

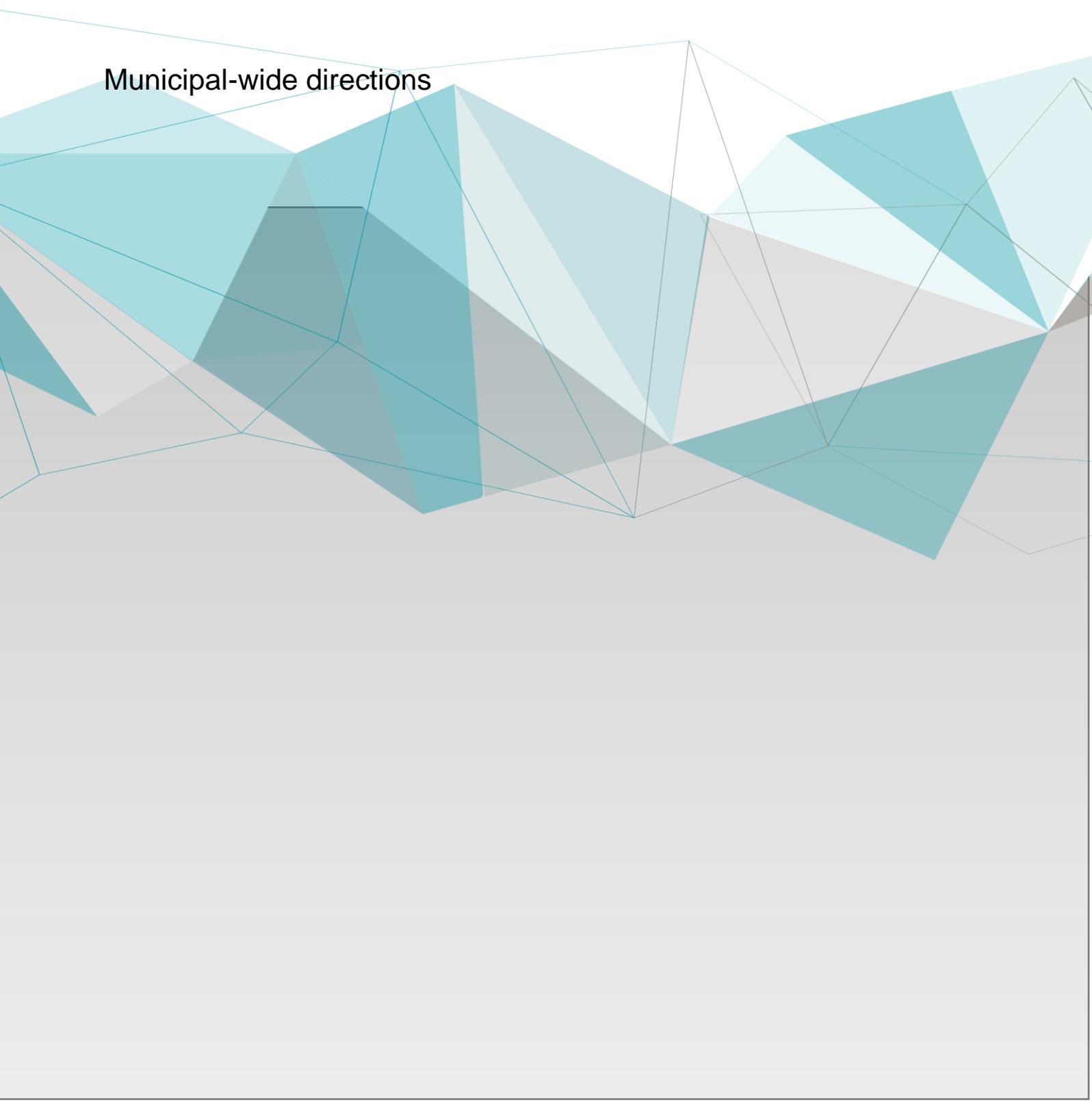


VOLUME 2

Places for People

Public Space Strategy 2022-32

Municipal-wide directions



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Acknowledgments

The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council recently advised Council that they consider that the Traditional Owners of the land of Port Phillip are represented by the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.

Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations

We pay our respects to Elders, both past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.

Message from the Mayor

On behalf of the Councillors, I am pleased to publicly release Council's *Places for People Public Space Strategy 2022-32*.

Council is committed to supporting the ongoing delivery of high-quality, multi-purpose and community driven public space in our City. This is reflective of Council's Liveable Strategic Direction of the current Council Plan, for Port Phillip to be 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.

This strategy has been prepared in close collaboration with our community to deliver on the Council Plan commitment over the next 10-years by including city-wide outcomes including:

- Diverse, attractive and inclusive spaces
- Blue-green spaces
- Active spaces
- Better access to public spaces
- Sustainable spaces
- Vibrant and adaptable spaces
- Cultural spaces.

This strategy is a long-term plan that outlines the challenges, outcomes, prioritisation approach and actions required to realise the full potential of Port Phillip's already enviable public space network. It will transform our existing spaces through an integrated 10-year Action Plan that will guide the operation, delivery, upgrade and design of public spaces for each neighbourhood across the City, and includes the following types of neighbourhood actions:

- New public open spaces
- Expansion of existing open spaces
- Upgrades to existing open spaces
- Play space upgrades
- New pedestrian crossings
- Landscape masterplans
- Foreshore upgrades
- Dog off-leash areas
- Temporary projects

- Street tree planting
- Advocacy and partnerships
- Strategies and guidelines.

Public Space Strategy vision statement

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.

What is public space and why is it important?

Public space contributes to the liveability of our City and defines our unique sense of identity and place. It is open and accessible to people. It is essential to our physical and mental well-being. It is where we meet our friends, exercise, play sport and relax. It is generally publicly owned and includes footpaths, urban plazas, parks, sports fields and beaches .

In this strategy, public space is described in the following ways:

- **Public open space** (referred to in this strategy as open space) – parks, gardens, reserves, the foreshore and urban spaces
- **Shopping strips** (activity centres) – destination public spaces which people visit to socialise and relax
- **Streetscapes** – key streets that link our public spaces and shopping strips
- **Contributory public space** –public space such as waterways, civic plazas, forecourts and Victorian Government owned and managed land (such as schools)
- **Publicly accessible space on private land** – spaces that are linked to major commercial and residential buildings that are privately owned but accessible to the public.

Well-designed public spaces have social, economic and environmental benefits. Research has identified that there are measurable improvements to people’s physical and mental health if they live and work near green public space, and that public space is an essential part of creating sustainable urban communities, particularly as urban density increases (WHO, 2016; Victorian Government, 2012; Deakin University, 2010). It is vital that we ensure equitable access to high quality public spaces in our City.

As our City has continued to grow and change, Council has observed an increased demand for the use of public open space for physical exercise, access to playgrounds and facilities, changes to community sport as well as a much greater community value placed on the mental health benefits derived from public space.

Our public space network

Port Phillip has an excellent public space network, with approximately 353 hectares of open space distributed over 169 individual open spaces (comprising 17 per cent of our city), as well as some noteworthy public spaces that adjoin our municipality such as Fawkner Park, Kings Domain/Melbourne Royal Botanic Gardens, Ripponlea Gardens and Elsternwick Park. The amount of public space varies in each neighbourhood across our city, ranging from 5 per cent of the neighbourhood in Balaclava/St Kilda East to 31 per cent in Albert Park/Middle Park.

The foreshore and Albert Park Reserve are by far our largest open spaces, contributing significantly to the public space network and attracting people from across greater Melbourne and beyond. We also have a number of medium-sized open spaces (including Alma Park, St Kilda Botanical Gardens, St Vincent Gardens and JL Murphy Reserve). These are complemented by a range of smaller open spaces in each neighbourhood within a short, easy and safe walking distance of the local community (i.e. without having to cross major roads or other physical barriers such as railways or waterways).

In addition to open space, each of our neighbourhoods have a range of public spaces in our 'shopping strips', key streets that link public spaces, and the foreshore, as well as contributory public spaces (such as church grounds). St Kilda Road neighbourhood has many publicly accessible private spaces. **Map 1** shows our public space network.

Our spaces are generally well-spread across the City, with all our neighbourhoods having access to public space.

Map 1 Port Phillip's public space network

What is the Public Space Strategy and why do we need it?

The *Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 – 2032* is the vision and blueprint to enhancing our City’s public space network. The strategy informs Council’s ongoing planning and investment in public spaces and will transform our existing spaces through an integrated action plan for each of our neighbourhoods.

The strategy is underpinned by the Liveable Strategic Direction of the *Council Plan 2021 – 2031* and supports the delivery of Council’s vision and other core Council strategies, guided by external legislation and plans. Refer to **Figure 1** below.

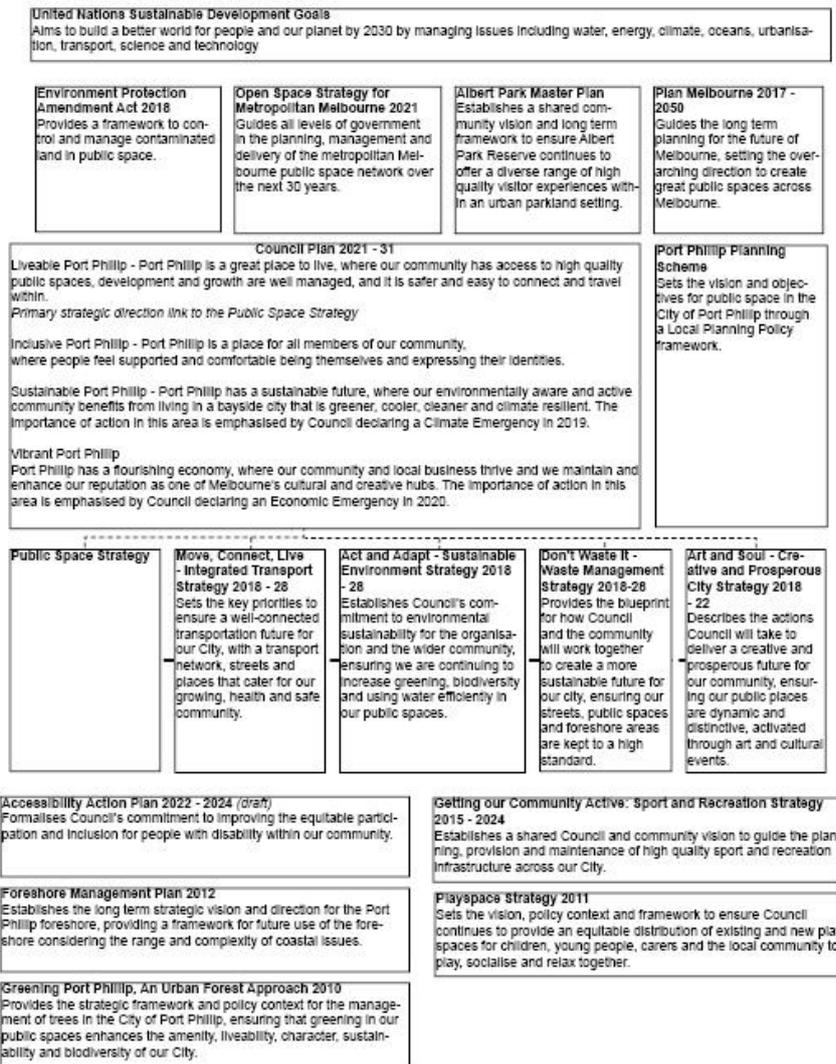


Figure 1 Public Space Strategy strategic context

What is Council's role in public space?

Trusted service provider

We are the provider of high-quality, community-driven public spaces that form a network of active, vibrant places that contribute to the overall well-being of our City.

Trusted partner

We work with a range of partners to deliver and maintain our network of public space.

Trusted advisor

We monitor and report against key measures outlined in this strategy to share our progress and identify areas for further improvement.

Trusted steward

We recognise the intrinsic connection of the Traditional Owners to Country and acknowledge their contribution in the management of land, water and resources, and we will continue to work closely with Traditional Owners in the management of our open spaces. We will be a sector leader in managing and delivering well-used and high-quality public space. We acknowledge that Council is a temporary and environmental steward of the land for future generations.

Our partners

Initiatives outlined in this strategy require significant collaboration between Council and stakeholders including our community, the Victorian Government, neighbouring councils, public and community sector organisations, and the private sector including developers.

State and Local Government

Advocate for, and develop partnerships with, the Victorian Government and neighbouring councils to maximise the benefits of our public spaces and public spaces in adjacent municipalities, including the potential joint delivery of new public spaces where appropriate.

Land owners and developers

Work with private landowners and developers to deliver new open space where appropriate as development occurs and ensure development outcomes enhance adjacent public spaces.

Our residents and workers

Work with our community (including residents, workers and visitors) to use our public spaces and nature strips, such as through establishing community gardens, encouraging nature strip planting (in line with policy), running community events and encouraging community stewardship of spaces.

The challenges we face

Our City is becoming even more dense, our environment is changing, and technology is shaping our lives in ways that were once unimaginable. This all has an impact on our public spaces: how we provide them, how often they get used, who uses them and how often we need to service them. It makes these places even more important to the well-being of our community. This strategy is our response to those challenges to ensure we maintain our enviable network of public space and overtime addressing inequities.

We are growing and changing

We are already one of Victoria's most densely populated municipalities and our population will grow to an expected 128,000 people by 2031. As the City's density increases, the role and demand for public space is changing. Nearly half of this growth comes from Fishermans Bend, which will transform the area from an industrial/employment precinct to a high density residential and mixed-use precinct with approximately 80,000 new residents and 80,000 new jobs by 2050 (DELWP, 2019). Other key areas of growth in Port Phillip are St Kilda Road, St Kilda and South Melbourne.

As more people live in apartments, parks are replacing backyards and urban spaces are becoming the 'living rooms' where people meet and interact. These spaces are an intrinsic part of the City's identity and character and they play a major role in creating a sense of connection for people.

Each of our neighbourhoods has different characteristics. In Albert Park/Middle Park, for example, the population is ageing and many people live in larger houses with backyards, while other neighbourhoods have a larger population of young families with children, and in others, single person households are dominant.

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 (i.e. without having to cross major roads or other physical barriers such as railways or waterways), particularly Balaclava/St Kilda East and South Melbourne. The quality of many of our public spaces is high; however, some spaces are of a lower quality due to things like size, diversity of use and facilities.

With the combined challenge of limited land availability and population growth in our City, the demand for public space becomes even more competitive. For our public space network and Council's delivery of services this means:

- new open spaces (including sporting fields) cannot be provided at the rate of population growth (other than within Fishermans Bend)
- more people will be using our open spaces and there will be limited provision of new open spaces, so our existing spaces will need to work harder and be maintained more frequently (this includes nature strips and community gardens)
- as usage and amount of open space increases, cost of maintenance will also increase
- our public spaces need to be accessible for all people and all abilities
- as apartment living increases, our community will be more reliant on open space for leisure and recreation
- as more people live alone, they will rely on open spaces for social connectedness
- forecast growth in Port Phillip and greater Melbourne will place more pressure on our open spaces.

Responding to disruptors

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic highlighted how easily our cities can be disrupted by unplanned events. It created new and different demands for our public spaces, including a significant increase in the number of people using our spaces at different times of the day and the types of activities being done in our spaces. This has seen community interest in upgrading or changing our spaces rise.

Challenges for our public space network that have arisen as a result of disruptors include:

- managing physical distancing in public spaces while catering for increased use
- managing the transition from temporary to permanent parklets (small public spaces located alongside a footpath or in on-street car parking spaces) and creating a consistent approach to creating new temporary or permanent parklets
- balancing the demand for commercial use of public space in responding to economic recovery
- demand for play spaces closer to home
- streets will need to be adapted to increase the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bike riders
- our public spaces must feel safe to those who are vulnerable
- low cost, temporary initiatives to activate public spaces will need to be considered in consultation with the community and key stakeholders.

Adapting to a changing climate

Our City has declared a climate emergency to recognise the challenges that we are currently facing. As the impacts of climate change increase, we will need to change how we design and manage our public spaces and it will become increasingly important to design public spaces that can adapt to a changing climate as outlined in Council's *Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-2028*.

Challenges for our public space network include:

- lower than average rainfall, changing rainfall patterns and inconsistent water supply requires changes to the way we manage water and irrigate our open spaces
- rising average temperatures and more days of extreme heat will cause heat-related health stress (for humans, animals and trees) and it will become more important for our public spaces to help cool our City and be places of refuge
- more frequent extreme weather events (such as heatwaves, storms and floods), combined with increased urbanisation may impact how our public spaces are used and managed
- sea level rise and storm surges make the foreshore vulnerable and in the long-term (beyond the life of this strategy) may result in areas of the coast being inundated or eroded unless proactive measures are taken
- the changing climate will impact biodiversity, which will require different planting choices and management practices
- rising groundwater levels will make it more difficult and costly to manage contamination of our open spaces and heighten the risk of soil salinity issues
- the cost of remediation of contaminated land is expensive and will continue to increase.

Responding to a different transport future

More people and more cars mean that our streets are becoming more congested. Ride sharing, autonomous and electric vehicles may increase this congestion. Road space makes up approximately 17 per cent of Council controlled land in our City and approximately 20 percent of this road space is used only for car parking. In line with Council's *Move, Connect, Live Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-2028*, we need to consider new ways to mitigate this and rethink the design and use of our streets to be more focused towards people.

Challenges for our public space network include:

- streets may need to be repurposed (temporarily or permanently) to create new public space such as parklets, playstreets, and bike and walking routes (this may include the removal of car parking in areas where our community considers there is higher value in using parking spaces in alternate ways)
- footpaths may need to be widened for the comfort of increased number of pedestrians or to allow social distancing along key walking routes and shopping streets
- some of our streets are not accessible to people of all abilities and often provide little shade or places to rest.

Rapidly evolving technology

The rapid evolution of technology parallels the increasing demand from our community for innovative ways to use and manage our public space. The digital shift is reshaping how we deliver services and engage our community in decision making.

Challenges for our public space network include:

- changes to technology and the digital environment accelerating faster than we are delivering innovation in our spaces
- lack of technology in our public spaces
- balancing access to new technologies and managing the impact on public spaces (such as shared e-bikes, scooters and electric vehicle chargers)
- being responsive and adaptive to make use of new technologies and solutions.

Changing economic conditions

The rise of online shopping, the sharing economy and more flexible work models are driving an evolution of our places and the experiences people have in our City. The cost of increased land prices, construction, rate capping and remediating contaminated land also needs to be taken into consideration when planning new, or upgrading, existing public spaces.

Challenges for our public space network include:

- availability of land for new public space is limited in our already built-up City, meaning that there is often competition between creating new open spaces or other community uses
- public spaces must support the economic activity in our shopping streets to help them thrive
- increased use of public spaces at all hours makes it more difficult and expensive to maintain and operate our public spaces

- there is limited financial flexibility to invest in public spaces due to rate capping, rising land costs, competing priorities and the financial effects of COVID-19
- levels of site contamination in our public spaces mean that it is expensive to remediate land
- increasing costs of utilities, including electricity for lighting and water for irrigation and other facilities.

City-wide spaces and transformations

The foreshore and Albert Park Reserve are the largest public spaces in our City, and cross multiple neighbourhoods. We must make sure the key moves for these spaces are considered with our whole city in mind. We also have a number of key projects (both funded and unfunded) that will transform our public space network.

The foreshore

The foreshore is the most popular public space in our City and is one of Victoria's major tourist attractions.

Key moves:

- work with the Victorian Government and other coastal land managers around Port Phillip Bay to implement a best practice approach to adapting to the impacts of climate change on the foreshore
- improve accessibility, and the amenity of connections, to the foreshore by advocating for improved pedestrian crossings and improving green links between the foreshore and key public spaces (such as Albert Park Reserve and key retail streets)
- upgrade public spaces on the foreshore (such as South Beach Reserve, Pier Road, Elwood Park and Point Ormond Reserve)
- plant more shade trees and garden beds on key sections of the foreshore (such as Pier Road and Pickles Street) to improve shade, biodiversity and amenity
- update Council's *Foreshore Management Plan* and develop a Coastal Adaptation Plan to align with this strategy and relevant coastal management legislation
- protect and enhance biodiversity along the foreshore and improve connections to key areas
- ensure access to the water and foreshore projects are planned and designed to cope with climate change, including projected sea level rise.

See Albert Park/Middle Park, Elwood/Ripponlea, St Kilda/St Kilda West and Port Melbourne neighbourhoods in Volume 3 for specific actions.

Albert Park Reserve

Albert Park Reserve is the largest public space in our City. While it is managed by Parks Victoria, it performs a crucial role in meeting the active and passive recreation needs of our residents.

Key moves:

- advocate to, and partner with, Parks Victoria to implement the Albert Park Reserve Master Plan to improve canopy cover, paths and neighbourhood level unstructured recreation and social facilities within the Reserve

- advocate for improved and more legible local community access (pedestrian and bike) into and throughout the Reserve
- improve green links between the Reserve and the foreshore
- continue to advocate for better access into the Reserve from the St Kilda Road neighbourhood
- mitigate the impact of the Australian Grand Prix and the reduction in access to the Reserve when it is closed to local community access during the event, noting that it is a key tourist event with reduced use for approximately three months of the year.

See Albert Park/Middle Park, St Kilda/St Kilda West, South Melbourne and St Kilda neighbourhoods in Volume 3 for specific actions.

Future transformative projects

Across our City a series of projects will add to and transform public space in the municipality over the coming years. Some of these are Council projects and some are in partnership with the Victorian Government or private developers.

Transformative Council projects

- **Palais Theatre and Luna Park Precinct Revitalisation** – a new plaza will integrate hostile vehicle mitigation with the public realm and create an accessible, generous and pedestrian friendly public space outside Palais Theatre and Luna Park.
- **Elwood Foreshore** – a masterplanned approach to Elwood Foreshore is being developed that will consider the needs of both the local community and visitors. It will guide changes to the foreshore buildings, car parking, pedestrian and bike riding connections, public realm and sport and recreation facilities.
- **Cobden Street Pocket Park** – a new gathering place for pedestrians will be provided through a shared zone on Kings Place and Millers Lane as well as the new plaza created through partial road closure of Cobden Street.
- **Activity centres** – as we continue to prepare structure plans for activity centres, we will define where new public spaces could go. In South Melbourne, we will address gaps in the public space network around the South Melbourne Market, and/or in the north-eastern portion of the neighbourhood. In Balaclava, we will deliver a new public space near Carlisle Street.
- **New public open space in St Kilda East** – future acquisition of land for new public open space in St Kilda East to address the historic gap in the public space network.

Partnership projects

- **Shrine to Sea** – support the Victorian Government in developing and implementing a master plan for, and the delivery of, the Shrine to Sea corridor (planned for completion in 2023).
- **Fishermans Bend** – support the Victorian Government to deliver a new public space network for Montague and Wirraway/Sandridge by implementing the Fishermans Bend Framework and associated Precinct Implementation Plans.
- **Anzac Station** – support the Victorian Government to deliver a new and improved public realm as part of the delivery of the Anzac Station.

- **St Kilda Pier** – support Parks Victoria to redevelop the iconic St Kilda Pier which, once completed, will provide improved recreational space for more people to enjoy. As part of this, there is an opportunity to transform the landside interface Royal Melbourne with the pier and reimagine Pier Road and the area surrounding the St Kilda Sea Baths, the Yacht Squadron, and even the connection between the foreshore, Fitzroy Street and the Esplanade Hotel.
- **St Kilda Marina** – work with the private lease holder/developer to unlock the full potential of the site as a working marina and key destination. The quality and quantity of accessible public space within the Marina will be increased for locals, Melburnians and national and international visitors to enjoy.

Projects requiring further investigation

- **St Kilda Triangle** – the St Kilda Triangle site has a rich and varied history and has the potential to be transformed into an exemplary public space for our community to enjoy. Council will continue to work with the community to guide the future planning and development of this site.
- **Purchase of the VicTrack car park adjacent to South Melbourne Market** - to be further reviewed as part of the South Melbourne NEXT project (requires agreement from VicTrack).
- **Pedestrian crossing at Nightingale Street** - install a pedestrian zebra crossing across Nightingale Street (part of Balaclava Walk and Green Line).
- **Green Line between Carlisle Street and Nightingale Street** – advocate to, and partner with, VicTrack to plant indigenous trees and grasses along the rail embankment and build a low retaining wall along Railway Place (would need VicTrack approval).
- **Raglan Street section of Green Line** – widen the nature strip on the eastern side of Raglan St by removing some, or all, car parking and build a formal walking path from Alma Road to Inkerman Street, including planting trees and vegetation.
- **York Street (adjacent to South Melbourne Market)** - a more generous and flexible public realm extension that supports additional outdoor trading, casual seating and place making opportunities (part of South Melbourne Next Project).
- **Cecil Street (adjacent to South Melbourne Market)** - expansion of the existing public realm in alignment with recent Cecil St closure trial. Retain cycle way, south bound traffic movements and eastern side parking/loading (part of South Melbourne Next Project).
- **Coventry Street (adjacent to South Melbourne Market)** - a more generous and flexible public realm extension that supports additional outdoor trading, public space, public seating and place making opportunities (part of South Melbourne Next Project).

Temporary projects

- 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.

Refer to **Map 2** for a map showing our transformative projects.

Map 2 Transformative projects in Port Phillip

City-wide outcomes

The challenges set out earlier in this document have a key influence on the future of our City and the public spaces within it. Responding to these challenges requires innovative approaches to the future provision and management of open space. The key moves listed under the outcomes below are a mixture of Council's business as usual and investment portfolio statements. The key investment portfolio projects will be prioritised annually through Council's budget build process, while the business as usual moves will be implemented with each operational and capital project that Council undertakes relating to public space.

Diverse, attractive and inclusive

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

Key moves:

- design and manage spaces for more than one use to increase appeal and level of use (e.g. sporting facilities, dog off-leash areas, events, casual and unplanned activities and play etc)
- involve the community in the design of public spaces
- co-locate public spaces and community facilities to encourage shared use
- ensure our spaces are clean and well maintained
- ensure people feel safer in our public spaces
- ensure that the design, management and maintenance of our public spaces is informed by Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles and evidence regarding gender and safety in public spaces
- prepare guidelines to assist making public spaces safer and more inclusive of people of all genders and sexualities
- ensure appropriate amenities in public spaces and key streets including shaded seating, appropriate lighting and improved wayfinding
- investigate opportunities for new, and review permitted times in existing, dog off-leash areas (in all open spaces, including beaches)
- develop a Universal Design guideline to assist Council decision-making on the design and management of public spaces
- prepare an overarching framework to support Council in managing the shared use of public open space, including, but not limited to, formal and informal sport and recreation, commercial uses, festivals, events and activations, dogs, community gardens and public space infrastructure
- prepare guidelines to assist Council decision making on supporting the use of laneways for gardening by the community
- prepare a guideline to support school use of public open space, whilst maintaining access and equity for all public space users
- partner with the community and developers to ensure that spaces such as building forecourts, church grounds and privately-owned public spaces are shared and well-used

- support and manage community festivals, major events and commercial activity in public space through the implementation of the *Event Strategy 2018-22*, the *Outdoor Events Guidelines* and *Commercial Recreation Policy*
- 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).

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 flourishing biodiversity. Incorporating water in public spaces makes our spaces greener and cooler, helps to mitigate flooding and ensure water is not wasted.

Key moves:

- integrate Water Sensitive City principles in the design and management of public spaces, including integrating flood mitigation, improving water quality and celebrating water in the landscape
- protect existing areas of biodiversity and create new habitats by planting more indigenous and native vegetation, reviewing land management practices, and linking key biodiversity corridors, with the involvement of the Traditional Owners of the land of Port Phillip
- update Council's Nature Strip Guidelines to be consistent with this strategy and support the use of nature strips for enhanced biodiversity and greening
- protect mature trees in our spaces, recognising the role that trees play in providing shade, amenity value and biodiversity through creating habitat for wildlife
- plant long-lived broad spreading canopy trees in public spaces and along key pedestrian and bike links to increase canopy cover and shade, assist with carbon capture and improve local character and amenity
- plant tree and vegetation species suitable for a changing climate and to improve the diversity of the urban forest, ensuring that they thrive for future generations
- investigate locations where roads can be repurposed to increase greening
- help cool our City by reducing hard impermeable surfaces and encouraging passive cooling in public spaces by planting long-lived broad spreading canopy trees, garden beds and natural turf areas
- develop a new irrigation strategy to guide decision-making on optimising potable water use for irrigation in parks, gardens, reserves and for trees, and plan and deliver projects that increase use of non-potable water
- update *Greening Port Phillip – An Urban Forest Approach*, and the *Greening Port Phillip Street Tree Planting Program 2017-22* to include additional actions identified in this strategy and other core Council strategies
- partner with developers to support greening, permeability, biodiversity and stormwater detention in public and private spaces in line with *Act and Adapt Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-28*.

Active

Our public spaces encourage our community to be active and healthy.

Key moves:

- make our existing sports grounds work harder through extending hours of use with improved lighting and programming, licensing, agreements and consideration of different surface types
- provide for informal sport and recreation as an alternative to organised sport to encourage physical exercise in open space
- advocate to Parks Victoria for better use of the sports facilities in Albert Park Reserve and to the Department of Education and Training for community use of school facilities (e.g. ovals and outdoor multi-purpose courts) outside of school hours
- renew the *Getting our Community Active: Sport and Recreation Strategy 2015-2024* to be consistent with the actions in this strategy where appropriate
- update the *Play Space Strategy 2011* to prioritise play spaces for upgrade and renewal.

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*.

Key moves:

- repurpose road space, where appropriate, to create more useable public spaces, particularly in areas where there are gaps in the public space network
- ensure our community is within a short, easy and safe walking distance (i.e. without having to cross major roads or other physical barriers such as railways or waterways) to public spaces
- ensure that public spaces in the City are accessible for people with a disability, in line with Council's *Access and Inclusion Plan*
- develop a guideline to inform the acquisition of land and discontinuance of roads and car parking where appropriate to create new public spaces
- use design tools such as paint, temporary additions, removal of obstructions, wayfinding and improved interfaces with surroundings to trial road closures and the removal of car parking for playstreets and parklets
- improve connections to public space for everyone through upgrading bike riding networks, walking connections and better defined green links
- integrate innovative technology that enhances accessibility and use of public spaces, including using technology to book facilities online
- repurpose existing restricted public space, where appropriate, to consider a wider range of public uses.

Sustainable

Our public spaces are well maintained and climate resilient so that they can be enjoyed for generations to come.

Key moves:

- design public spaces to be long-lasting and constructed of high-quality materials with the whole of life costs and environmental impacts considered
- ensure access to nature and sunlight in all open spaces
- use more sustainable methods to remediate contaminated soil, such as using plants
- plan and design our open spaces to be resilient to our changing climate
- develop guidelines to ensure that groups or individuals who use particular public spaces at a level above the rest of the community contribute to the additional costs of repair and maintenance of that space.

Vibrant and adaptable

Our public spaces contribute to improving community wellbeing and enhancing the identity, sense of place and amenity in our City. Our public spaces can be easily repurposed for physical distancing, facilitate increased active transport and stimulate social and economic recovery.

Key moves:

- strengthen the community heart of our neighbourhoods by expanding or improving public space in activity centres as part of a structure planning processes
- support the use of our public spaces at all hours rather than just peak times
- widen footpaths at the South Melbourne Market, and repurpose road space for pedestrians and market stalls
- transform on-street car parking spaces to create parklets for our community to enjoy (e.g. temporary play spaces, greening and outdoor trading)
- improve co-ordination and streamline the permitting approvals process
- work in partnership with local businesses, our community and other levels of government to ensure our public spaces promote these initiatives
- evaluate the success of temporary public space activations and use them as opportunities to accelerate change and create more permanent public space.

Cultural

Our spaces connect people to place and provide the opportunity to celebrate our culture, diversity and creativity.

Key moves:

- involve the Traditional Owners of the land of Port Phillip in the design and management of public spaces
- recognise the heritage significance of public spaces and implement conservation management plans where they exist
- celebrate our creativity and diversity by embedding heritage, art and cultural identity into our spaces

- develop guidelines for locating public art and memorials in public space.

How we prioritise our efforts to achieve these outcomes

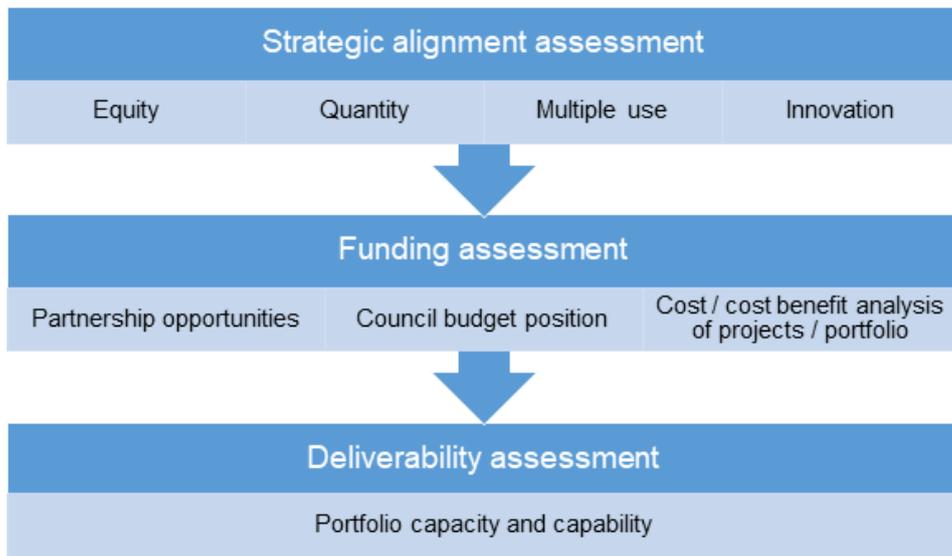
We prioritise our efforts to achieve the above City-wide outcomes using four key criteria. These have been applied to projects contained within this strategy and will also be used into the future to assess new ideas, potential projects and requests for public space¹.

- **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.

Once we have determined how well a new idea, potential project or request for public space is strategically aligned with this Strategy, we then look at our available funding (including the likelihood of funding from other sources such as State and Federal Government) and consider the cost and where possible the associated benefits of projects and or the portfolio. We then undertake an assessment of our ability to deliver the portfolio in terms of our capability and capacity and this ultimately helps us to determine our key actions.

This process is outlined in the diagram below.

¹ In the first years of the strategy, it is acknowledged some projects may not fully align with these criteria as they are currently contractually committed or significantly underway. Over time, these criteria will be used to guide future public space investment decisions by Council.



References

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Council contact details

For more information, please contact us via:

www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/contact_us.htm

Phone: 03 9209 6777

Facsimile: 03 9536 2722

SMS: 0432 005 405

You can also visit our website:

www.portphillip.vic.gov.au

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