



10.4 **PLACES FOR PEOPLE: PUBLIC SPACE STRATEGY 2022 - 2032**

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 To present the *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032* to Councillors for endorsement and adoption.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032* (the Strategy) sets the vision and blueprint for the future of our public spaces in the City of Port Phillip.
- 2.2 The vision for the Strategy is to create ‘a well-connected network of public spaces for all people that nurture and support the health, wellbeing, social connection, creative expressions, economy and environment of our community’.
- 2.3 It is one of Council’s core strategies and delivers on the Liveable Strategic Direction of the Council Plan 2021 – 2031.
- 2.4 The Strategy comprises three volumes:
- Volume 1: Strategy introduction
 - Volume 2: Municipal-wide directions
 - Volume 3: Neighbourhood actions.
- 2.5 Volume 3 of the Strategy includes an Action Plan to guide Council’s investment in public spaces across the City of Port Phillip over the next 10 years. There is sufficient capacity across the funding profile year on year to meet the project delivery schedule across the 10-year period, which totals \$88 million. Anticipated funding sources include public open space contributions, strategic property reserve, rates expenditure and grants.
- 2.6 The draft Strategy was released for community engagement from 10 August to 6 September 2020. As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, all consultation was undertaken online. This followed preliminary community engagement as part of Council’s Neighbourhood Conversations sessions in March 2019, and a more detailed values-based community and stakeholder engagement process in August 2019. The final version of the Strategy responds to a number of matters raised during the 2020 consultation.
- 2.7 The Strategy will be delivered over a 10-year period, with actions allocated over short (2022 – 2025), medium (2026 – 2029) and long (2030 – 2032) term timeframes. Each year, project business cases will be developed and submitted for Council’s approval through the yearly annual budget process in line with the Strategy. All projects will be subject to refinement through the detailed design and consultation stages. Consultation will involve all relevant internal and external stakeholders including the community.



3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Endorses and adopts the *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032* (**Attachment 1**), inclusive of updates that respond to feedback received by the community.
- 3.2 Notes the supporting Public Space Strategy Technical Report (**Attachment 2**) and Public Space Strategy summary of engagement report (**Attachment 3**) which have informed the preparation of the *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032*.
- 3.3 Notes that the *Open Space Strategy 2009* is now superseded by the adopted *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032*.
- 3.4 Thanks the community for providing feedback on the draft Strategy and notes that a response to previous feedback will be received following Council's adoption of the Strategy.
- 3.5 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to make minor editorial updates to the adopted Strategy, if required.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

Need for *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 - 2032*

- 4.1 Council's *Open Space Strategy 2009* and Implementation Plan Framework are out of date, and most actions have been completed or need review.
- 4.2 The development of the Strategy is a key initiative of the Liveable Strategic Direction of the *Council Plan 2021 – 2031*.
- 4.3 There is an increased need for a coordinated, long term approach to the planning of, and investment in, our City's public spaces, in the context of rapid population growth and densification, which was not envisaged by the *Open Space Strategy 2009*.
- 4.4 There is a need to align and create delivery synergies with other core Council strategies including *Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018 - 28*; *Art and Soul: Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2018 - 22*; *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018 - 28*; and *Don't Waste It: Waste Management Strategy 2018 – 28*, as well as the Port Phillip Planning Scheme Review.
- 4.5 The Strategy aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, as well as existing Victorian Government strategies, including the *Fishermans Bend Framework*; *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*; *Open Space Strategy for Metropolitan Melbourne 2021*; and the *Albert Park Master Plan*.
- 4.6 The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of public space and the increased demand for public space for economic activity including parklets, kerbside dining and temporary pop-up activations.

What the Strategy will achieve

- 4.7 The outcomes sought to be achieved for the City through this strategy include:
 - Diverse, attractive and useable - Our public spaces are designed with all people and their needs in mind. Everyone, no matter their age, gender, ability or background, should feel welcome in our public spaces and our public spaces are



able to host a variety of uses including active, informal and passive recreation for everyone to enjoy.

- Better access - Our public space network is more extensive and better connected as we find ways to improve access to parks, gardens, reserves and high quality public space through enhanced green links, building on the movement and place network identified in Move, Connect Live Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-2028.
- Blue-green - Our public spaces are greener and incorporate water sensitive design and management. A diversity of healthy tree species and vegetation in our streets and public spaces have a positive influence on the health and wellbeing of our community and support a range of biodiversity. Incorporating water in public spaces makes our spaces greener and cooler, helps to mitigate flooding and ensure water is not wasted.
- Sustainable - Our public spaces are well maintained and climate resilient so that they can be enjoyed for generations to come.
- Active - Our public spaces encourage our community to be active and healthy.
- Vibrant and adaptable - Our public spaces maximise opportunities to improve community wellbeing and enhance the identity, sense of place and amenity in our City. Our public spaces can be easily repurposed to improve opportunities for physical distancing, facilitate increased active transport, create additional open space and stimulate social and economic recovery.
- Cultural - Our spaces connect people to place and provide the opportunity to celebrate our culture, diversity and creativity.

Community engagement on the draft Strategy

- 4.8 Preliminary community engagement occurred as part of Council's Neighbourhood Conversations sessions in March 2019. This was followed by a detailed values-based community and stakeholder engagement process in August 2019.
- 4.9 Community engagement on the draft Strategy occurred from 10 August to 6 September 2020. A summary report of the community engagement feedback can be found at [Attachment 3](#). Key outcomes are summarised as follows.
- 4.10 Respondents were most excited about:
- Shrine to Sea project
 - Addition of more dog-off leash areas
 - Plan to address the lack of public open space in Balaclava/St Kilda East
 - Elwood Foreshore upgrade
 - Improvements to the St Kilda Foreshore
 - Enhancement and improved accessibility of Albert Park
 - Having more greenery and open space
 - General beautification of Port Phillip
 - Focus on sustainability
 - Improvement of play spaces



- The draft PSS in general and its ambitions for public space in Port Phillip

4.11 Respondents were most concerned about:

- Lack of pedestrian safety considerations
- Need for more planting (particularly shade trees)
- Access to public spaces including Albert Park Reserve and Fishermans Bend
- The timeframes allowed for the project are too generous
- Cost of the proposed actions and how they would be funded
- How sustainability and biodiversity would be factored into the PSS
- General concerns about the perceived 'lack of vision'.

4.12 Respondents wanted Council to:

- Focus on maximising the amount of green space and trees that can be incorporated into public spaces
- Ensure that there are adequate numbers of dog off-leash areas so that all dog owners in the area are able to access these facilities; conversely, ensure that some spaces are kept free of dog off-leash areas so that residents and visitors have safe, uninhibited access to public spaces
- Consider ways to improve access to public space for pedestrians and people on bikes
- Consider increasing the amount of greening and planting proposed in the Strategy.

4.13 In response to feedback from the community, the following changes were made to the Strategy:

- Increased emphasise in the City-wide outcomes on the importance of tree planting initiatives, greening and water infrastructure
- Inclusion of a new key move to investigate opportunities for new, and review permitted times of existing, dog off-leash areas in all public open spaces, including beaches, which is identified as a short-term action which will commence in 2022.
- Amended wording to better reflect the involvement of the Traditional Owners of the land, represented by the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
- Revised language to better reflect Council's response to the climate emergency and sustainability.

4.14 Volume 3 of the Strategy includes an Action Plan to guide Council's investment in public spaces across the City of Port Phillip over the next 10 years. The Strategy includes 118 actions with a total cost of \$88 million, and includes the following neighbourhood actions:

Project type	Number of projects
New public open spaces	9



Expansion of existing open spaces	7
Upgrades to existing open spaces	8
Play space upgrades	8
New pedestrian crossings	3
Landscape masterplans	1
Foreshore upgrades	5
Dog off-leash areas	1
Temporary projects	7
Street tree planting	20
Advocacy and partnerships	35
Structure plans	3
Strategies and guidelines	13

4.15 In response to feedback from the community, the following changes were made to the Action Plan:

- Developed a set of criteria to establish strategic alignment with the objectives Council is seeking to achieve through the Strategy
- Reviewed the proposed Action Plan, including committed projects, having regard to strategic alignment and project optimisation criteria to assess relative project priority
- Identified some temporary spaces to trial interventions before they are made permanent
- Engaged an external quantity surveyor to undertake a third-party review of the costings in response to community concern about the cost of the Action Plan and how projects would be funded
- Based on the third-party review, undertook further refinement of the cost of the Action Plan projects.

How projects have been selected for inclusion in the Action Plan

4.16 The following key criteria have been applied to projects included in the Action Plan and will also be used into the future to assess new ideas, potential projects and requests for public space:

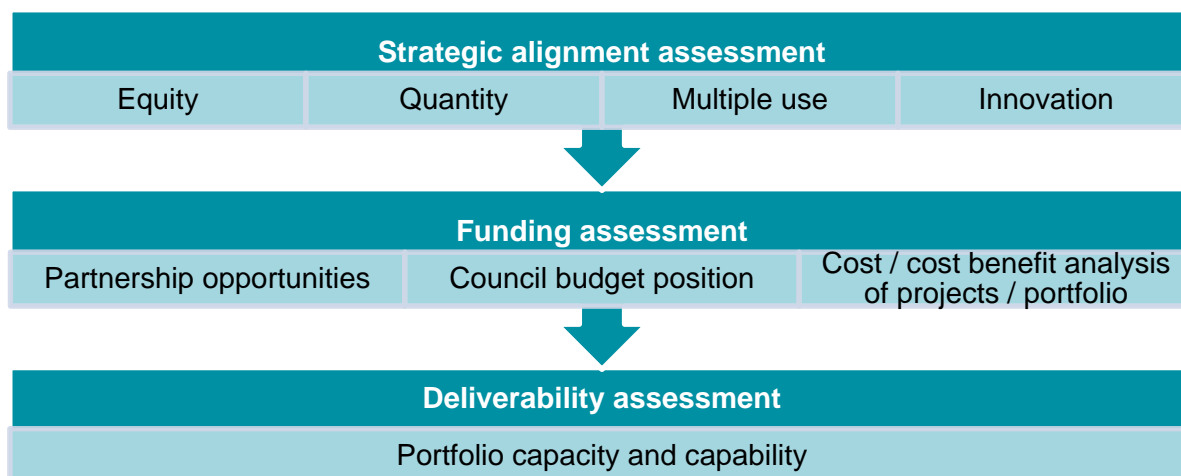
- Equity - As access to high quality public spaces is important to the health and wellbeing of our community, we prioritise our investment in public space towards ensuring its provision is as equitable as possible across our municipality both now and into the future.
- Quantity - As we are a dense and growing inner city municipality, wherever possible we prioritise our investment in public spaces towards improving the



quality of existing open space and, where feasible, creating new open space (noting that there are limited opportunities to create new open space).

- Multiple use - As public space is limited and sometimes contested, we prioritise investment in public spaces that lend themselves to host a variety of uses including active, informal and passive recreation for everyone to enjoy and share.
- Innovation - We see investment in public space as benefiting current and future generations, so we look for opportunities to prioritise our investment to test and trial innovative and temporary solutions to deliver short term outcomes and ensure the benefits of long-term investment are maximised.

4.17 Each new idea, potential project or request for public space is considered through a three-stage process shown in the diagram below.



4.18 In the first years of the Strategy some projects may not fully align with these criteria as they are currently contractually committed or significantly underway. Over time, the intent is that these criteria will be used to guide future public space investment decisions by Council.

4.19 There is no detailed action plan for the Fishermans Bend neighbourhoods in this strategy. This is because the Victorian Government is implementing the Fishermans Bend Framework and preparing Precinct Implementation Plans which will inform the upgrade of existing, and delivery of new, open space in Fishermans Bend, including a funding and finance strategy to deliver these works.

Transformative and partnership projects

4.20 It is expected that the following projects will add to, and transform, public space in the municipality over the coming years:

- Palais Theatre and Luna Park Precinct Revitalisation
- Elwood Foreshore
- Cobden Street Pocket Park
- Activity centres
- New public open space in St Kilda East.



4.21 It is proposed that Council will partner with external stakeholders including the Victorian Government, other local governments and developers on the following projects:

- Shrine to Sea
- Fishermans Bend
- Anzac Station
- St Kilda Pier
- Elster Creek Catchment Partnership
- St Kilda Marina.

Other projects Council will deliver

4.22 The following projects require further investigation and have not been funded through the Strategy:

- St Kilda Triangle
- Purchase of the VicTrack car park adjacent to South Melbourne Market
- Pedestrian crossing at Nightingale Street
- Green Line between Carlisle Street and Nightingale Street
- Raglan Street section of Green Line
- York Street (adjacent to South Melbourne Market)
- Cecil Street (adjacent to South Melbourne Market)
- Coventry Street (adjacent to South Melbourne Market).

4.23 The Strategy includes a number of temporary public open space projects, which will enable Council to test and trial innovative and temporary solutions to deliver short term outcomes and ensure the benefits of long-term investment are maximised. These include:

- Trial new temporary public open spaces in Balaclava and St Kilda East
- Temporary partial road closures in Balaclava, St Kilda East and St Kilda
- Beautification of a small portion of the Green Line in Balaclava.

4.24 Other public space projects that Council will deliver in addition to the actions identified in the Strategy include:

- Sport and recreation facilities (e.g. upgrades to sport fields and pavilions)
- Ongoing maintenance and renewal (e.g. maintenance and replacement of park and foreshore furniture, paths, lighting, play spaces etc.)
- Public space in Fishermans Bend (delivered by the Victorian Government or Council)
- Streetscape upgrades within activity centres (e.g. these will be determined by future Structure Plans).



5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 Consultation on the draft Strategy occurred from 10 August to 6 September 2020. This followed preliminary community engagement as part of Council's Neighbourhood Conversations sessions in March 2019, and a more detailed values-based community and stakeholder engagement process in August 2019.
- 5.2 The engagement objectives for the draft Strategy were to:
- Seek community feedback on the draft Strategy including outcomes and defined actions with a broad representative sample of our City's population
 - Confirm and build on what we already know about community sentiment, attitudes and needs around public space
 - Establish ongoing dialogue with our community and Councillors to ensure they were aware, informed and engaged at key points of the development of the Strategy
 - Establish an understanding of the different needs and uses of public space in each of our neighbourhoods.
- 5.3 Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, consultation was conducted online only, and included an online survey via Have Your Say, Q&A forum, social media campaign, emails to interested parties and posters displayed in key public spaces across the municipality.
- 5.4 The online survey was completed by 152 people, eight (8) responses were provided via email, 8 comments were made via social media and 14 community members attended the Q&A forum. The social media reach was approximately 25,000 people, and approximately 5,500 emails were sent to interested parties.
- 5.5 The community have been involved in identifying the actions in this strategy as well as informing the overarching outcomes sought to be achieved and the prioritisation approach. Further consultation will be undertaken in the future during the concept and detailed design stages on specific projects (including proposed road closures) as they commence and the outcomes of this consultation will influence the way projects are delivered, and in some cases will influence whether it is still feasible to proceed in the manner outlined in this strategy. If it is not feasible to proceed in some cases, this will be highlighted, and the strategy will be updated over time.
- 5.6 One of the municipal-wide key moves explicitly acknowledges the need to work with certain stakeholders to deliver some of the desired outcomes. This is to 'partner with the Victorian Government to activate underutilised spaces for public use (e.g. VicTrack for railway reserves, Department of Health and Human Services for public housing, Department of Transport for rail, tram and road underpasses)'.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 To mitigate the risk of the Strategy not being implemented, it includes measurable outcomes and timeframes for Council to monitor the progress of the delivery of actions. An implementation plan will also be developed.
- 6.2 Public Open Space Contributions can only be spent within strict parameters (that dictate the location and nature of works) under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. Guidance is currently being finalised on open space expenditure that qualifies for Open Space Contribution reserve drawdown.



- 6.3 Where projects may involve land acquisition and/ or road closures, these will be subject to statutory processes and requirements under the relevant legislation including the *Local Government Act 2020*.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 The Action Plan guides Council's investment in public space into the future. Actions are allocated over short (2022 – 2025), medium (2026 – 2029) and long (2030 – 2032) term timeframes and associated costs are identified.
- 7.2 Council officers allocated provisional projects in the Strategy over the 10-year period from 2022 - 2032. Including the cost escalation by the construction index over time, the full cost of the Strategy is quantified at \$88 million.
- 7.3 Over the 10-year period, the following funding sources for the Strategy are anticipated:
- \$8 million from grants (some are already secured; advocacy will play a key role to secure additional grant funding)
 - \$31 million from currently reserved and future anticipated Open Space Contributions
 - \$8 million from drawdown on strategic property reserve (to be used for costs associated with land acquisition)
 - \$41 million of rates funded expenditure (through yearly budget allocation).
- 7.4 There is sufficient capacity across the funding profile year on year to meet the project delivery schedule across the 10-year period.
- 7.5 As part of Council's standard project management systems, project business cases will need to be developed to ensure the project deliverability, asset service planning, funding, impact on users, community engagement and other factors that contribute to success outcomes. These will also inform yearly budget allocation processes.
- 7.6 Open Space Contributions have been applied in accordance with our financial strategy and will be reviewed as part of the budget this year. Guidance is currently being finalised on open space expenditure that qualifies for Open Space Contribution reserve drawdown.
- 7.7 Should Council wish to review the percentage of mandatory open space contributions across the municipality that apply under the Port Phillip Planning Scheme, further work would be required.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 'Blue-green' is one of the key outcomes sought to be achieved through this Strategy. That is, that public spaces are greener and incorporate water sensitive design and management. Accordingly, the Strategy recognises the need for Council to design public spaces differently to cope with the impacts of climate change and to meet Council's commitment to be a water sensitive city.
- 8.2 The Strategy will guide the delivery and management of the public space network to ensure it offers a range of environmental benefits to help reduce the urban heat island effect, offer cooler places for respite and improve biodiversity.



9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 The Strategy guides the future of the public space network to cater for the growing demand for public space by the community; and create more places for the community to connect and socialise.
- 9.2 The Strategy guides the sharing of public spaces to ensure Council can respond to the diverse needs of the community.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 The Strategy delivers on the Liveable Strategic Direction of the *Council Plan 2021 – 2031*, which has the strategic objective that 'Port Phillip 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'. The Strategy will contribute to the following four-year strategies:
 - Port Phillip has diverse and distinctive neighbourhoods and places and is proud of and protects its heritage and character
 - Port Phillip is safer with liveable streets and public spaces for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy
 - The City is well connected and easy to move around with options for sustainable and active transport.
- 10.2 The Strategy also has key links to the Inclusive, Sustainable and Vibrant Strategic Directions, contributing to the following four-year strategies:
 - Port Phillip is more accessible and welcoming for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities
 - Port Phillip has cleaner streets, parks, foreshore areas and waterways where biodiversity flourishes
 - The City is actively mitigating and adapting to climate change and invests in designing, constructing and managing our public spaces to optimise water sustainably and reduce flooding (blue/green infrastructure)
 - Port Phillip's main streets, activity centres and laneways are vibrant and activated.
- 10.3 The Strategy aligns other core Council strategies including *Move, Connect, Live: Integrated Transport Strategy 2018 - 28*; *Art and Soul: Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2018 - 22*; *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018 - 28*; and *Don't Waste It: Waste Management Strategy 2018 – 28*, as well as the Port Phillip Planning Scheme Review.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

- A detailed implication plan will be developed to guide the implementation of the Strategy.
- The Strategy will be delivered over a 10-year period, with actions allocated over short (2022 – 2025), medium (2026 – 2029) and long (2030 – 2032) term timeframes.



- Some committed projects are scheduled for delivery in 2021/22, or substantially commenced and due for delivery in 2022/23.
- As part of Council's standard project management systems, project business cases will need to be developed to ensure the project deliverability, asset service planning, funding, impact on users, community engagement and other factors that contribute to success outcomes. These will also inform yearly budget allocation processes. For example, initial scoping is already underway to prepare a budget bid for 2022/23 for a review of dog off-leash areas in accordance with the key move to 'investigate opportunities for new, and review permitted times in existing, dog off-leash areas (in all open spaces, including beaches)'.
- Where projects may involve land acquisition and/ or road closures, these will be subject to statutory processes on a case by case basis (which include consultation and decision making by Council).
- The Strategy will be reviewed after five years and updated as needed, particularly at the conclusion of annual budget processes.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

- The Strategy will be published on Council's website and promoted through Council's social media channels.
- Further consultation will be undertaken in the future during the concept and detailed design stages on specific projects (including proposed road closures) as they commence.

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

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

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1A - Volume 1 of the Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 - 2032 
2. Attachment 1B - Volume 2 of the Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 - 2032 
3. Attachment 1C - Volume 3 of the Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 - 2032 
4. Attachment 2 - [Public Space Strategy Technical Report](#)
5. Attachment 3 - [Public Space Strategy summary of engagement report](#)