

Report to the Future Melbourne Committee**Agenda item 6.1****Neighbourhood key issues and City of Melbourne Projects for South Yarra****19 July 2022****Presenter:** Rushda Halith, Director Community Development**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the South Yarra neighbourhood community and upcoming key initiatives. (Refer Attachment 2).
2. On 14 December 2021, Council endorsed Future Melbourne Committee meetings to occur in neighbourhood locations to encourage and support more local residents, businesses, workers and students to participate, experience and engage in Future Melbourne Committee meetings through attending, observing, making a submission and/or asking a public question in a neighbourhood setting.
3. This initiative is part of a neighbourhood approach commenced last year to strengthen how the Council understands and works with different communities across the municipality as we continue to navigate the impacts of COVID-19.
4. The municipality is made up of a broad set of neighbourhoods, each with its own unique characteristics and needs – from densely populated urban environments, such as the central business district, to more residential areas, such as Kensington, Carlton and South Yarra. Using community development practice and a place-based approach, Council seeks to better understand the strengths, needs and priorities of communities to guide its work. Ensuring opportunity of access and participation of diverse voices and views will be a key priority as this approach is embedded this year through neighbourhood plans and projects, developed in partnership with communities.

Key issues

5. Just south of the river, a lush sliver of South Yarra sits within the City of Melbourne.
6. Sweeping green space, river frontage, heritage buildings and leafy residential streets are celebrated here. The area also boasts excellent outdoor action and great schools, lively arts and events, and buzzing hospitality and retail precincts.
7. The neighbourhood is fringed by the Yarra River – Birrarung, found west of Punt Road and stretches south to Commercial Road.
8. The glorious Royal Botanic Gardens flank South Yarra. This green oasis is a living work of art. It's also a site of continued significance to the First Peoples who once hunted eels in the billabong that lives on as part of Ornamental Lake. To delve more into the long history and ongoing culture of this place, explore the new Mapping Aboriginal Melbourne project at aboriginal-map.melbourne.vic.gov.au
9. Today, about 23 per cent of the total South Yarra population lives in this small section of the wider suburb. This hosts about 8200 residents, with a median age of 35. Almost a third of residents speak a language other than English at home – predominantly Mandarin, Spanish and French. A third are born overseas.
10. Some of the city's most treasured and popular open spaces are maintained in the neighbourhood, and closely held to the heart of locals.
11. The Domain Parklands stretch over 123 hectares and contribute to the green belt that wraps around Melbourne. It's a collective of important parks and gardens, cared for by the city under the guidance of the Domain Parklands Master Plan.
12. These parklands include Alexandra Park, Queen Victoria Gardens and Kings Domain, as well as Alexandra Gardens, where rowing clubs and Riverside Skate Park add colour and movement along the riverbank.

13. On high ground sits Government House, while rolling hills funnel revellers to the Myer Music Bowl for al-fresco picnics and memorable events. Nearby, the commanding presence of the Shrine of Remembrance inspires deep reflection.
14. The area will soon be serviced by the Metro Tunnel Anzac Station, which will improve access to the neighbourhood. It will also reduce pressure on the grand tree-lined boulevard of St Kilda Road, arguably one of the busiest tram corridors in the world.
15. Need more parkland? Go in search of the picturesque 41-hectare Fawkner Park, formally set out in 1862 and a favourite for locals and visitors alike. Many paths around Fawkner Park are lined with Moreton Bay figs, elms, poplars and oaks. If you're lucky you might spot a morning tai chi session on the dewy lawn, or a game of quiddich.
16. City of Melbourne facilities embedded in the park cater to older people, children and outdoor enthusiasts alike. Twelve sporting fields are frequented by 13 community sporting clubs, and a six-court tennis centre is open to the public.
17. The South Yarra Senior Citizens Centre invites older people and their carers to join free or low-cost community activities for mind and body alike. It is also available for community hire, with priority given to activities for older people such as physical activity and lifelong learning.
18. Local kids can play in and learn about the broader natural environment while attending the 74-place Fawkner Park Children's Centre and Kindergarten. South Yarra families are welcome at the nearby Boyd Community Hub for immunisations, maternal and child health, family support and parenting services, and in the much-loved library.
19. As part of the Fawkner Park Master Plan, we've recently upgraded the Pasley Street North entrance to improve landscape and tree health, drainage, safety and amenity. We've been careful to respect the heritage value of the landscape and the historical context of this metropolitan park.
20. Two smaller local open spaces are important go-to venues for locals: the Golden Elm Reserve, and Toorak and St Kilda Road Reserve, and the Alfred Hospital is reassuringly nearby.
21. About 335 businesses are hard at work in our slice of South Yarra – including the restaurants, cafes and convenience stores found in the Domain Road village. In all, there are some 17,800 jobs in the neighbourhood.
22. Locals are passionate about their area, and rightly so. As we prepare the new Neighbourhood Planning Portal for South Yarra, we've received more than 500 contributions from residents, students, workers, business owners and visitors.
23. Among them are many shared local priorities, strengths and needs. We're analysing the feedback and encourage you to follow its progress: participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate-south-yarra

Recommendation from management

24. That the Future Melbourne Committee notes the overview of the South Yarra neighbourhood community and upcoming key initiatives.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 10)
2. North Melbourne: Neighbourhood Highlights and Initiatives (Page 4 of 10)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. Council adopted the schedule of Future Melbourne Committee and Council meetings on 14 December 2021, in accordance with its Governance Rules. This included the locations for the community Future Melbourne Committee meetings, which commence from February until November 2022.

Finance

2. The financial impact associated with the key initiatives outlined in the overview of the South Yarra Neighbourhood community and upcoming key initiatives in Attachment 2 are in the 2022-23 budget.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

4. Council projects and activities in South Yarra seek to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of the community.

Stakeholder consultation

5. The holding of meetings in community locations, will increase the community's capacity to experience and participate in the democratic process, in addition to engaging with Councillors informally on a range of matters.

Relation to Council policy

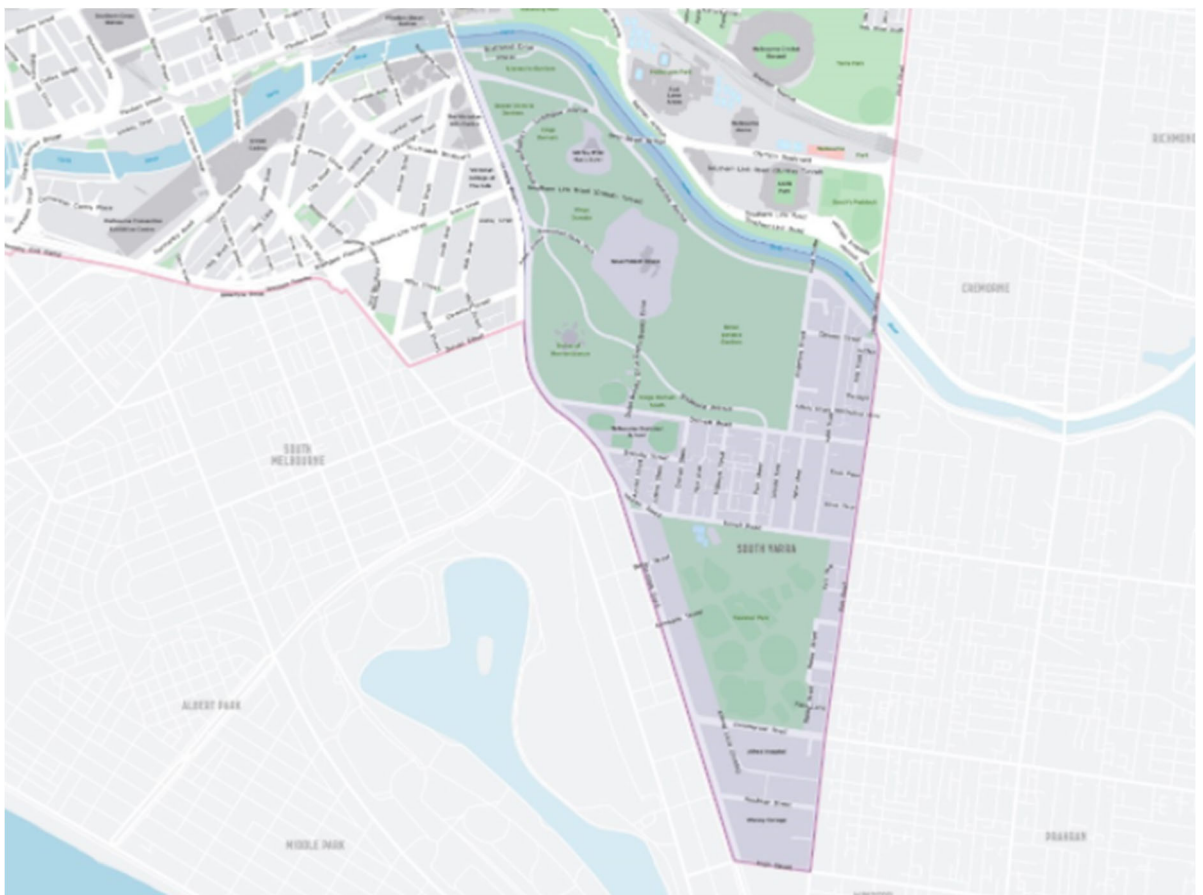
6. This report aligns with the community aspirations identified in the Council Plan 2021-2025 and the Governance Rules.

Environmental sustainability

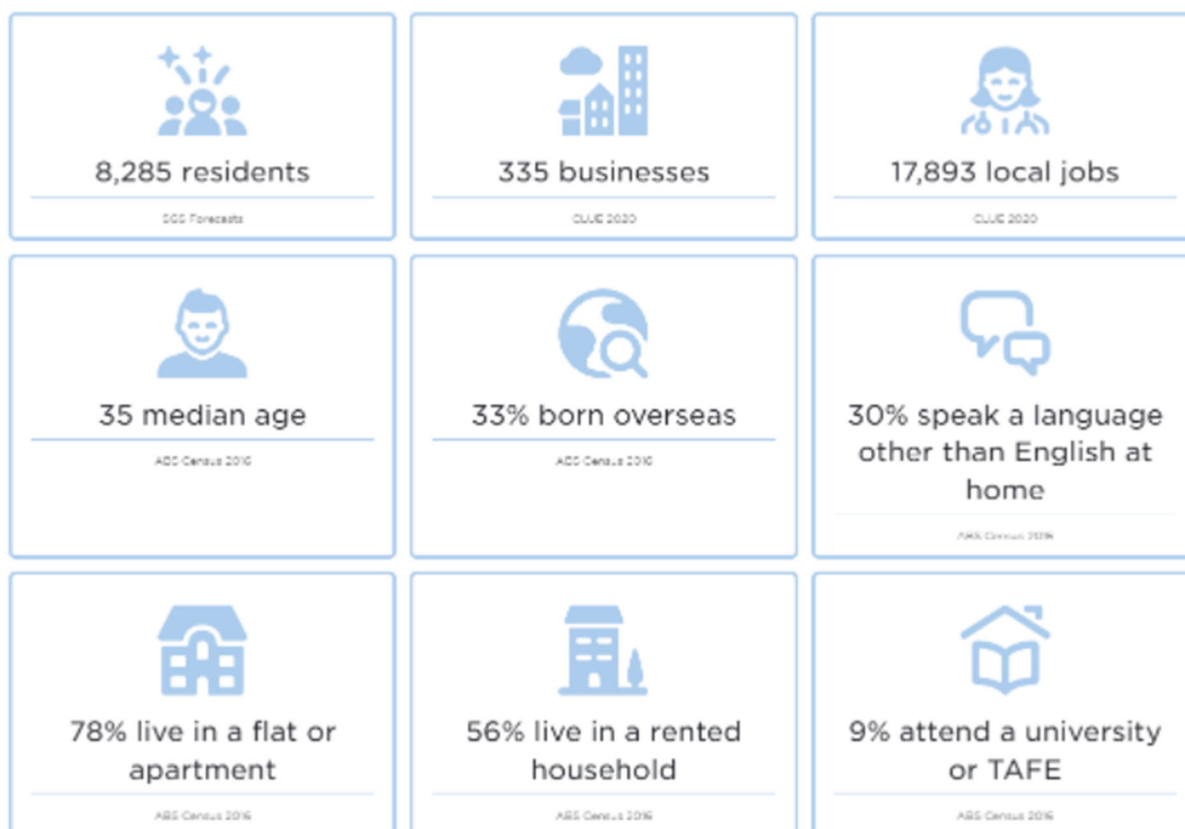
7. Council projects and activities in South Yarra focus on enhancing both environmental and social sustainability.

SOUTH YARRA

Neighbourhood Highlights and Initiatives



Who lives in City of Melbourne's South Yarra?



About South Yarra

South Yarra is located to the south of the Yarra River Birrarung and the east of St Kilda Road.

City of Melbourne's South Yarra is to the west of Punt Road and includes significant open spaces and buildings, leafy residential streets, and the Alfred Hospital. South Yarra to the east of Punt Road is governed by City of Stonnington. Approximately 23% of the total South Yarra population lives in City of Melbourne's South Yarra area.

The areas that South Yarra sits on today have rich Aboriginal heritage and cultural significance, of which many sites are mapped in the new Melbourne Aboriginal Mapping project, available on the City of Melbourne website: <https://aboriginal-map.melbourne.vic.gov.au>

South Yarra is home to some of the most treasured and popular open spaces in Melbourne. The Domain Parklands comprise nearly 123 hectares and forms part of Melbourne's green heart. The Parklands are a collective of parks and gardens of significance including Alexandra Gardens, Alexandra Park, Queen Victoria Gardens, Kings Domain and Kings Domain. The Parklands is also home to a range of state level institutions such as the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, Government House, Shrine of Remembrance and the Myer Music Bowl. Fawkner Park, one of inner Melbourne's most popular and significant green

open spaces, is approximately 41 hectares and provides a variety of sporting and recreation opportunities for visitors and residents.

Nestled between the open spaces is the Domain Road Village, providing a mix of restaurants, cafes and convenience stores, and established residential streets with heritage buildings. St Kilda Road is a grand, tree-lined boulevard leading into the central city.

South Yarra offers its residents and visitors an array of economic, education, recreation and leisure opportunities, with access to a number of schools, sports clubs, multiple industries, parks and gardens. There is an active community in South Yarra with a long-standing formal residents group, other informal but strongly connected community groups that share a passion to see South Yarra thrive and preserve its unique character.

The Metro Tunnel Anzac Station is on track to open in 2025, which will improve access to the neighbourhood and reduce pressure on the St Kilda Road / Swanston Street tram corridor, the busiest tram corridor in the world. This major work will be complemented by changes to tram operations, led by the Victorian Government, and separated bicycle lanes being installed on St Kilda Road, in line with the Anzac Station opening.

The median age of South Yarra's resident population is 35 with the highest proportion of people being between ages 25 and 35. 30% of residents in South Yarra were born overseas and apart from English, Mandarin, Spanish and French are the most popular languages spoken at home.

South Yarra locals describe their neighbourhood to be a place that has something for everyone – stunning parklands, excellent outdoor recreation venues, great schools and lively arts, events, hospitality and retail precincts.

Council Services

Childcare and family services

The Fawkner Park Children's Centre and Kindergarten is a City of Melbourne facility that is leased to a Committee of Management. It provides a 74-place education and childcare centre with integrated kindergarten.

Family Services - Maternal and Child Health, Immunisation, Family Support and Counselling and Parenting Services are available to all South Yarra Families at Boyd Community Hub.

Community spaces

South Yarra Senior Citizens Centre hosts health and wellbeing, and recreational activities for older people and their carers. It is available for community hire through licence hire agreements, with priority access given to groups and not-for-profit organisations offering services and activities for older people. This includes physical activity and lifelong learning.

Parks and open spaces

City of Melbourne manages and maintains several public open spaces in South Yarra. Of particular significance are the two largest parklands, Domain Parklands and Fawkner Park, both of which are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register in recognition of their historic, aesthetic and other cultural values. St Kilda Road and the Domain have also received

recognition on the National Heritage List. These major parklands are extremely well used and appreciated by the local and broader Victorian community along with many international and national visitors. The Tan track, which runs through the Domain is much loved by joggers and walkers and Alexandra Gardens hosts a range of major events throughout the year, contributing to the city's vibrancy and culture.

There are also two important small local open spaces: Golden Elm Reserve, and Toorak and St Kilda Road Reserve.

Sporting and recreation venues

City of Melbourne manages Riverslide Skate Park in the Alexandra Gardens. This is a staffed outdoor skate park delivering supervision, lessons, and events. The facility enjoys around 110,000 visits annually.

The Rowing precinct on the bank of the river are home to many clubs, including Banks Rowing Club, Melbourne Grammar School boat sheds, Melbourne Rowing Club, Richmond Rowing Club, Yarra Yarra Rowing Club, Melbourne University Boat Club and Mercantile Rowing Club.

City of Melbourne also manages Fawkner Park, containing 12 sporting field spaces that accommodate 13 community sporting clubs and seven schools across a range of activities. Fawkner Park Tennis Centre has a 6-court facility suitable for community tennis programs, coaching and public court access.

The Edmund Herring Oval in Kings Domain South is currently supporting the construction of the new Metro Tunnel Anzac Station and will be returned to community sporting use following completion of the project.

Destination marketing activity

Marketing content elevating South Yarra businesses has been a focus of City of Melbourne's 'What's On' channels with a combined audience of 1 million people. 'Hero' events are used to elevate the neighbourhood as a whole, and encourage visitation to the entire precinct. For example, the Lightscape event at Royal Botanic Gardens is a highlight featured on 'What's On' social media and outdoor billboards. Other South Yarra businesses and events are also featured.

Key Initiatives

Recent council work underway in South Yarra:

- Development of a new Neighbourhood Planning Portal for South Yarra focusing on local priorities, strengths and needs. The first phase of community consultations ran from March to 30 April. There were over 500 contributions made by residents, students, workers, business owners and visitors, which are being analysed to develop draft neighbourhood priorities. Community members are encouraged to follow the initiative through <https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate-south-yarra>
- As a part of the Fawkner Park Master Plan implementation:

- Fawkner Park lighting upgrades were completed between 2018 and 2020
- The entrance area at Pasley Street North to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, local flooding issues, landscape health and entrance appearance, was upgraded in June 2022.
- The existing multipurpose court has been located a short distance away in the playground precinct.
- As part of the Domain Parklands Master Plan:
 - Implementation planning to renew the Riverside Skate Park is underway
 - Detailed design and documentation for Riverside Skate Park tender will be completed in the 2022-23 financial year
 - Implementation planning for the wider Alexander Gardens precinct is also underway
 - An investigation into improving access in Alexandra Gardens has also commenced.
- Capital works in South Yarra's parks are underway, including irrigation, path and sports field renewals.

Council investments in South Yarra

Infrastructure investments in South Yarra in the 2022-23 financial year include around:

- \$55,000 to reduce speed limits
- \$180,000 for cycle infrastructure
- \$2,000,000 for Fawkner Park Sport fields renewal
- \$270,000 for other green space, infrastructure and cultural projects.

We will invest around \$1.5 million on renewal works in South Yarra including for roadways, flood mitigation, drains, parks, median and tree plot renewals and property.

We will invest nearly \$400,000 on maintenance works in South Yarra including at our properties, on pedestrian infrastructure, wayfinding signage and for urban forest health.

Key activities

This year we will:

- Progress the South Yarra Heritage Review and associated Amendment (to exhibition) to protect and celebrate heritage places and neighbourhood character.
- Facilitate integrated water management solutions to support increased greening, reduced flooding and reduced pollution to the bay and Yarra River – Birrarung.
- Deliver capital works to renew Fawkner Park Sports Fields.

Our strategic work in South Yarra

We will progress delivery of:

Fawkner Park Master Plan

The Fawkner Park Master Plan (2006) has been developed to achieve the overall vision of enhancing the landscape characteristics of Fawkner Park while managing and balancing its wide variety of uses. The plan provides an overall vision for the management of Fawkner Park.

Domain Parklands Master Plan

The Domain Parklands Master Plan (2019) has been developed to guide the future management of the parklands, balancing increased use with the need for passive recreation spaces. The plan provides an overall vision for the management of the Domain Parklands and is supported by wide community and stakeholder consultation undertaken, along with detailed research, analysis and planning.

Open Space Strategy

The Open Space Strategy (2012) provides the overarching framework and strategic direction for open space planning in the City of Melbourne. A key objective of the strategy is to plan Melbourne's open space network to be within easy walking distance to the community, particularly in areas of forecasted population growth.

The strategy's focus for South Yarra is on maintaining the quality and quantity of the existing open spaces and implementing the master plans for the two major parklands, Fawkner Park and Domain Parklands.

South Yarra Urban Forest Precinct Plan

The South Yarra Urban Forest Precinct Plan (2013-2023) is a 10-year planting plan, developed in collaboration with community, which shows the current state of the urban forest in South Yarra and the future initiatives and changes we are pursuing to enable a healthy, resilient and diverse urban forest. Each of Melbourne's 10 precincts has a 10 year Urban Forest Precinct Plan.

Disaster preparedness and resilience planning

Through a new initiative on Community Disaster Resilience, City of Melbourne will look to run programs to help our community be more prepared. Work will be done to further understand what types of events, programs and support would be valuable in South Yarra for building neighbourhood resilience for tackling climate change and disasters.

Municipal Planning Strategy

The Municipal Planning Strategy (2022) establishes the overarching strategic planning policy for the municipality. It considers the area's context, history, assets, strengths, attributes and influences and establishes the vision and strategic direction for future land use and development.

The new Municipal Planning Strategy includes greater emphasis on promoting sustainable development, promoting housing diversity and affordable housing, mitigating climate change, promoting employment, innovation and creative industries, providing infrastructure and elevating high quality design outcomes and design excellence.

For South Yarra, it outlines the context and character of the area, the long term vision, key changes, challenges and opportunities across the built form and public realm, environment, water, economy, culture and heritage, infrastructure, land use and community wellbeing.