

Draft Yarra Homelessness Strategy

The Fitzroy Residents' Association (FRA) commends the administration for producing this draft. The FRA seeks the adoption of the Draft Yarra Homelessness Strategy by Council as soon as practicable.

Homelessness and Social Issues are one of the top priorities of FRA members as identified in April of this year.

The new draft strategy clarifies a suitable role for Yarra Council and notes the four areas of Yarra's approach to homelessness. The annual responsiveness as well as renewal of the strategy itself is appropriately flexible for such a complex area.

The strategic directions extend or enhance services. That will cost money. If funds are not already included in the FY20/21 budget, the FRA asks that these bid requests come forward as soon as practical (post adoption) to avoid the Homelessness Strategy becoming yet another item of **Yarra Council Shelf Ware** (like Yarra's Climate Emergency Plan, the underfunded Heritage Strategy, the un-costed Brunswick Street Streetscape Masterplan or the unadopted Open Space Strategy).

The Homelessness Strategy relies on the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy (adopted by Council on 12 November 2019). The FRA fully supports that Strategy *apart from* Direction 3.4.1 which is to investigate exemptions for developments from third party appeals, parking requirements and/or height provisions.

The FRA believes that all developments in Yarra need to follow equal planning processes and approved standards (regardless of their role in the provision of housing to residents).

Exemptions to planning and standards may lead to antagonism against those developments and possibly the occupants. Social and affordable housing tenants should have the same rights to a good standard of housing and appropriate parking provision. There is a concern that any exempted developments will not meet planning and amenity standards.

The FRA also supports affordable housing being distributed across the City of Yarra, rather than it being concentrated in a few areas.

The FRA is concerned that current targets for affordable housing in **all** new apartment developments are not being met, and whether such targets are sufficient to meet current and future needs.

We have a similar concern regarding the provision of open space in new developments .

The recent provision of open space in Collingwood, though welcomed, has been minimal and relies on grants from the State Government.

As new developments across Yarra continue to increase we need to ensure that there is the adequate and accessible provision of open space. The importance of open space is essential to a healthy and liveable environment.

The FRA recommends the draft Yarra Homelessness Strategy be adopted. Budget allocations for its implementation need to be considered a priority over coming years (and as soon as practicable).

Thank you.

Greg Chenhall, Deputy Chair

Martin Brennan, Chair

13 August 2020