway Precincts. 3.7 Requests the CEO, or their delegate, write to the Victorian Government seeking commitments to: 3.7.1 release a comprehensive funding and finance strategy for all infrastructure classifications and categories. 3.7.2 release the updated scope and cost information that has formed the basis of all draft DCP projects in sufficient time to enable them to be reviewed by Council and other submitters. 3.7.3 development of an updated Fishermans Bend Partnership Agreement, and an infrastructure governance and implementation strategy. 3.7.4 confirmation of process, timeframes and eventual funding for the delivery of catalytic infrastructure, including the Fishermans Bend tram and Melbourne Metro 2. 3.7.5 Collaborative development and finalisation of the Montague, Sandridge and Wirraway Precinct Implementation Plans, and a commitment to the review and update of any approved DCP as part of the Precinct Implementation Plan processes.	and State Government through this process. Council will next formally write to State on the matters of separate of the DCP, including public transport, partnership and precinct planning integration (Item 3.6-3.7 in progress).		
20/03/2024	Proposed Discontinuance of Road Adjoining 197 and 199 Princes Street, and 55 Station Street, Port Melbourne	That Council: Having considered that there were no submissions in response to the public notice regarding Council's proposal to discontinue the road known as Laneway R2243 (Road): 3.1 Resolves to discontinue the Road as it considers that the Road is not reasonably required for public use for the following reasons: 3.1.1 It is enclosed on the side and rear boundaries by adjoining properties, and only accessible onto Princes Street; 3.1.2 It is only open to the general public for pedestrian access to the rear of the adjoining property at 55 Station Street, Port Melbourne; 3.1.3 It is not open to the general public for vehicular access; and 3.1.4 It does not form part of a thoroughfare for pedestrian or vehicular traffic to any other public road; 3.2 Resolves to retain and restrict access to the discontinued Road, entering into a Section 173 Agreement with the adjoining land owners; 3.3 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate to negotiate, approve, and enter into such documentation to complete the discontinuance, retention, and restriction of public access of the Road as described;	Property officers are in discussions with surrounding residents to negotiate a 173 agreement.	Tuchtan, Vicki	31/08/2024

Outstanding	**Division:**	**Date From:**	1/01/1900
	Committee: Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date To:**	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ESTIMATED COMPLETION
		3.4 Directs that any easements, rights or interests required to be created or saved over the Road by any public authority be done so and not be affected by the discontinuance and restriction of public access; and 3.5 Directs that a notice pursuant to clause 3 of Schedule 10 of the *Local* Government *Act 1989* is published in the Victorian Government Gazette.			
20/03/2024	Council Submission to the Victorian Government's Montague Precinct Implementation Plan (Fishermans Bend)	That Council: 3.1 Welcomes the Victorian Government's development of and consultation on the Draft Montague Precinct Implementation Plan. 3.2 Endorses the attached submission to the Victorian Government's Draft Montague Precinct Implementation Plan (Attachments 1 and 2). 3.3 Authorises the CEO, or their delegate, to write to the Victorian Government, notifying them of the Council Submission and seeking: 3.3.1 Confirmation of council involvement in any updates to the Montague Precinct Implementation Plan, planning scheme amendment and associated supporting material. 3.3.2 Receipt and review of the planning controls that will form part of a planning scheme amendment that implements the Montague Precinct Implementation Plan. 3.3.3 Receipt and review of the Making Montague supporting material prior to finalisation of the Montague Precinct Implementation Plan for the upcoming planning scheme amendment. 3.3.4 Involvement in aligning the government's infrastructure funding strategy (including development contributions plan) and Montague Precinct Implementation Plan processes and outcomes, noting that Council has made a separate submission to the Planning Scheme Amendment GC224 Fishermans Bend Development Contributions Plan process. 3.4 Authorises the CEO, or their delegate, to make minor amendments to the submission that do not materially alter the intent.	State Government was notified of Council endorsed submission (Item 3.2 complete). Council has been engaging with the State Government through the partnership forum and will formally write to them on the matters of partnership process and precinct planning integration (Item 3.3 in progress).	Nevin, Gareth	3/04/2024

Completed	**Committee:**	Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date From:**	1/01/2024
			Date To:	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
16/09/2020	Response to Joint Letter regarding inadequate vehicle parking - G12+ Domain Precinct Residents' Group	That Council: 1. Acknowledges the concerns raised by the signatories to the joint letter and the issues being experienced by residents of Albert Road. 2. Thanks, the G12+ Domain Precinct Residents' Group for the joint letter to Council and advises the head signatory of the joint letter of Council's resolution on this matter. 3. Requests Council officers to advocate to Rail Projects Victoria and Cross Yarra Partnership for the retention of as many on-street parking spaces as practical on Albert Road in the legacy design, without compromising the expanded Albert Road Reserve or safety for pedestrians and bike riders, and a staged approach to the reduction of on-street car parking as part of construction of ANZAC Station and surrounds. 4. Request Council officers to research and identify innovative solutions that enable underutilised parking in buildings to be accessed by visitors and trades people, subject to Council's resources and budget. 5. Notes that the forthcoming consultation by Cross Yarra Partnership on an amended development plan for the Domain Precinct provides an opportunity for the community to provide feedback on the parking provision and design of Albert Road. 6. Commits to regular patrols by parking enforcement officers of Albert Road on weekday mornings, once the Level 4 COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted and the Victorian Government has given approval for normal parking compliance activities to resume. 7. Notes that a review of all on-street car parking spaces and controls within the precinct, including loading zones, is planned for the 21/22 FY, to ensure the available spaces are used as fairly and effectively as possible. Having more effective on-street parking management is intended to encourage increased use of the existing parking bays within buildings for visitors, servicing and loading and helping to alleviate current parking pressures. This review is aligned to the implementation of the Domain Public Realm Master Plan and subject to funding through Council's annual budget process. 8. Requests that Council officers report the findings of the on-street parking review planned for 21/22, referred to in point 6, to Council as an opportunity to consider whether this review provides sufficient strategic justification to commence a planning scheme amendment process to require on-site loading facilities and vary visitor parking rates. 9. Notes that because the Ministerial Amendment VC148 to all municipal planning schemes (which removed the need for residential buildings with more than five dwellings to provide any visitor parking) only took effect in November 2018, seeking approval from the Minister for Planning to vary these parking rates in the Port Phillip Planning Scheme without sufficient strategic justification is unlikely to be supported.	Council continues to enforce parking controls within the Domain Precinct Parking and respond to direct enquiries relating to parking matters. Council in its endorsed response to the draft Amended Development Plan sought parking retention as a high priority. Councillors were briefed in April 2024 and a final consultant report has been finalised. On 15 May 20234, officers presented the final report to Council for consideration wherein officer recommendations were adopted. These included: • that officers further assess and brief Council on the reconfiguration of road-space in Palmerston Crescent and Bowen Crescent which could increase available on-street parking. • that the proposed changes to locations of loading bays and timed on-street parking restrictions, outlined in the report be implemented and that any departure from these recommendations, as determined by officers, remain consistent with Council's Parking Management Policy. • that officers identify and provide changes to parking bay arrangements, where appropriate, to offer greater flexibility for parking permit holders in this area • that officers continue to negotiate with developers to provide onsite loading facilities and visitor parking in new developments.	MacNish, David	23/05/2024

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MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
		10. Notes that Council resolved on 28 March 2018 to seek the discretionary requirements for on-site loading facilities be converted into mandatory built form controls in the Design and Development Overlay (DDO26) for the Domain Precinct. However, it was not approved by the Minister for Planning and is unlikely to be reconsidered. Instead Council officers will continue to work to secure the discretionary requirements for on-site loading through its statutory planning service. 11. Notes that since Council sought to introduce changes to Design and Development Overlay (DDO26), Council has been successful at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), with VCAT agreeing with Council's position on several occasions to ensure proposals meet discretionary built form controls, including on-site loading facilities.			
3/02/2021	Procurement Australia Contract	That Council: 3.1 Endorse the renewal of Port Phillip City Council's contract with Procurement Australia (2312-0618) for the period 4 February 2021 to 31 December 2025, with an estimated expenditure of up to $24M over the four-year contract period. 3.2 Notes that the estimated contract expenditure of up to $6M annually, is based on historical average spend of $7.4M annually over the last four years, combined with the introduction of improved controls, and reduced actual spend in 2020. 3.3 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to undertake all necessary actions to give effect to Council's decision with respect to the suppliers and Procurement Australia's Contract No 2312-0618 including executing and affixing Council's common seal to all documents as required. 3.4 Notes officers are planning to undertake a broader review of the Contract and the approach used for recruitment, training and associated services in 2021. This will include a review of the contract management, governance and oversight arrangements, as well as mechanisms to ensure greater visibility of organisational use and trends, to inform broader workforce and recruitment strategies. The review will also look at the efficiency and effectiveness of these arrangements to provide assurance over value for money of this expenditure category.	3.1 Complete, 3.2 Complete/noted. Procurement and People Culture and Safety continue to monitor spend through contract management. 3.3 Approved no further action. 3.4 Complete. Officers have completed the broader review of the Contract and the approach used for recruitment, training, and associated services in 2021. The review determined that the contract continues to provide Council with a diverse, value-for-money tested panel of providers that meets Council's operational needs. A Council report was tabled on 17 April detailing the report findings and recommendations.	Lew, Daniel	30/04/2024
20/07/2022	Proposed Discontinuance and Sale of Road Abutting 26 and 28 Wellington Street St Kilda	That Council having considered that there were no submissions in response to the public notice regarding Council's proposal to discontinue and sell the road abutting 26 and 28 Wellington Street, St Kilda, known as laneway R3723, being the land contained in Memorial Book 22 Number 809 and Memorial Book 298 Number 450 (Road): 3.1 resolves to discontinue the Road as it considers that the Road is not reasonably required for public use for the reasons set out in the report; 3.2 resolves to sell the discontinued Road to Homes Victoria, the owner of the adjoining property (Adjoining Owner) at 28 Wellington Street, St Kilda for a nominal amount of $1 plus legal fees;	The sale of this Land settled on 17 November 2023.	Tuchtan, Vicki	30/11/2023

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		3.3 directs that a notice pursuant to clause 3 of Schedule 10 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic) is published in the *Victoria Government Gazette*; 3.4 directs that the Chief Executive Officer or delegate signs an authorisation allowing Council's solicitors to execute transfer documents and any other documents required to be signed on Council's behalf in connection with the transfer of the discontinued Road to the Adjoining Owner; 3.5 directs that any easements, rights or interests required to be created or saved over the Road by any public authority be done so and not affected by the discontinuance and sale of the Road; and 3.6 directs that the Adjoining Owner be required to consolidate the title to the discontinued Road with the title to the Adjoining Owner's property within 12 months of the date of the transfer of the discontinued Road.			
7/02/2024	Appointment of Authorised Officers Pursuant to the Planning and Environment Act 1987	That Council: 3.1 Approves the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation at **Attachment 1 and Attachment 2**. 3.2 Affixes the common seal of Council to the Instrument of Appointments.	The Instruments of Delegation have been executed and distributed accordingly. No further action required.	Collins, Katrina	16/02/2024
7/02/2024	Audit and Risk Committee - Appointment of Audit & Risk Committee Chairperson 2024 AND Reappointment of Independent Member	That Council: 3.1 Appoints Brian Densem to the position of Chairperson of the City of Port Phillip Audit and Risk Committee for the 2024 calendar year, commencing 01 January 2024 through to 31 December 2024. 3.2 Extends Helen Lanyon's tenure as an independent member of the City of Port Phillip audit and Risk Committee for an additional three years, commencing 01 January 2024.	Audit & Risk Committee Chair (B Densem) and reappointed independent member (H Lanyon) have been notified of the outcome. No further action required.	Snowden, Julie	14/02/2024
7/02/2024	Aged Care Reform-Engagement Report	That Council: 3.1 Acknowledges the ongoing commitment to supporting older people to age positively in our community. 3.2 Notes that the Commonwealth Aged Care Reforms drive a need for Council to review the way it delivers services to older people to ensure it is viable, relevant, effective and efficient, sustainable and demonstrates best value to the community. 3.3 Notes the feedback from staff, clients, community, advisory committees, community groups and unions received through the formal consultation process will inform and shape the future model of service delivery for older people. 3.4 Thanks everyone who provided feedback on the proposed future model of service delivery for older people- the Village model.	Feedback from staff, clients, the community, advisory committees, community groups and unions informed Councils response to the Commonwealth Aged Care Reforms and the need for Councils to review the way it delivers services to older people. Feedback provided supported the development of the Village Model as a way of continuing to deliver services community-based services to older people and providing a new role known as the community connector roles which will support olde people to link into the services and supports they need to age well in the City of Port Philip.	Monro-Hobbs, Bridget	22/05/2024
7/02/2024	Presentation of November CEO Report - Issue 102	That Council: 3.1 Notes the CEO Report – Issue 102 (provided as Attachment 1).	Received and noted by Council, November 2023 CEO report published to Council's website.	Bailey, Jacky	5/04/2024

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MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
7/02/2024	Acland Street Village Special Rate and Charge - Consideration of Submissions	That Council: 3.1 Considers all written submissions and hear persons who have requested to speak in support of their submissions in respect to the proposed Acland Street Village Special Rate and Charge 2024 - 2029 and in accordance with sections 163A, 163B and 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. 3.2 Notes it will make a formal decision on whether to declare the Acland Street Village Special Rate and Charge 2024 - 2029 at its ordinary meeting on 17 April 2024.	Submissions and objections including a summary was received and noted by Council. The Council considered and declared the Special rate at the Council meeting on 17 April 2024.	Filleti, Susie	18/04/2024
7/02/2024	Fitzroy Street Special Rate and Charge - Consideration of Submissions	That Council: 3.1 Considers all written submissions and hear persons who have requested to speak in support of their submissions in respect to the proposed Fitzroy Street Special Rate and Charge 2024 - 2029 and in accordance with sections 163A, 163B and 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. 3.2 Notes it will make a formal decision on whether to declare the Fitzroy Street Special Rate and Charge 2024 - 2029 at its ordinary meeting on 17 April 2024.	Submissions and objections including a summary was received and noted by Council. The Council considered and declared the Special rate at the Council meeting on 17 April 2024.	Filleti, Susie	18/04/2024
7/02/2024	Draft South Melbourne Structure Plan	That Council: 3.1 Notes the draft South Melbourne Structure Plan in Attachment 1. 3.2 Notes the South Melbourne Structure Plan Background Report in Attachment 2. 3.3 Notes the supporting documents listed in section 4.6 of this report. 3.4 Endorses the draft South Melbourne Structure Plan, background report and supporting documents for community and stakeholder consultation. 3.5 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) to make any minor editorial changes to the draft South Melbourne Structure Plan prior to publication for consultation.	The consultation on the draft South Melbourne Structure Plan, background report and supporting documents took place from 19 February to 28 March 2024. Once the Structure Plan is endorsed by Council (expected mid-2024) implementation, including a planning scheme amendment, will begin.	Chapman, Alayna	29/04/2024
7/02/2024	Notice of Motion Councillor Peter Martin - Heritage Verandah Upgrade project	That Council:- 1. Waives permit fees valued at $35,000 for the Clarendon and Coventry Streets Business Association to assist in completing their Heritage Verandah Upgrade project. **PROCEDURAL MOTION** That the item be deferred to the next available Council meeting being 21 February 2024.	To allow more time for Councillors to consider, this item was deferred to the 21 February Council meeting where Council endorsed to waive $35,000 in permit fees. Council motion was communicated to funding agent, the Department of Transport and Planning. The Department has approved outstanding funding of construction costs. Project has received requisite Council and Departmental approvals to proceed to construction. The project is proceeding to delivery over next month.	Gullan, James	6/05/2024
21/02/2024	Notice of Motion Councillor Peter Martin - Heritage	That Council:	Council motion was communicated to funding agent, the Department of Transport and Planning. The	Gullan, James	6/05/2024

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MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
	Verandah Upgrade project	1. Waives permit fees valued at $35,000 for the Clarendon and Coventry Streets Business Association to assist in completing their Heritage Verandah Upgrade project.	Department has approved outstanding funding of construction costs. Project has received requisite Council and Departmental approvals to proceed to construction. The project is proceeding to delivery over next month		
21/02/2024	Records of Informal Meetings of Council	That Council 2.1 Receives and notes the written records of Informal Meetings of Council (attached) as required by the Governance Rules.	Received and noted by Council, no further action required.	Williams, Emily	26/02/2024
21/02/2024	Local Government Legislative Reforms Submission	That Council: 3.1 Notes the request from the Victorian Government for feedback on Local Government Victoria's (LGV) *Local Government Reforms 2024 Consultation Paper* (Attachment 1). 3.2 Thanks LGV for the opportunity to provide feedback on the *Local Government Reforms 2024 Consultation Paper*, but notes the challenging timeframe provided has impacted the organisation's ability to support Council to engage with the proposed changes. 3.3 Authorises the Mayor to make a written submission to LGV's Local *Government Reforms 2024 Consultation Paper* on behalf of Council aligned with the key points outlined in section 4.11 of this report. 3.4 Authorises the CEO, or their delegate, to support the Mayor's submission.	A draft submission letter and feedback form was prepared by the Head of Governance and approved by the Executive Manager Governance and Organisational Performance. The Acting Mayor approved both documents and a submission was made on their behalf via the Mayor and Councillors Office on 28 February 2024.	Smerdon, Xavier	28/02/2024
21/02/2024	Presentation of December CEO Report - Issue 103	That Council: 3.1 Notes the CEO Report – Issue 103 (provided as Attachment 1).	Received and noted by Council, December 2023 CEO report published to Council's website.	Bailey, Jacky	5/04/2024
21/02/2024	Integrated Transport Strategy review - engagement findings and recommendations	That Council: 3.1 Thanks the community for taking part in the review of the Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy. 3.2 Notes the results of the consultation on the Strategy. 3.3 Notes the progress on actions to date described in **Attachment 3**. 3.4 Endorses updates to five of the Strategy's indicators and discontinuance of six indicators used to measure progress due to changes in availability of data sources and alignment with other Council polices. 3.5 Endorses an amended Action 18 in the Strategy from: "*Deliver a network of dedicated and continuous protected bike corridors to create safer routes for all ages and abilities"* ***to*** Action 18a: "Deliver a range of interventions to build a network of connected, safe riding options, ensuring safety for people of all ages and abilities", and continue to explore	Actions progressed, final editorial changes made to the strategy, and the final version has been published to Council's website.	Roache, Karen	22/05/2024

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MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
		opportunities for the provision of protected bike lanes in the City of Port Phillip." **and adds** Action 18b: "Advocate to State government to deliver protected bike corridors on state-managed arterial roads." 3.6 Authorises the CEO (or delegate) to make minor editorial changes to the Strategy to reflect the endorsed review recommendations.			
21/02/2024	Financial Update 2023-24: Mid-Year Review	That Council: 3.1 Notes that full year cumulative cash surplus before the mid-year budget requests is $0.1 million which is $0.77 million unfavourable compared to budget of $0.87 million with the following movements: 3.1.1 Notes additional funding of $0.18m approved by the Chief Executive Officer for emergency works related to the St Kilda Foreshore Lighting Renewal Project (funded from the Asset Renewal Reserve) 3.2 Notes attachment 1 – Financial Statements with accompanying explanatory notes. 3.3 Approves the following budget requests with a net financial impact of $0.07m for 2023/24 and $0.38m for 2024/25 including (see attachment 2): 3.3.1 $373,000 additional for the Elwood Reserve Change Rooms and Toilets project due to outcome of tender process. Noting funding of $277,000 from the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program Stage 4 and the remaining $96,000 to be included in Budget 2024/25. 3.3.2 $150,000 additional for the JL Murphy Baseball Infield project due to outcome of tender process. Noting funding of $75,000 from Open Space Reserves and remaining $75,000 to be funded from the 2023/24 cumulative cash surplus. 3.3.3 $359,000 additional for the Albert Parks Bowls Pavilion Upgrade to expand scope of works to include upgrade of the male facilities and office contingent on a financial contribution of $266,000 from the Albert Park Bowls Club and also addition scope to include accessibility compliance requirement with remaining $93,000 to be included in Budget 2024/25. 3.3.4 $372,000 additional for the JL Murphy Soccer Pitch 2 Reconstruction due to updated costings through the design phase. Noting funding of $186,000 from Open Space Reserves and remaining $186,000 to be included in Budget 2024/25.	Council decisions communicated with relevant stakeholders.	Liu, Peter	27/02/2024
21/02/2024	Councillor Expenses Monthly Reporting - November and December 2023 and January 2024	That Council: 3.1 Notes the monthly Councillor expenses report for November 2023 (attachment 1) and that this will be made available on Council's website.	Expenses received and noted by Council and declarations published to the Councillor Governance webpage.	Gillett, Mitchell	22/04/2024

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MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
		3.2 Notes the monthly Councillor expenses report for December 2023 (attachment 2) and that this will be made available on Council's website. 3.3 Notes the monthly Councillor expenses report for January 2024 (attachment 3) and that this will be made available on Council's website.			
29/02/2024	78, 80-94 Cecil Street, 119-125 Market Street, 3-5, 7 Northumberland Street and 146-164, 166, 168, 170 York Street, South Melbourne	3.1 That the Responsible Authority, having caused the application to be advertised and having received and noted the objections, issue a Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit. 3.2 That a Notice of Decision to Amend a Permit be issued for the construction of a multi storey building comprising office, shops and food and drinks premises (as of right uses), building and works in association with a Design and Development Overlay and reduction in car parking at 80 - 94 Cecil Street, 3 - 5 Northumberland Street, 7 Northumberland Street 119 - 125 Market Street and 146 - 164 York Street, South Melbourne. **Amended Permit Preamble** The Permit Preamble to be amended to be (with new changes shown in the minutes of the meeting.	Application heard and determined at Planning Committee meeting. Notice of Decision issued on 15 March 2024.	Parkinson, Scott	4/03/2024
29/02/2024	Statutory Planning Delegated Decisions Report 14 December 2023 to January 2024 (Inclusive)	That Council: 3.1 Receives and notes the December 2023 and January 2024 (attachment 1) regarding the summary of all Planning Decisions issued in accordance with the Schedule of Delegation made under Section 98 of the Local Government Action 2020 and Section 188 of the Planning & Environment Act 1987 adopted by Council on 24 July 1996 and as amended, for the Port Phillip Planning Scheme. 3.2 Notes that no decisions were made by the Manager City Development under delegation from the Chief Executive Officer during the period 15 December 2023 to 29 February 2024, as resolved by Council at its Planning Committee Meeting of 14 December 2023.	Delegated decisions received and noted by Council, no further action is required.	Parsons, Larry	5/03/2024
6/03/2024	Petition - City of Port Phillip Rental Crisis	That Council: Receives and notes the Petition and provides a response to a future Council meeting.	Officers are preparing a response to bring back to a Council meeting in August 2024.	Heil, Tanja	29/05/2024
6/03/2024	Audit and Risk Committee - Biannual Report as at 31 December 2023 AND Annual Review of the Committee Charter	That Council: 3.1 Adopts the updated Audit and Risk Committee Charter (Attachment 1) 3.2 Notes that the updated Audit and Risk Committee Charter will be published on Council's website. 3.3 Notes the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report as of 31 December 2023, which details activities of the Committee covering scheduled meetings held on 31 August 2023 and 5 December 2023.	The updated ARCo Charter has been prepared for loading onto Council's website - pending final authorisation from the Comms Team. No further action required.	Snowden, Julie	19/03/2024
6/03/2024	Municipal Association of Victoria State	That Council:	MAV motions were submitted by officers and accepted by MAV. Our MAV Motions for State Council 2024:	Gullan, James	6/05/2024

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		Date To:	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
	Council - May 2024 - Submissions	3.1 Endorses the following motions for submission to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council Meeting on 17 May 2024: 3.1.1 That the MAV: Seeks the collaborative support of the State Government through the Minister for Precincts and the Minister for Tourism to rejuvenate precincts significantly hit from a lack of visitation extending from the COVID pandemic and to open grant opportunities for these precincts to revive their visitor economies. 3.1.2 That the MAV: Requests the office of Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events consider a roundtable to hear from traders and local government on the challenges associated with holding these major events in their municipalities, and the opportunity for flow on impacts to be realised. 3.1.3 That the MAV: advocates to the Victorian State Government for support for Local Governments wanting to be the first point of contact for older people seeking access to in-home care and related services that best meet their needs. 3.1.4 That the MAV: Seeks a review of existing Build to Rent regulations and provisions and assesses the ongoing challenges identified by local government around these developments for infrastructure and open space investment. 3.2 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate to make any minor amendments that do not change the material intent of the Motions.	Motion 37. Supporting residents using in-home care, Motion 53. Challenges with 'Build-to-Rent', Motion 54. Victorian Precinct Rejuvenation after COVID, Motion 55. Maximising the value of our Major Events economy		
6/03/2024	Older Persons Advisory Committee Annual Report 2023 - For Endorsement	That Council: 3.1 Endorses the Older Persons Advisory Committee Annual Report 2023 (Attachment 1) 3.2 Recognises the value of work undertaken by the OPAC as the peak advisory and advocacy body on issues affecting the wellbeing of older people (55 years and over) within the City of Port Phillip. 3.3 Acknowledges the on-going work of the OPAC and thank the Committee for its efforts.	OPAC 2023 Annual Report received and noted by Council, no further action required.	Horsley, Cathy	14/03/2024
6/03/2024	Barak Beacon Public Housing Estate	3.1 That the Council delegate advise the Minister for Planning c/- Homes Victoria that Council: 3.1.1 Does not support the following aspects of the development (as further detailed in this report): □ The front setbacks of Buildings 2 and 3 to Barak Road. □ The rear setbacks of Buildings 2 and 3 to Beacon Road.	Council's resolution was sent to Homes Victoria on 7 March 2024 for consideration. The minister will be responsible for determining an application, this was lodged on 24 May 2024. Council officers have met monthly with the developer and representative from both Homes Victoria and the Department of Transport and Planning to advocate for Council's position.	Stewart, Patricia	29/05/2024

Completed	**Committee:** Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date From:**	1/01/2024
		Date To:	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED

		- The extent of hard surface and lack of planting opportunities along the eastern elevation of Building 4.
		- Lack of integration of the internal pathways to Beach Street (including pedestrian crossing across Beacon Road)
		- The low number of three or more bedroom apartments identified as a core housing requirement through the Council area.
		- The internal amenity of the studio apartments as outline in Section 10 of this report.
		- The lack of replacement canopy tree planting, particularly along the east and west boundaries.
		- Failure to provide the internal communal open space areas required.
		- Further consideration required regarding parking provision, especially for larger dwellings, and regarding vehicle swept path issues in the car park.
		- Revision of wind mitigation measures to reduce their visual and amenity impact.
		3.1.2 Requests revisions/further information to include:
		- Two vehicular crossovers relocated from Barak Road to Beacon Road. The amended crossovers should:
		  - Upgrade the existing crossovers generally aligning with Building 2B and 3B.
		  - Vehicle crossing and the bike lane must clearly contrast each other to ensure bike riders see there is a vehicle crossing.
		  - Stop line marking on either approach to the bike lanes to be installed to reiterate right of way for riders.
		  - Soft speed hump to be installed prior to bike lane for vehicles exiting the development to further reiterate point above.
		  - Greater sight lines required for vehicles exiting the development (outside of the Planning Scheme) as the sight line requirement in the Planning Scheme is meant for vehicle / pedestrian conflicts and not vehicular / cyclist.
		- Amended traffic report to consider the pedestrian circulation around the site and whether any pedestrian safety measures are required at the intersection of Barak Road and Howe Parade, as a result of the increased traffic generation. Any recommendations for improvements are to be delivered as part of the approved development.			

Completed	**Committee:**	Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date From:**	1/01/2024
			Date To:	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
		All other aspects of the proposal including sustainable design and waste management are generally acceptable subject to receipt of more detailed information which may result in minor changes to the proposal. These design and operational concerns need to be addressed or conditioned in any permit to be issued.			
6/03/2024	Status of Council Decisions and Questions Taken on Notice recorded by Council: 1 October - 31 December 2023	That Council: 3.1 Notes the implementation status of Council and Planning Committee Resolutions as contained in Attachments 1 and 2. 3.2 Notes the response status of questions taken on notice during Council Meetings as contained in Attachment 3.	Quarterly report noted by Council. No further action required.	Purvis, Rebecca	14/03/2024
6/03/2024	Presentation of December CEO Report - Issue 103	That Council: 3.1 Notes the CEO Report – Issue 104 (provided as Attachment 1).	December 2023 CEO Report received and noted by Council and published to Council's website.	Isaac, Kihm	3/04/2024
6/03/2024	Petition - Request for use of Elwood Primary School Reserve as an off-leash dog park	That Council: Receives and notes the Petition and provides a response to a future Council meeting.	The petition was received and noted on 6 March and a response will be provided when the Dog Off Leash Guidelines return to Council for adoption in July 2024.	Pritchard, Dana	3/05/2024
6/03/2024	City of Port Phillip Spatial Economic and Employment Framework (SEEF): Adoption	That Council: 3.1 Notes the officer report in relation to the adoption of a long-term spatial framework for facilitating economic and employment growth in Port Phillip. 3.2 Notes the consultation approach in the preparation of the final *City of Port Phillip Spatial Economic and Employment Framework* and final *City of Port Phillip Spatial Economic and Employment Framework Technical Report December* 2023 at Attachments 1 and 2, respectively. 3.3 Adopts the final *City of Port Phillip Spatial Economic and Employment* Framework at Attachment 1 and the final *City of Port Phillip Spatial Economic and Employment Framework Technical Report December 2023* at Attachment 2 as the strategic justification and basis for: a) future decisions on employment land and economic matters; and b) a future amendment to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme to introduce new and amended planning provisions. 3.4 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) to make any minor editorial changes to the final *City of Port Phillip Spatial Economic and Employment Framework* at Attachment 1 prior to publication and before applying to the Minister for Planning for authorisation to prepare an Amendment, under section 8A of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.	The adopted final City of Port Phillip Spatial Economic and Employment Framework has been published and is available on Council's website.	Chapman, Alayna	29/04/2024
6/03/2024	Draft Housing Strategy and Phase 3 Community consultation	That Council: 3.1 Endorses the release of *Draft Places to Live: City of Port Phillip* Housing *Strategy* (**Attachment 1**) and supporting documents (**Attachment 2, 3 and 4**) for community and stakeholder consultation.	Phase 3 of engagement commenced on Friday 8 March 2024 and closed on Friday 19 April 2024. Feedback from the engagement is currently being reviewed and will be presented to Council. Adoption	Yapa, Samindi	22/05/2024

Completed	**Committee:**	Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date From:**	1/01/2024
			Date To:	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
		3.2 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate to finalise and make minor changes that do not materially alter Draft *Places to live: City of Port Phillip Housing Strategy* prior to publication for consultation.	of the final housing strategy is anticipated in mid-2024.		
6/03/2024	City of Port Phillip Advocacy Strategy	That Council: 3.1 Endorses the City of Port Phillip Advocacy Strategy 2024-2027 to provide Councillors, officers and the community with an advocacy process that details how Council prioritise, implement, and report on advocacy priorities. 3.2 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate to make any minor amendments that do not change the material intent of the Strategy.	The finalisation of advocacy strategy is underway, Councillors will be briefed on the strategy in June 2024, and the strategy is anticipated to be presented to a Council meeting in August 2024 for consideration.	Gullan, James	22/05/2024
6/03/2024	Cowderoy Street Right Turn Restriction Trial	3.1 Ends the Cowderoy Street Right Turn Restriction Trial. 3.2 Removes the right turn restriction from Canterbury Road to Cowderoy Street and restores the intersection to its condition pre-trial. 3.3 Advises the community of the outcome of the trial, next steps, and thanks them for their contribution.	At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 6 March 2024, a report was presented to Council to consider whether to permanently restrict the right turn movement from Canterbury Road to Cowderoy Street between 4:30 – 6:30pm, Monday to Friday. Council endorsed to end the Cowderoy Street Right Turn Restriction Trial and restore the intersection to its condition pre-trial Officers have advised the community of Council's decision and have removed the restriction.	Mason, Thomas	7/05/2024
20/03/2024	Records of Informal Meetings of Council	That Council 2.1 Receives and notes the written records of Informal Meetings of Council (attached) as required by the Governance Rules.	Received and noted by Council, no further action required.	Williams, Emily	5/04/2024
20/03/2024	Appointment of Authorised Officers Pursuant to the Planning and Environment Act 1987	That Council: 3.1 Approves the Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation at **Attachment 1 Attachment 2 and Attachment 3**. 3.2 Affixes the common seal of Council to the Instrument of Appointments.	11A Instruments of Appointment for Paul Wood, Connor Buckley and Nellie Montague were signed by the Mayor and CEO. Common Seal affixed and a copy sent to the relevant officers.	Collins, Katrina	3/04/2024
20/03/2024	Draft Dog Off-Leash Guideline for Public Consultation	That Council: 3.1 Releases the draft Dog Off-Leash Guideline for community consultation. 3.2 Authorises the CEO, or their delegate, to make amendments to the draft Dog Off-Leash Guideline to reflect any changes through this resolution and to make minor editorial adjustments to prepare the document for consultation.	The petition was received and noted on 6 March and a response will be provided when the Dog Off Leash Guidelines return to Council for adoption in July 2024.	Ulcoq, Claire	3/05/2024
20/03/2024	Inkerman Safety Improvement Project - Engagement Findings	That Council: 3.1 Thanks community members who provided feedback on the Inkerman Safety Improvement Project. 3.2 Notes the high level of interest from community and businesses and varied views as outlined in the Engagement Summary Report (Attachment 1).	Community Feedback received and noted by Council. At the Council meeting held on 15 May, Council endorsed to proceed to detailed design and construction of option B: Safety improvements including on-road buffered bike lanes, and changes.	MacNish, David	22/05/2024

Completed	**Committee:** Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date From:**	1/01/2024
		Date To:	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
		3.3 Requests a subsequent report be tabled at an ordinary Council meeting in 2024 for Council to determine any design changes to the Inkerman Safety Improvement Project and whether to progress to detailed design and construction.			
20/03/2024	Petition: Esplanade Hotel Grand Prix Street Party 22-24 March 2024	That Council: 1. Receives and notes the Petition. 2. Proceeds with the issuance of an event permit for the Australian Venue Company to operate the *Espy Grand Prix Street Party* event from Friday 22 March to Sunday 24 March 2024 (including set up and pack down days of Thursday 21 March and Monday 25 March). 3. Monitors the event over the 5 day period and responds immediately to any breaches of permit conditions. 4. Conducts a post event debrief with the Australian Venue Company and relevant stakeholders to note any concerns that arise from the event. 5. Based on the findings of this debrief, considers whether the event be permitted again in future years.	An event permit was issued for the Australian Venue Company to operate the Espy Grand Prix Street Party. The event was monitored over the 5-day period and was compliant with all permit conditions. The post event debrief has been scheduled and all feedback will be considered and noted.	Hall, Jess	27/03/2024
20/03/2024	Proposed Update to Rating Strategy 2022-2025	That Council: 3.1 Notes that the following land types are negatively impacting the municipality due to being under-utilised, causing safety and amenity concerns and not contributing to the overall purpose and objectives of the Council Plan: 3.1.1 Derelict Land 3.1.2 Un-activated Retail Land 3.1.3 Vacant Land 3.2 Notes proposed changes to the Rating Strategy 2022-2025 to include new property classes for differential rating purposes. These new property classes and differential rates will be set as follows: 3.2.1 Derelict Land rate in the dollar to be set at 4 times (400%) of the Residential Land rate. 3.2.2 Un-activated Retail Land rate in the dollar to be set at 4 times (400%) of the Residential Land rate. 3.2.3 Vacant Land rate in the dollar to be set at 3 times (300%) of the Residential Land rate. 3.3 Releases the draft updated *Rating Strategy 2022-2025* (Attachment 1) for community consultation alongside the draft budget 2024/25 between 18 April 2024 and 13 May 2024 followed by the hearing of feedback for the draft budget at the Special Council meeting on 14 May 2024. 3.4 Notes that the draft Budget 2024/25, to be considered by Council on 17 April 2024, will be informed by the proposed Rating Strategy 2022-2025.	Community consultation ran between 18 April 2024 and 13 May 2024. Community members also had the opportunity to speak at the hearing of budget feedback Special Meeting of Council on Tuesday 14 May. The updated Rating Strategy 2022-25 will be considered for adoption alongside Budget 2024/25 at the Special Council Meeting on 26 June 2024.	Liu, Peter	22/05/2024

Completed	**Committee:**	Council Meeting and Planning Committee	**Date From:**	1/01/2024
			Date To:	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
		3.5 Notes that the proposed Rating Strategy 2022-2025 may be updated alongside the draft budget to reflect any feedback from the community consultation period prior to being brought back to Council for adoption. 3.6 Notes that the updated Rating Strategy 2022-25 will be considered for adoption alongside Budget 2024/25 at the Special Council Meeting on 26 June 2024. 3.7 Authorises the CEO to make amendments to the updated *Rating Strategy 2022-2025* to reflect any changes through this resolution, and to make minor editorial adjustments to the document to prepare for publication and distribution including but not limited to minor wording updates to the proposed definitions.			
20/03/2024	E-scooter Trial Update	That Council: 3.1 Notes that the Mayor has written to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety and the Minister for Public and Active Transport requesting the public release of the evaluation report for the e-scooter trial. 3.2 Notes the update to the Victorian Government led e-scooter trial including legislative changes that, once proclaimed, will empower Councils to manage shared e-scooter schemes through contractual arrangements that can address safety and amenity. 3.3 Notes that the e-scooter trial is due to end on 5 April 2024 and that, at the completion of the trial on 5 April 2024 or some other date as determined by the Victorian Government, Council will commence a procurement process to determine which e-scooter providers will operate in the City of Port Phillip and under what conditions. 3.4 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) to extend existing agreements with e-scooter operators until the procurement process and transition to a new shared e-scooter agreement is completed.	The Victorian Government has again extended the e-scooter trial in Victoria until 4 October 2024 Existing agreements with operators have been reviewed and extended to allow for the completion of the trial and progress towards procurement of a future scheme.	Roache, Karen	26/04/2024

Questions taken on notice.	**Committee**:	Council and Planning Committee Meetings	**Date From:**	1/01/2024
			Date To:	31/03/2024

MEETING DATE	MEETING SECTION	ASKED BY	QUESTION	RESPONSE
6/03/2024	7.1 Petition: Request for use of Elwood Primary School Reserve as an Off-Leash Dog Park	Cr Crawford	Was there a timeline or a timeframe around the agreement that Council originally made with use of that space with the Elwood Primary School?	Response to Question taken on notice - 6 March Council Meeting

13.5 RECORDS OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: **JOANNE MCNEILL, EXECUTIVE MANAGER, GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

PREPARED BY: **EMILY WILLIAMS, COUNCIL BUSINESS ADVISOR**

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To report to Council the written records of Informal Meetings of Councillors at the City of Port Phillip as required by the Governance Rules.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Council

2.1 Receives and notes the written records of Informal Meetings of Council (attached) as required by the Governance Rules.

3. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

3.1 An Informal meeting of Council record is required by the City of Port Phillip Governance Rules if there is a meeting of Council 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.

4. OFFICER MATERIAL OR GENERAL INTEREST

4.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS **1. Completed informal meetings of Council forms received in May 2024**

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Councillor & ELT Time					
Date and Time:	Date: 24/04/2024			Time: 1pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☐	☒
	Cr Bond	☐	☒	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☐	☐
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☐ Chris Carroll ☐ Tarnya McKenzie ☐ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff:			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	• Property policy • EV report • Middle Park Hotel • Tram works • St Kilda Promenade funding: • St Kilda Music Precinct • People Updates • JL Talbot works • Tree removal update • Palm Tree fires					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

A Conflict of Interest Disclosure form MUST be completed by members of Council staff

Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Joanne McNeill

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Third Quarter Financial Update					
Date and Time:	Date: 1/05/2024			Time: 5:15pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll			☒ Brian Tee		
	☒ Tarnya McKenzie			☐ Claire Stevens		
	☒ Lachlan Johnson			☐ Joanne McNeill		
	Other Staff: Spyros Karamesinis / Peter Liu / Angeline Dooley					
Matters considered:	• Financial update for the third quarter 2023/24 including an update on Councils priority projects					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Spyros Karamesinis

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Lake Ward Councillor Briefing					
Date and Time:	Date: 24/04/2024			Time: 5.30pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☐	☐	Cr Martin	☐	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☐	Cr Pearl	☐	☐
	Cr Crawford	☐	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☐	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☐	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☐ Chris Carroll ☐ Tarnya McKenzie ☐ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff: Michael Mowbray (Coordinator Planning)			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	Discussion of following applications: • PDPL/00334/2023 341 Beaconsfield Parade, St Kilda West – Use of land as a Bar • PDPL/00789/2023 279-282 Beaconsfield Parade, Middle Park demolition and consolidation into a single dwelling					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
No conflicts identified	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Michael Mowbray

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Councillor & ELT Time					
Date and Time:	Date: 8/05/2024			Time: 1pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☐	☒	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☐	Cr Pearl	☐	☒
	Cr Crawford	☐	☒	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☒ Tarnya McKenzie ☒ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff:			☒ Brian Tee ☒ Claire Stevens ☒ Julie Snowden (Acting Joanne McNeill)		
Matters considered:	• 2 x Confidential VCAT Matters • Park Street / Inkerman Street review • Confidential Libraries facilities plan • J L Talbot Reserve • St Kilda Skate Park • Reporting and Briefing timetable					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Julie Snowden

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Port Phillip Zero (externals from Launch housing)					
Date and Time:	Date: 8/05/2024			Time: 5:00pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☐	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☐	☒	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☒ Tarnya McKenzie ☐ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff: Tanja Heil, Tanya Cale, Leo Kelly and George Hartvani (Launch Housing)			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	• Update briefing on Port Phillip Zero project was presented.					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

A Conflict of Interest Disclosure form MUST be completed by members of Council staff

Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Leo Kelly

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Elwood Main Drain Duplication – Project Update (Melbourne Water presenting)					
Date and Time:	Date: 8/05/2024			Time: 5.30pm		
Meeting conducted via:	In Person					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☒
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☐	☒	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☒ Tarnya McKenzie ☒ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff: James Gullan, Dana Pritchard, Jane Lyon			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	• Elwood Main Drain project timelines and project stages • Site set up and compound/laydown area • Project methodology • Litter issues in Elster Creek • Project engagement					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Jane Lyon

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Councillor Briefing – Property Policy					
Date and Time:	Date: 8/05/2024			Time: 6.40pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☐	☒	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☐ Tarnya McKenzie ☒ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff: Vicki Tuchtan, Anthony Savenkov, Efe Ozyaba			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	• Property Policy Update					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

A Conflict of Interest Disclosure form MUST be completed by members of Council staff

Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	Nil	Nil

Name of Officer submitting form: Vicki Tuchtan, Acting Manager Property and Assets

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Captain Cook Update and Options					
Date and Time:	Date: 8/05/2024			Time: 7:45pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☐	☒	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll			☒ Brian Tee		
	☐ Tarnya McKenzie			☐ Claire Stevens		
	☐ Lachlan Johnson			☐ Joanne McNeill		
	Other Staff: Lauren Bialkower, Adele Denison, Justin Gayner					
Matters considered:	• The timeframe relating to the reinstalment of the Captain Cook Monument in Catani Gardens • The addition of first peoples context					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Lauren Bialkower

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Membership Review					
Date and Time:	Date: 8/05/2024			Time: 8pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☐	☒	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll			☒ Brian Tee		
	☐ Tarnya McKenzie			☐ Claire Stevens		
	☐ Lachlan Johnson			☐ Joanne McNeill		
	Other Staff: Lauren Bialkower, James Gullan					
Matters considered:	• Recommendations relating to various membership programs					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

A Conflict of Interest Disclosure form MUST be completed by members of Council staff

Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Lauren Bialkower

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Councillor & ELT Time					
Date and Time:	Date: 15/05/2024			Time: 1pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☐	☒	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☐	☒	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☐	☐
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll			☒ Brian Tee		
	☒ Tarnya McKenzie			☒ Claire Stevens		
	☒ Lachlan Johnson (online)			☐ Joanne McNeill		
	Other Staff:					
Matters considered:	• Council Meeting agenda items – changes to agenda and possible Councillor amendments • Report and Meeting Timetable – forward agenda • Shrine to Sea Update • Kerford Road works • Australia Post closure announcement					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

A Conflict of Interest Disclosure form MUST be completed by members of Council staff

Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Claire Stevens

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Councillor Briefing: EPA Acoustic Camera Trial Update					
Date and Time:	Date: 15/05/2024			Time: 5pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☐	☒	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☐	☒	Cr Nyaguy	☐	☒
	Cr Clark	☒	☐	Cr Pearl	☐	☒
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☒ Tarnya McKenzie ☐ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff: Leo Kelly			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	• Inform Council of the EPA for the Acoustic Camera program and the potential to participate in a local camera trial. • Identify the opportunity for Council to offer “in principle” allocation of up to $10,000 installation costs towards trialling an Acoustic Camera site in the City.					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Leo Kelly Manager Community Building and Inclusion

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Lake Ward Councillor Briefing					
Date and Time:	Date: 21/05/2024			Time: 5.30pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☐	☐	Cr Martin	☐	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☐	Cr Pearl	☐	☐
	Cr Crawford	☐	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☐	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☐	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☐ Chris Carroll ☐ Tarnya McKenzie ☐ Lachlan Johnson Michael Mowbray (Coordinator Planning)			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	Planning applications as follows: • 38 Burnett Street, St Kilda (PDL/00439/2023) • 8-12 Punt Road, 2 & 7 Wellington Road, St Kilda (PDPL/00789/2023)					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
No conflicts identified	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Michael Mowbray

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Councillor & ELT Time					
Date and Time:	Date: 22/05/2024			Time: 1pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☐	☒	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☐	☒
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☒	☐
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☒ Tarnya McKenzie ☒ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff:			☒ Brian Tee ☒ Claire Stevens ☒ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	• Aged Care transition update • MSAC update • Park Street tram link • IT Road Map • Emerald Hill Community Hospital • Allocation of funding across the municipality • Election question • Fitzroy Street • Membership review • St Kilda Film festival • ANAM • Project delivery briefing • Council meeting and other comms briefing					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Joanne McNeill

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Councillor Expense and Support Policy Briefing					
Date and Time:	Date: 22/05/2024			Time: 6:15pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☐	☒
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☐ Tarnya McKenzie ☐ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff: Xavier Smerdon			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☒ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	• Councillor Expense and Support Policy					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Mitch Gillett

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Alma Park West Boundary Treatment					
Date and Time:	Date: 22/05/2024			Time: 6.30pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☐	☒
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☒ Tarnya McKenzie ☐ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff: Dana Pritchard			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	• Design for Alma Park West Boundary Treatment					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Dana Pritchard

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Sandridge Bay Trail - Project Update					
Date and Time:	Date: 22/05/2024			Time: 6.45pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☐	☒
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☒ Tarnya McKenzie ☐ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff: Dana Pritchard			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	• Update on the Sandridge Bay Trail Project – reduced scope, bus stop removal.					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Dana Pritchard

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Draft Sports Facilities Plan					
Date and Time:	Date: 22/05/2024			Time: 7:45pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☐	☒
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☒ Tarnya McKenzie ☐ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff: Dana Pritchard, Susan Cannell, Nicole Back, Claire Ulcoq			☐ Brian Tee ☐ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	The Draft Sports Facilities Plan was presented to Councillors					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

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Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Nicole Back

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Parking Management Policy Implementation (including Epermits)					
Date and Time:	Date: 22/05/2024			Time: 8.30pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☐	☒
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll ☐ Tarnya McKenzie ☐ Lachlan Johnson Other Staff: Craig McLean, Karen Roache, Melanie Darmanin			☐ Brian Tee ☒ Claire Stevens ☐ Joanne McNeill		
Matters considered:	• Parking Management Policy implementation update including consultation on digital residential parking permits, short term parking permits and changes for existing applicants as at 1 July 2025					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

A Conflict of Interest Disclosure form MUST be completed by members of Council staff

Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of Officer submitting form: Karen Roache

Informal Meeting of Councillors

Name of meeting:	Electric Vehicle Charger Councillor Briefing					
Date and Time:	Date: 22/05/2024			Time: 9.05pm		
Meeting conducted via:	Hybrid (MS Teams/In Person)					
Councillors present: *Please mark ☒ the Councillors present*		In person	Virtual		In person	Virtual
	Cr Baxter	☒	☐	Cr Martin	☒	☐
	Cr Bond	☒	☐	Cr Nyaguy	☒	☐
	Cr Clark	☐	☒	Cr Pearl	☒	☐
	Cr Crawford	☒	☐	Cr Sirakoff	☐	☒
	Cr Cunsolo	☒	☐			
Staff present: *Please mark ☒ the Staff present*	☒ Chris Carroll			☒ Brian Tee		
	☐ Tarnya McKenzie			☐ Claire Stevens		
	☐ Lachlan Johnson			☐ Joanne McNeill		
	Other Staff: Craig McLean, Beth McLachlan, Sowmya Nagaraj					
Matters considered:	• EV Charging					

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

A Conflict of Interest Disclosure form MUST be completed by members of Council staff

Name	Subject / Matter	Left the Meeting?
Nil	N/A	N/A

Name of officer completing the form: Beth McLachlan

14. NOTICES OF MOTION

14.1 Notice of Motion - Councillor Louise Crawford - Caravan Parking 464

14.2 Notice of Motion - Councillor Louise Crawford Elster Creek Litter 465

14.1 Notice of Motion - Councillor Louise Crawford - Caravan Parking

I, Councillor Louise Crawford, give notice that I intend to move the Motion outlined below at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 05 June 2024:

That Council:-

1. Request officers to investigate options to reduce the amenity impacts of long-term parking of caravans, trailers, and boats on Alexandra Street, St Kilda East, and report back to Council at a future meeting.

Supporting Information

Parking of caravans, campervans and boats / trailers is a complex and long-standing issue within our municipality. Long-term storage of vehicles reduces the number of parking spaces available to local traffic and impact the amenity of the local area.

Community members have raised concerns regarding long-term storage of vehicles in Alexandra Street, St Kilda East.

The Transport Safety team has also received a jointly signed letter signed by 13 residents representing 9 properties to implement a 4-hour parking restriction in Alexandra Street, in response to caravans and vehicles parking long-term in the street. Officers have arranged a seven-day parking survey to better understand parking utilisation. Given the complexity of this issue, the results of the parking survey may not indicate the need to proceed with implementing parking restrictions based on the Parking Management Policy.

Current road rules and local laws in place to address unwanted parking

Vehicles over 7.5 metres in length or weighing over 4.5 tonnes cannot be parked on streets in built-up areas for more than one hour.

City of Port Phillip has Local Laws in place that prohibit camping in vehicles / campervans to alleviate amenity concerns based on people living in their vans.

Vehicles can be removed if they are determined to be abandoned.

Emerging issue in Alexandra Street and more broadly within the municipality

Caravans, campers and boats / trailers can be legally parked on a public street if the vehicle is under 7.5m in length and less than 4.5 tonnes. Vehicles seen to impact local streets are generally under the length and weight limit that triggers enforcement.

While vehicles may often appear to be abandoned, generally only a small percentage of these types of towable vehicles are determined to be abandoned when following the processes under the Local Government Act.

Considering the above, a large proportion of vehicles impacting the local community are parked legally with no mechanism in place to address this issue. Therefore, options for how Council could respond to the conditions in Alexandra Street, and more broadly throughout the municipality, are required.

14.2 Notice of Motion – Councillor Louise Crawford - Elster Creek

I, Councillor Louise Crawford, give notice that I intend to move the Motion outlined below at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 05 June 2024:

That Council:-

1. Notes the local community concerns relating to litter in the Elster Creek
2. Supports council's active participation in the Elster Creek Catchment Litter Collaboration with the City of Glen Eira and Melbourne Water, and implementation of the action plan, which includes investigation into potential litter management solutions.
3. Undertakes an audit of councils existing Gross Pollutant Traps that are located near the Elster Creek to review their effectiveness in reducing litter in the creek.
4. Writes to the Minister of Water to raise awareness of the issue and request Ministerial support for action to reduce litter and pollutants in the Elster Creek.
5. Embeds learnings from the Elster Creek Litter Collaboration across the municipality to protect the Bay through litter management within the stormwater network.

Supporting Information

Background (Item 1)

- There is community concern regarding the amount of litter and pollutants in the Elster Creek, who sought action to improve the water quality and reduce litter entering the system.
- Concerns have been escalated by planning for the construction of the new flood mitigation diversion drain duplication project which will not include litter management infrastructure.
- Elster Creek residents have formed an action group, called the Elster Creek Action Team (ECAT), who have requested additional downstream litter traps.
- At a council briefing Melbourne Water presented to Council on the Head Street drain duplication, and their preferred approach to litter management. This included an initial assessment of opportunities that suggests there no 'end of line' options, that would not exacerbate flood risks.

Elster Creek Catchment Litter Collaboration (Item 2)

- In response to community concern, Melbourne Water have set-up an action group of key government stakeholders to explore opportunities to reduce litter and pollutants in the Elster Creek.
- The litter collaboration will focus on catchment options to reduce litter flowing into the Elster Creek (and therefore the bay).
- The collaboration has proposed a phased approach that includes gathering data on litter sources and types, and developing and implementing an action plan that will consider treatments, infrastructure, targeted communications, engagement and education programs, and compliance and enforcement activities.

Gross Pollutant Traps Audit (Item 3)

- To support the work of the Litter Collaboration, the City of Glen Eira are undertaking an audit of their gross pollutant traps.
- The City of Port Phillip has two GPTs nearby Elster Creek that were last audited in 2019. Whilst Council is compliant with the recommended actions of the 2019 audit, there is an opportunity to undertake a further audit to understand if the GPTs are still fit for purpose, or whether any improvements can be made.
- The audit will review whether the current infrastructure remains effective in managing litter and, where relevant, provide recommendations for uplift.
- This audit is anticipated to cost roughly $5k per GPT, which can be funded from the existing Asset Management budget in 24/25.

Advocacy (Item 4)

- The Elster Creek Catchment is a highly urbanised area that drains through the Elster Creek into Port Phillip Bay.
- The catchment spans multiple municipalities, with the Elster Creek being a key water infrastructure asset in Victoria.
- The catchment currently has a range of projects occurring concurrently including uplifts to Yalukit Willam Nature Reserve (including Commonwealth funding), construction of the Head Street drain duplication (Melbourne Water), and other local treatments.
- Ongoing advocacy to State and Federal Governments to support coordinated collaborative action to the catchment is required to achieve optimised outcomes for the community. This includes reduction of litter, improvement of water quality, increased indigenous plantings, and flood mitigation activities.

Long-term Litter Management (Item 5)

- Within our municipality there are several other stormwater outlets to the Bay. Some are managed by Melbourne Water and some by CoPP.
- The stormwater network attached to these outlets provides opportunity for litter to flow into Port Phillip Bay.
- Embedding learnings from the Elster Creek Catchment Litter Collaboration across the municipality, which is based on a holistic approach to litter management is important in reducing our city’s impact on the health of the Bay.

15. REPORTS BY COUNCILLOR DELEGATES

16. URGENT BUSINESS

17. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

17.1 VCAT matter - confidential 466

17.2 Park Street Streetscape Improvement Project and Road Reconstruction 466

17.3 Shrine to Sea Masterplan Advocacy and Implementation 466

17.4 Legal Matter 466

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolves to move into confidential to deal with the following matters pursuant to section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*:

17.1 VCAT matter - confidential

3(1)(e). legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies.

Reason: This matter reports on confidential without prejudice negotiations as part of a VCAT Compulsory Conference process.

17.2 Park Street Streetscape Improvement Project and Road Reconstruction

3(1)(a). Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

Reason: Council will be undertaking procurement during the time of the Council meeting. If the briefing is not confidential, this may impact the value of quotes submitted to undertake these works.

17.3 Shrine to Sea Masterplan Advocacy and Implementation

3(1)(c). land use planning information, being information that if prematurely released is likely to encourage speculation in land values

3(1)(e). legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies.

Reason: While Council have endorsed the draft Masterplan, the final Masterplan is yet to approved by the Minister for public release. This is expected to be in the next few months. The MOU/Victorian funding agreement between agencies contains legally privileged information and financial information that is unable to be shared prior to the public release of the Masterplan.

17.4 Legal Matter

3(1)(e). legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies.

Reason: This report contains sensitive information on Council's position in a legal matter.