

FRA welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the review of Yarra's Open Space Strategy. It is understood that for this project the term "open space" refers to all the publicly owned land that is primarily set aside for recreation, passive outdoor enjoyment, leisure and nature conservation. This includes public parks, gardens, urban squares, waterways and sporting reserves.

We make the following comments:

- It is noted that the previous Open Space Strategy was adopted in 2006. We submit that the new Strategy needs a three-year review period given the increased development and population that is likely to occur within the municipality.
- Whilst the definition of "open space" as stated above does not include streets and laneways, FRA submits that there are opportunities to consider "greening" initiatives directed to these places, such as:
  - The initiative of the City of Melbourne, *Green your laneway* pilot where four laneways were upgraded with vertical gardens, climbing plants, trees and street art. Businesses in Yarra seem to have complete freedom to trash laneways making them solely for the use of their rubbish and bins.
  - Pop-up parks using streets and laneways, even if only temporarily, would not only provide some relief in hot weather but also give residents the opportunity to socialise.
- FRA reminds the Council of its resolution of 22 November 2016:  
*INCREASED OPEN SPACE*  
5. *THAT Council request the Minister for Planning that legislation be amended to require the open space contribution in a development to be proportionate to the number of dwellings.*  
*CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY*

Without legislative change, there is limited opportunity to bring about meaningful opportunities to increase open space in Yarra.

Further, FRA refers to the residents' resolution passed at the April 2017 town hall meeting submitted to Council in May 2017 by the Yarra Residents Coalition:

*THAT Yarra Council:*

- *Set the open space at 8% in the future development contribution overlay to the Yarra Planning Scheme*

- *Provide full public transparency on open space contributions from developers in the budget, showing itemized receipts and expenditure*
- *Resolve that the purpose of development contributions is primarily for the acquisition of private land for public amenity, not for the conversion of existing public space - such as roads or parking into another form*
- *Consider ways to encourage developments to not automatically be given approval to use 100% of land (including lobbying of Minister for State changes)*

*The reasons underpinning the resolution include:*

- *other Councils have set the open space contribution at 8%*
- *residents wanted greater transparency in the Council Budget by providing more detailed information on developer contributions and how they were allocated*
- *residents wanted to preserve existing public space and emphasised the need to acquire private land for public use*

*YRC believes that the cost of purchasing new land for pocket parks has been inflated by the lack of height controls leading to land speculation, which an increase in the open space development contribution would help to offset.*

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