

Live

Lightly

WINNER OF –KEEP AUSTRALIA BEAUTIFUL'S
VICTORIAN SUSTAINABLE CITY OF THE YEAR 2011

Annual Report
2011–12

Contents

Live Lightly

This year's annual report has been designed to showcase Yarra City Council as the Victorian Sustainable City of the Year for 2011. Each feature page promotes a sustainable initiative with a link (via the QR code) to Council's website. For instructions on how to use the QR code to link to our website, turn to the back page of this report.

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Highlights

Make the switch

Council has reduced its annual electricity use by more than 10% by making the switch to energy efficient street lights.

THE PROJECT BEGAN IN LATE 2010 AND SINCE THEN ALMOST 5000 LIGHT GLOBES HAVE BEEN CHANGED.

Welcome

Welcome to Yarra City Council's 2011–12 Annual Report detailing Council's performance from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012. Our aim is to give you a true and accurate reflection of the highlights, achievements and challenges at Yarra Council during the year as well as showcase the many services and programs that we provide to our community. For ease of reading, this report is divided into seven parts.

Part 1 – page 6

Summarises Yarra's major achievements for 2011–12 and provides a scorecard reviewing these achievements against the Strategic Objectives in Yarra's Council Plan 2009–13. It also contains a profile of the Yarra community, messages from the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer, a financial overview, a snapshot of major capital works, major projects, sustainability initiatives, advocacy campaigns, grants and awards, and explores how we engage with our community.

Part 2 – page 34

Contains information on Governance including a summary on Councillors and how they make decisions, as well as a range of statutory information such as Freedom of Information requests, risk management and privacy.

Part 3 – page 46

Focuses on the Council organisation, including our staff, Occupational Health and Safety and Equal Opportunity.

Part 4 – page 52

Details how Council has met the Strategic Objectives set out in the Yarra Council Plan 2009–13, and also highlights some of our achievements outside the Council Plan.

Part 5 – page 76

Contains Yarra's official performance statements.

Part 6 – page 82

Provides the financial statements.

Part 7 – page 137

Details other useful information including a glossary, index and key contacts.

Wurundjeri Acknowledgement

Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri community as the first owners of this country. Today, they are still the custodians of the cultural heritage of this land. Further to this, Council acknowledges there are other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have lived, worked and contributed to the cultural heritage of Yarra. Why we have an Annual Report
The Victorian Local Government Act 1989 requires all Councils to present an Annual Report to the Minister for Local Government by 30 September each year.

As well as meeting this statutory requirement, the Annual Report reflects Council's commitment to open, accountable and sustainable governance, ensuring the best use of our resources and assets to serve the community. It is an important publication that informs residents, community groups and organisations, businesses, Members of Parliament, peak bodies and all other interested people about Council's performance during the 2011–12 financial year against the objectives set out in the Council Plan 2009–13.

Hard copies of our Annual Report are available from Yarra's Customer Service Centres at Richmond and Collingwood, and at our libraries at Richmond, Collingwood, Carlton, Fitzroy and North Fitzroy. Large print copies can also be made available on request. For further information, telephone Council on 9205 5555. An electronic version of the Annual Report can be accessed via Council's website at: www.yarracity.vic.gov.au

49%

OF RESIDENTS LIVE IN MEDIUM DENSITY HOUSING

79,015

POPULATION (ACCORDING TO THE 2011 CENSUS)

29%

OF OUR POPULATION WERE BORN OVERSEAS

8720

BUSINESSES BASED IN YARRA

35%

OF PEOPLE LIVING IN YARRA HOLD A DEGREE OR HIGHER

58,000

PEOPLE WORK IN YARRA

Performance Highlights Yarra's Achievements in 2011–12

The Council Plan 2009–13 sets out the four-year vision for Yarra as well as Strategic Objectives for Council to follow each year. The Plan includes a framework for delivering services and programs for the community.

This double page spread lists the five Strategic Objectives set by the Council Plan and some of the major achievements and challenges Council faced in meeting those objectives in 2011–12.

Strategic Objective

Making Yarra more liveable – ensure the community has easy access to the best possible services and facilities

Some major achievements in 2011–12:

- Completion of the \$7.2 million redevelopment of Victoria Park
- Completion of the \$7.8 million redevelopment of the Collingwood Leisure Centre
- Installation of new sports lighting at Alphington Park and Peterson Oval in Fitzroy
- Began construction on the new \$1.48 million Ramsden Street Pavilion
- Public space upgrades on Smith Street at intersections with Webb and Stanley streets

Some challenges in 2011–12

- Council campaigned against the State Government's proposal for an east-west toll road through the City of Yarra. At the same time it strongly advocated for a Doncaster Rail solution.
- Planning responsibility for significant sites in Yarra, including the Richmond and Fitzroy housing estates and Richmond Station, was taken over by the State Government, casting a cloud of uncertainty over their future

Turn to page 52 for more on this Strategic Objective.

Strategic Objective

Ensuring a sustainable Yarra – reduce water and energy use, minimising waste and pollution and increasing local open space

Some major achievements in 2011–12:

- Constructed a raingarden in Edinburgh Gardens to filter and recycle storm water for the park's irrigation
- Upgraded bike paths including the Main Yarra Trail and Linear Park shared trail
- Committed a further \$300,000 to the Yarra Energy Foundation to help fund community carbon reduction
- Changed almost 1000 street lights to energy efficient globes
- Rolled out more solar hot water and electricity systems across Council buildings. 25 Council facilities now equipped with solar capacity

Some challenges in 2011–12

- Council has cut its energy consumption by 19.5% since 2000, but fell short of its target to cut energy use by 30% by June 2012
- Construction of a new park in Oxford Street, Collingwood was delayed due to property negotiations

Turn to page 57 for more on this Strategic Objective.

Strategic Objective

Serving Yarra's community – provide services and programs to improve the health and well being of the community

Some major achievements in 2011–12:

- \$1.5 million commitment to the \$24 million redevelopment of the North Richmond Community Health Centre
- 4174 dogs and 2194 cats were registered
- Prepared a new local law that will allow Council to introduce smoking bans in public places like playgrounds and sporting facilities
- 47,000 hours of care provided for elderly residents or residents with a disability

Some challenges in 2011–12

- Protracted consultation on the design of the Lourdes Family and Children's Hub delayed the start of construction
- Completion of the Swan Street Structure Plan was deferred pending further discussion and consultation with the community, and a meeting with the Minister for Planning

Turn to page 61 for more on this Strategic Objective.

Strategic Objective

Supporting a diverse and dynamic Yarra – encourage diversity through arts and cultural activities, libraries and economic development

Some major achievements in 2011–12:

- Purchase of new art works for the City of Yarra Collection
- \$455,000 spent on new books and materials for Yarra's five libraries
- 920 people participated in Council sponsored business and training programs
- \$575,857 distributed to 122 projects as Community Grants

Some challenges in 2011–12

- Council sought to have the Keith Haring mural in Collingwood repainted, not merely preserved, in accordance with the Keith Haring Foundation's wishes
- The North Fitzroy Library and Community Hub project was delayed to allow further community input on its design

Turn to page 67 for more on this Strategic Objective.

Strategic Objective

Building Council's capacity and performance – improve services and respond to the changing needs of the community

Some major achievements in 2011–12:

- Delivered \$28.8 million of a \$31.62 Capital Works program, including \$5.9 million on road and footpath upgrades
- Completed a review of Council's local laws to bring them in line with community expectations
- More than 18,800 hard and green waste bookings taken
- Contractor appointed for the \$13.8 million refurbishment of Collingwood Town Hall

Some challenges in 2011–12

- A long term project to develop the former gas works site in North Fitzroy into an indoor sports facility has stalled due to uncertainty over future uses for the site
- Implementation of the Performance and Development Review IT system was deferred until 2012–13
- Introduction of a new system for online payment, including rates payments and animal registration renewals delayed until 2012–13

Turn to page 71 for more on this Strategic Objective.

History

The City of Yarra was created in June 1994 following the Victorian Government's restructure of Local Government. The new municipality merged the former councils of Collingwood, Richmond, Fitzroy and parts of Northcote (Alphington and Fairfield, south of Heidelberg Road only) and the City of Melbourne (North Carlton). Yarra was governed by Commissioners from December 1994 until 1996, when Councillors were democratically elected.

While Yarra City is only 18 years young, the history of the land and suburbs that make up Yarra is fascinating.

The name "Yarra" is thought to have originated from the Aboriginal words "Yarra Yarra", meaning ever flowing (river).

Our rich Aboriginal history

The Wurundjeri (Woiwurrung) people have lived, worked and looked after the land in the area now known as Fitzroy since the beginning of time. The suburbs of Fitzroy and Collingwood now stand on these traditional lands.

Despite the effects of colonisation, Aboriginal people and culture survived and the strong bonds between families and clans could not be broken.

From the 1920s onwards, the Aboriginal community of Melbourne began to steadily increase with the wave of Aboriginal people coming from the missions.

By the 1950s, Fitzroy supported a community of more than 300 Aboriginal people, with many living in surrounding inner city suburbs. During this time, Fitzroy not only became the largest Aboriginal community in Victoria, it also became the social and political hub of Aboriginal Melbourne.

For further reading about Yarra's Aboriginal history visit:

<http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/services/Community-Planning/aboriginal-services/Aboriginal-History-Walk/>

Our Colonial history

From 1839, the suburbs that make up Yarra developed as a residential enclave to first house the Colony's assisted immigrants, and later gold seekers who arrived en masse in the 1850s.

The establishment of industry along the Yarra River, and in other parts of the city, serviced the needs of the new arrivals as well as

those of overseas importers in the same period of rapid population growth. Industry and commercial life grew and centralised around these early vantage points up to the inter-war period and eventually, in their continued growth, displaced some of the housing and householders that they had served.

As former suburbs of Melbourne Town, many of the localities of Yarra are now removed from their companions but share their history. They are mainly Victorian and Edwardian-era residential areas, with the common architectural character of single and double storey terrace houses interspersed with occasional larger detached villas.

The next identifying factor in the formation of Yarra's suburbs was that of government or private land subdivisions. Private development in areas like Richmond, Collingwood and Abbotsford did not adhere to any particular vision whereas government subdivisions (in North Carlton, Princes Hill, Clifton Hill and North Fitzroy) were regular, with provision for public life in buildings and landscape, and education or religion.

Each subdivision type has generated its own distinctive neighbourhood character based on Victorian and Edwardian-era urban patterns.

Considered together, Yarra's inner suburbs form part of one of the great Colonial Victorian-era cities in the world where development was concentrated into a small span of time, mainly by the wealth brought by gold, and generated a remarkably homogenous built character. As a group these suburbs have no equal in Victoria and are only matched nationally by localities in inner Sydney such as Woolloomooloo and The Rocks.

Beyond the distinctive building stock, there is rich social history brought about by the housing and employment of successive waves of immigrants from Asia, Europe and Britain. Yarra's suburbs allowed dense residential accommodation of many nationalities to serve as transitional homes close to evolving public transport and employment.

Gradual residential gentrification has demanded expansion and sometimes destruction of Yarra's modest and simple 19th century homes. It has also offered opportunities for rebuilding in contemporary ways that in some cases has created unique architectural prototypes for new styles and forms used across the state and Australia in the late 20th century.

For further reading, please visit www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/libraries/local-history

Commitment to the Aboriginal community

In 2011–12, Council continued to uphold the proud Indigenous history of Yarra and actively support the rights of the Aboriginal community. We are committed to building strong partnerships with the local Aboriginal community, and continuing the journey towards reconciliation.

We do this through our:

- Aboriginal Advisory Group which provides on-going consultation between the Aboriginal community and Council. The group brings together Aboriginal elders, community members and representatives of Aboriginal organisations in Yarra to work on a range of issues affecting the Aboriginal community including health, housing, legal matters, sport and recreation, culture, heritage, environment, employment, and training.
- Aboriginal Partnerships Plan 2011–14 is underpinned by the values of reconciliation, social justice and respect, and aims to strengthen partnerships between Council, the Aboriginal community, other levels of government and the local non-Indigenous community.
- Aboriginal History Walk map enables local residents, tourists and historians to take a self-guided tour through Aboriginal Fitzroy.
- Stories around the Fire which was a unique event held in July 2011 at the Atherton Gardens Estate to honour the Aboriginal history of Fitzroy, and the particular significance of a site known as 'The Meeting Place'. The event revived the traditions of The Meeting Place, bringing together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, musicians and community members to share the memories, cultural knowledge and stories of Fitzroy's Aboriginal past and present. 'Stories Around the Fire' was presented as part of the 2011 Gertrude Street Projection Festival with support from Council, MAYSAR (Melbourne Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation), Office of Housing (State Government of Victoria), The Gertrude Association and the Parkies community.
- Acknowledging the Aboriginal connection to Gertrude Street—In early 2012, Council created a dedicated Facebook page for anyone wishing to share their ideas and views about a proposal to recognise the contribution of Aboriginal people to the history and character of Gertrude Street in Fitzroy.

For further reading, visit: Facebook and search for 'Celebrating Aboriginal Culture in Gertrude Street'.

12%

INCREASE IN YARRA'S ABORIGINAL POPULATION SINCE 2001

Yarra facts and figures

At a glance

- Located close to Melbourne's Central Business District.
- Neighbouring Councils are Moreland and Darebin (to the north), Boroondara (to the east), Stonnington (to the south), and Melbourne (to the west).
- Includes suburbs of Abbotsford, Alphington (part), Burnley, North Carlton, Clifton Hill, Collingwood, Cremorne, Fairfield (part), Fitzroy, North Fitzroy, Princes Hill and Richmond.
- In the two years to January 2012, the value of the average residential property in Yarra rose by 3.9% – from \$625,000 to \$650,000.
- Significant landmarks in Yarra include the Nylex sign in Cremorne, the Dimmeys clock tower in Richmond, the Shot Tower in Clifton Hill, the Pelaco and Slade Knitwear signs in Richmond, and the Olympic Tyres sign in Collingwood.

Business in Yarra

- More than 8720 businesses are based in Yarra.
- About 58,000 people work in Yarra.
- Yarra is home to some of Melbourne's most vibrant shopping strips including Bridge Road and Swan, Victoria and Church streets in Richmond, Brunswick, Johnston and Gertrude streets in Collingwood and Fitzroy and Queens Parade in Clifton Hill and North Fitzroy.

Our residents

- Population was 79,015 at 30 June 2011.
- More than 35,484 households call Yarra home.
- Close to a third (29%) of our residents were born overseas in countries that include the United Kingdom, Vietnam, New Zealand, Greece, and China.
- About half of our residents (49%) live in medium density housing (detached, semi-attached and multi-unit housing).
- Yarra residents are the biggest users of non-car transport to get to work in metropolitan Melbourne.

Leisure in Yarra

- Yarra has 235 hectares of open space, equating to around 34 square metres of open space per person.
- Large historical gardens are located in Edinburgh Gardens in North Fitzroy and Darling Gardens in Clifton Hill.
- Yarra has three leisure centres, 19 sports grounds, 3 bowling clubs and a golf course.
- Popular attractions include Collingwood Children's Farm, Abbotsford Convent, Dights Falls, Fairfield Boathouse, Merri Creek lookout and footbridge and Yarra Bend Park.

Art and Culture in Yarra

- At the heart of Melbourne's arts and cultural scene, Yarra is home to galleries, live music venues, performance spaces, artists and community festivals.
- The two-day Johnston Street Fiesta (held last year on 19–20 November) attracts 50 – 60,000 visitors to Fitzroy. The celebrations include stage entertainment, dance classes, Spanish cuisine and a street parade.
- Council is supporting a campaign for the heritage-listed Keith Haring mural painted in 1984 at the former Collingwood Technical School site, to be restored to its former glory.

The changing face of Yarra

Yarra appears to be on the cusp of a new phase in its urban evolution. Sustained population growth is occurring due to the transformation of old warehouses and factories into multi-storey, high density, apartment developments. All indications are that people moving into these new apartments are more likely to be younger, educated and high-income professionals.

Growth and a changing population profile leads to a shift in focus and questions about what services residents will need and want into the future. What will the impacts be if there is no change in services? What community benefit may come from growth and change? Will the services Council provides today be relevant tomorrow?

There are many examples demonstrating the post-gentrification shift.

Manufacturing, which was once the most significant industry for employment in Yarra, now accounts for around 5% of employment of local residents. Professional employment has increased from around 1% in 1947 to be the dominant employment type by 2006, representing over 40% of jobs held by Yarra residents.

Education levels of residents clearly show the evolution of Yarra, with around 1% of residents holding a degree or higher in 1971, increasing to over 20% by 1996 and to almost 35% in 2006.

So why is it important to consider post-gentrification?

Most Australian municipalities are undergoing an 'ageing' population, either because there are relatively fewer children being born than in previous generations, longer life-expectancies, young people moving to where jobs are or 'sea' and 'tree'-changers moving in.

Inner-city municipalities are the exception to this pattern with people drawn here for the lifestyle and professional employment, and many willing or able to afford higher house prices.

Local government services are an amalgam of State and Federal Government requirements, historical need and local interest. A challenge for Council in the future will be to ensure its services meet the changing needs and expectations of our evolving community.

Preliminary results from the 2011 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data reveal Yarra's emerging profile:

- There are more children aged 0–12 years in Yarra (7957) than there are residents aged 65 years and older (7330).
- 78% of Yarra residents 15 years and older have completed Year 12, compared to 59% for Greater Melbourne.
- Yarra's Aboriginal population has increased by 12% since 2001.
- The number of residents reporting their religion as No Religion (39%) has increased significantly. This is a 66% increase in 10 years and compares with 23% for Greater Melbourne.
- 34% of households in Yarra had a weekly income of \$2500 or more compared to 22% for Greater Melbourne.
- Yarra has a significantly higher proportion of the population renting (52% of dwellings) than the Melbourne average (28%), both in public housing and private rental.
- 70% of people renting private dwellings pay \$550 per week or more (\$18,200 per annum).
- 60% of Yarra's dwellings are one or two bedrooms, while for Greater Melbourne 75% of dwellings are three or more bedrooms.
- Internet access has become very common, with only 15% of dwellings reporting no internet at home. Most dwellings have Broad-band internet.

For further reading visit <http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/About-Yarra/Profile-Demographic/>

78%

OF YARRA RESIDENTS HAVE COMPLETED YEAR 12

7957

CHILDREN AGED 0–12 YEARS

Our Services

Council delivers more than 100 programs and services to our community covering everything from planning, building, construction management, traffic engineering, road safety, footpaths, drains, community buildings and local laws to vital human services that help families, young people, the elderly and people with disabilities.

We manage sports grounds, parks and other open space areas, and run libraries, leisure centres and child care centres. We support arts and culture, provide community grants to help local groups and promote Yarra as not only a great place to live, work and relax, but also as a tourist destination.

Here are some of the services Council provides and how much they cost in 2011–12.

Council buildings and properties

(\$11.43 million)

As the custodian of more than 150 buildings and properties, Council spends considerable funds maintaining and improving these assets so they can be enjoyed by the community and are suitable and safe to use.

Roads, drains and footpaths

(\$5.9 million)

Council manages approximately \$560 million worth of roads and infrastructure, including 260 kilometres of road, 491 kilometres of footpaths, kerb and channel, 170 kilometres of storm water pipes and 85 kilometres of laneways. Council works to a plan to manage, maintain and improve this infrastructure.

Aged and disability services

(\$6.32 million)

Council provides services to assist residents who are frail, aged or have a disability to live independently in their homes and maintain their connection to community life. The services are funded by Council and the State and Federal governments.

Parks, gardens, playgrounds and sport grounds

(\$3.7 million)

Yarra has significant areas of open space for residents to enjoy. Council maintains and upgrades local parks, gardens, playgrounds and sports grounds throughout the municipality.

Family and children's services

(\$11.75 million)

Council provides high quality services for families and children in Yarra. This includes maternal and child health services, child care services, kindergartens, vacation care, after school care, family support and financial counselling.

Environmental management

(\$1.98 million)

In July 2011, Yarra was named Keep Australia Beautiful's Sustainable City of the Year in recognition of the many Council and community projects promoting sustainability. These projects included the construction of a raingarden in North Fitzroy's Edinburgh Gardens and Council's promotion of Environmentally Sustainable Design through its Statutory Planning Unit.

Libraries

(\$3.66 million)

Yarra has five libraries and together they share a significant collection of books, magazines, CDs and DVDs and local history materials which are available to the community. The collection is regularly updated with new items.

Waste and recycling

(\$6.93 million)

Council provides collection services for garbage, hard waste and green waste as well as education programs on the importance of reducing waste to landfill and recycling.

Transport and road safety

(\$1.13 million)

Council spends more per capita on bicycle networks, paths, facilities and bicycle parking than any other inner-city Council to cater for the high percentage of bicycle users living in Yarra. Council is committed to improving and promoting greater safety awareness on local streets.

260

KILOMETRES OF ROAD MAINTAINED AND IMPROVED

>150

BUILDINGS AND PROPERTIES UNDER MANAGEMENT

>100

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES DELIVERED TO OUR COMMUNITY

Mayor's Message

With Cr Geoff Barbour

It gives me great pleasure to present Yarra City Council's Annual Report for 2011–12.

This Annual Report covers a 12-month period that saw Council celebrate the completion of long term community infrastructure commitments and then turn its attention to planning for another round of important new projects.

Here are some highlights of our achievements: Keeping one eye on the future and one on the past

In Yarra, we're lucky to live in a place where history stands shoulder to shoulder with the present and future, quite literally.

Our inner-city location has encouraged thousands of new residents to move here, particularly since the turn of the century, creating new communities and galvanising local business and tourism.

The challenge for Council has been to make sure residents have access to services and infrastructure, particularly in former industrial suburbs with very little green open space like Richmond and Collingwood.

Council's redevelopment of Victoria Park to turn it into a community space is a great example of how we can preserve our rich local history while creating something new for future generations.

The Collingwood Football Club has retained links to the famous ground, basing its charitable foundation there and hosting VFL matches, while Abbotsford residents have a wonderful park to walk their dogs on or have barbeques. Local sporting groups and schools are also able to play on this hallowed turf.

A community celebration officially opened the new look Victoria Park in December 2011.

The following month, Council also opened the refurbished Collingwood Leisure Centre, which had undergone a \$7.8 million major upgrade to expand its aquatic facilities.

With considerable vision and planning invested into these projects, it was wonderful to see them re-opened for people to enjoy.

Now we are looking ahead to the next set of challenges.

A new library and community hub for North Fitzroy is our goal and over the past 12 months we have been working with the community to come up with a satisfactory design that can cater to a number of different uses.

In June 2012, Council also took steps to preserve its own history and plan for the future, approving a \$13.8 million project to refurbish the heritage-listed Collingwood Town Hall. It will bring the building up to a standard more appropriate for the 21st Century and will include improved disability access.

Like Victoria Park and the Collingwood Leisure Centre before them, these are key projects that, once completed, will be vital community assets that I hope will be highly valued by our community.

Managing change and the community's expectations

The rate of development and change unfolding in Yarra right now has probably not been seen since many of our suburbs were founded on the back of the gold rush and wool boom of the late 19th Century.

The rapid nature of that change brings with it positives and negatives, and it is Council's role to strike a fair balance between managing growth and protecting our heritage and character from inappropriate development as best we can.

Finding that balance is an immense and at times unsatisfying process for Council and the community, and it is a challenge exacerbated when Council's role as the deciding authority is removed or reduced by the State Government. Planning Minister Matthew Guy has shown that he is prepared to regularly use his significant powers of intervention.

Large-scale developments are going up, or are on the drawing board, across the municipality.

Each one presents challenges in terms of how we plan for the new communities that will spring up in and around them.

It is essential that residents and businesses have a voice in the decision making process and I think Council's decision to grant a permit to Lend Lease to develop the former Channel Nine site in Richmond was a good example of that process in action.

From the outset the community and Councillors were involved, the central message from them being that building heights on the site should be kept lower than what Lend Lease had originally proposed.

Although the Minister for Planning eventually approved the development without any restriction on heights, Lend Lease agreed to limit buildings to six storeys, remaining in touch with Council's and community expectations.

The process allowed Council to take the views of the community to Lend Lease and reach a compromise that was influenced in some way by all those with an interest in the final outcome.

I fear, however, that a number of significant projects proposed by the State Government since July 2011 will not allow the community's voice to be heard in such a collaborative manner.

The State Government is pushing ahead with plans to build a new East-West tollroad, is looking at a major redevelopment of Richmond Station and the surrounding area, and is also looking at introducing major changes to public housing estates in Fitzroy and North Richmond.

Each one of these projects has the potential to profoundly change the way people live and work in our communities, so Council will fight for our community's right to have a say in these decisions.

One of the ways Council has decided to make its voice heard is by backing a campaign calling for a rail link from Doncaster to be built in place of the East-West Tollroad.

This rail link will cost a fraction of the cost of the tollroad, will take thousands of commuter cars off the road and out of Yarra streets and give a corridor of over 600,000 people a new and much needed public transport option.

Council will continue to advocate for smart, long-term planning decisions that are made in the interest of our community, not poorly

conceived and uneconomic quick fixes designed for the short-term gain of private interests.

Yarra leads the way in sustainability

In July 2011, Yarra was named Victorian Sustainable City of the Year.

That honour, bestowed on our community by Keep Australia Beautiful, was a wonderful tribute to the many and varied ways Council and the people of Yarra are working together towards a common sustainable goal.

What is particularly pleasing is that the recognition was not for one isolated initiative, but for a list of policies, projects and community-based programs.

One of those projects was the Edinburgh Gardens raingarden.

Constructed with the assistance of Melbourne Water, the raingarden was opened in October 2011.

By capturing and filtering storm water, the raingarden delivers two positives by picking up pollutants before they reach the Merri Creek and allowing us to store and recycle water for irrigating the park.

This past year also saw the first 12 months of putting Council's Urban Agriculture Guidelines into practice.

Believed to be the first of their kind adopted by a local government in Australia, the guidelines were created to provide guidance to people wanting to set up things like community gardens and roadside planter boxes.

To assist the community's take-up of these projects, Council also appointed an Urban Agriculture Facilitator to liaise with residents and help them get urban gardening happening in their community.

One of the first street-side planter boxes appeared in Clifton Hill in April 2012, and I hope we'll start seeing more around Yarra as people meet our facilitator and become more familiar with the guidelines.

I expect we will see many of these themes continue in the current year.

CR GEOFF BARBOUR Mayor, City of Yarra

(Cr Alison Clarke served as Yarra's Mayor from 14 December 2010 until 15 December 2011.)

\$13.8m

APPROVED TO REFURBISH COLLINGWOOD TOWN HALL

\$7.8m

Spent on upgrading Collingwood Leisure Centre

CEO's Message

With Vijaya Vaidyanath

I arrived at Yarra in early July 2012, at the conclusion of a year that saw Yarra's community benefit from substantial upgrades to key facilities like Victoria Park and Collingwood Leisure Centre.

Being new afforded me the opportunity to look to the future and continue the good work already embarked upon by the previous CEO, Dr Andi Diamond, and Ivan Gilbert who acted in the CEO role for three months from April to June 2012.

The organisation has embarked on several new and exciting initiatives like strengthening our strategic focus on customer service, an improvement in core services such as waste management and open space, the implementation of a new Construction Management branch and a multitude of major infrastructure projects.

Council has had lots of challenges along the way in the areas of planning, local laws and amenity and parking and traffic management. Hand in hand with these challenges has been Council's role as advocate for the community at a State and Federal Government level, and at times with major developers, to ensure they improve communication with the communities who are being impacted by their works.

I am pleased to say the Council will continue to move in the right direction on all these fronts. Responsible financial management Council was on track in 2011–12 to be debt free for the first time since 1994.

Debts acquired in the merger of the former Collingwood, Fitzroy and Richmond councils during local government amalgamations in 1994 are close to being paid off.

However, Council was significantly impacted by a higher than expected superannuation liability of \$11.3 million associated with the Vision Super defined benefits scheme which will have to be serviced in future financial years.

The superannuation liability together with higher than forecast legal, governance and consultant costs saw Council record an operating deficit of \$3.42 million.

Capital Works

One area of significant achievement has been Council's capital works program. During 2011–12, Council delivered \$28.8 million (or 91%) of a \$31.62 million Capital Works program.

Highlights included the completion of the redevelopment of Victoria Park and the refurbishment of Collingwood Leisure Centre, committing \$1.5 million to the upgrade of the North Richmond Community Health Centre, the completion of the Edinburgh Gardens rain garden, the start of construction on the new Ramsden Pavilion in Clifton Hill and the installation of solar panels and/or solar hot water systems at nine Council-owned community facilities.

Looking to the next 12 months there's lots planned including continuation of the Collingwood Town Hall refurbishment and North Fitzroy Hub projects plus a range of everyday streetscape, road infrastructure and amenity upgrades.

Enhancing customer service

Improved customer service has been a key aim of the organisation in recent years, and surveys of residents and internal benchmarking indicate we have started to achieve consistently satisfactory results in this area.

In the State Government's Annual Community Satisfaction Survey, Council scored 78 in the Customer Contact category.

That result was significantly higher than both the State-wide average of 71 and the Inner Melbourne Metropolitan average of 73.

Meanwhile, Council's internally managed service standards benchmark, the Customer Service Guarantee, showed we had met or exceeded 36 of 64 service improvements targets in 2011–12.

As well as focusing on the fundamentals of collecting bins and fixing roads, Council also ventured into new territory by incorporating social media in the customer service experience.

Council began managing and responding to queries via Twitter, and established accounts specifically aimed at users of our leisure centres and libraries.

Leading the way to low carbon living

In July 2011, Yarra was named Victorian Sustainable City of the Year in Keep Australia Beautiful's annual Sustainable Cities and Clean Beaches Awards.

This prestigious award recognised a range of Council and community initiatives aimed at reducing waste, cutting energy consumption and preserving the natural environment.

The 2011–12 financial year will also be the first year Council is recognised as carbon neutral.

As part of our Carbon Neutral Action Plan, Council endorsed a strategy in September 2011 to purchase carbon offsets against the National Carbon Offset Standard.

To receive official accreditation, Council needs to go through an independent audit that verifies our methodology for claiming carbon neutral status for the organisation's emissions in 2011–12.

We expect the verification process to be completed by the end of 2012.

Enthusiasm for sustainable ideas remains strong in the community too, with 50 entries received in the 2012 Yarra Sustainability Awards.

This is the highest number of entries we have received since the awards began in 2009.

Advocacy

Planning and public health issues were the focus of widespread community consultations in 2011–12. A proposal to ban smoking in some public areas became the subject of a multifaceted consultation towards the end of the financial year, while Council also signalled its support for a supervised injecting facility in Richmond. Meanwhile, residents were also asked to have their say on a number of significant planning proposals, including the development of the former Channel Nine site in Richmond and a draft Swan Street Structure Plan.

The next 12 months

My focus in the months ahead will be to enhance our advocacy at all government levels and articulate the evolving 'story of Yarra'. I also want to strengthen our community engagement commitment so that the community is more informed and engaged on major issues that impact them. Improving community understanding of the complex environments Council works in, particularly in the areas of planning, construction management and transport, is also part of that challenge.

A major focus this year will be on asset management so that we have a clear picture of what our assets are, who is using them now, who will be using them in the future and what it will take to maintain and improve them. I am excited to be part of Yarra and I look forward to working with Councillors, staff and the community on these and many more critical issues for Yarra City.

VIJAYA VAIDYANATH, Chief Executive Officer

\$7.2m

REDEVELOPMENT OF VICTORIA PARK OPENED DECEMBER 2011

\$3.7m

SPENT ON DELIVERING OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

Financial Overview

This financial overview summarises Council's financial activities from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012 as outlined from page 82 of this report.

Council's financial performance over the last year demonstrates that we are on target to achieve the objectives of our Council Plan and long-term financial plan, in particular, the maintenance and improvement of our infrastructure assets, reducing debt and achieving future operating surpluses.

Income

	\$'000
Revenue	136,869
Expenses	140,289
Surplus (Deficit) for the year	(3420)
Full income statement on page 87	

This year Council incurred an operating deficit of \$3.42 million.

The deficit includes Council's Vision Super defined benefit superannuation liability which is required of all Local Government authorities who are members of this superannuation scheme. Council has received official confirmation from Vision Super that the amount required from Yarra Council is \$11.304 million of which the first part payment is due by 1 July 2013. Other major variances include the transfer of expenditure from the capital program for items that could not be classified as an asset (\$1.8 million); additional legal fees incurred for major planning appeals, governance and planning advice (\$1 million); additional agency and staffing costs, some of which are income related (\$1 million net).

Equity

	\$'000
Balance at the beginning of year	1,444,962
Surplus (Deficit) for the year	(3420)
Net Reserves movement (incl. revaluation)	(16,800)
Balance at end of financial year	1,424,742
Full statement of changes in equity on page 89	

Council's balance sheet equity decreased for the year due to the operational deficit result and also revaluation of land and buildings which realised a decrement in value.

Cash

	\$'000
Net cash provided by operating activities	28,556
Net cash used in investing activities	(26,044)
Net cash used in financing activities	(486)
Net increase in cash held	2026
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	15,134
Cash at the end of the financial year	17,160
Full statement of cash flows on page 90	

Cash levels increased marginally due to the high level of operating activities which was partly offset by capital works investing activities for the year.

Balance Sheet

	\$'000
Current assets (incl. cash assets \$17.16M)	25,436
Non-current assets	1,437,810
Total assets	1,463,246
Current liabilities	24,870
Non-current liabilities	13,634
Total liabilities	38,504

NET ASSETS	1,424,742
Accumulated surplus	549,239
Reserves	875,503
EQUITY	1,424,742
Full balance sheet on page 88	

Council continued to reduce debt by over \$0.486 million and no new borrowings were entered into as was originally anticipated in the 2011–12 Budget. Council has, however, incurred additional superannuation 'defined benefit' liabilities which will be paid in future financial years.

At the same time, Council delivered \$28.8 million in works from a \$31.62 Capital Works program, including \$5.9 million on roads, footpaths, kerb and channel; \$3.71 million on open space improvements; and \$11.431 million on Council's buildings and facilities.

91%

DELIVERY ON 2011–12 CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

Capital Works

Council allocated \$31.62 million for capital works in its 2011–12 budget. This figure included \$1.43 million in projects that were carried forward from the 2010–11 year and were fully funded in the 2010–11 budget. As at 30 June 2012, Council had delivered upon 91% of its capital works program for 2011–12.

Capital works projects cover the provision of new community infrastructure and upgrades to existing facilities such as libraries, leisure centres and child care centres, as well as improvements to parks and reserves, sporting facilities, roads, footpaths and drainage.

To the right is an overview of some of the major capital works projects undertaken in 2011–12:

Buildings and facilities

- Collingwood Town Hall redevelopment. The estimated cost of the refurbishment is \$13.865 million. About \$2.06 million was allocated in the 2010–11 and 2011–12 budgets to cover the cost of the design and to secure temporary office accommodation. \$5.9 million has been allocated to the project in the 2012–13 budget and it is proposed that \$5.9 million be allocated in the 2013–14 financial year.
- Street lighting change-over and solar panel installations (\$834,000).
- Commencement of planning for the North Fitzroy Community Hub (\$290,000).
- Preliminary work on the Lourdes Family and Children's Hub in Abbotsford (\$250,000).
- Concept design for the Victoria Street Gateway Project (\$150,000).

Open space

- Completion of the Victoria Park redevelopment (\$7.2 million – which included \$3.5 million from the Federal Government).
- Linear Park shared trail upgrade (\$420,000).
- Upgrades to other parks and playground equipment (\$365,000).
- Installation of new sports lighting at Alphington Park, Alphington and Peterson Oval, Fitzroy (\$230,000).

Leisure and culture

- Completion of the Collingwood Leisure Centre redevelopment (\$3.8 million contributed in 2011–12 towards the total \$7.8 million project cost).
- Ramsden Street sports pavilion redevelopment (\$490,000).
- Purchase of library books and materials (\$455,000).
- Purchase of new art works (\$50,000).

Roads and drains

- Smith Street public domain improvements (\$370,000).
- Pigdon Street, North Carlton road resurfacing, including bike lanes (\$370,000).
- Installation of raingardens in local streets (\$320,000).
- Turner Street, Abbotsford footpath kerb and channel works (\$164,000).
- Langridge Street, Collingwood resurfacing including bike lanes (\$123,000).

Major capital works projects proposed for 2012–13

- Collingwood Town Hall redevelopment continued(\$5.9 million).
- Creation of new parks in Oxford Street, Collingwood and Lennox and Butler streets, North West Richmond. Council is also seeking community feedback on a proposal to close the intersection of Richmond Terrace and Docker Street in Richmond for a new park (\$1.5 million).
- Completion of Ramsden Street pavilion redevelopment (\$900,000).
- North Fitzroy Community Hub (\$700,000).

Major projects

Redeveloped North Richmond Community Health Centre

The \$24 million redevelopment of the North Richmond Community Health Centre continues to progress. Stage one, which involved the construction of a new building to house the expanded Lennox Street Health Centre, was opened in September 2011. This allows the centre to provide more dental services, additional medical services including physiotherapy and podiatry, and an expanded community health promotion program. Work has begun on stage two which comprises a new maternal and child health facility expected to be operational by August 2012. Council committed \$1.5 million towards the redevelopment for the creation of a new maternal and child health facility.

Lourdes Family and Children's Hub

In June 2012, Council approved the schematic design for the proposed \$8.2 million Family and Children's Hub on the Lourdes site in St Heliers Street, Abbotsford. The hub is a priority project for Council due to the demand for long day care places for children in Yarra. The plan endorsed by Council is for a single-storey facility with six child care rooms opening onto an outdoor play area, a maternal child health area, and a community room. Council will prepare an application for a planning permit in the second half of 2012. The community will be provided with an opportunity to provide feedback on the permit application. About \$500,000 has been allocated in Council's 2012–13 Budget to progress the project, including undertaking detailed design work. The new Council will determine the funding allocation in the Council's long term capital works program for construction of the hub.

Ramsden Pavilion

Work began in April 2012 to construct a new sports pavilion at Ramsden Street Reserve, Clifton Hill. The \$1.48 million project will see the outdated 1940s pavilion replaced with a modern, environmentally friendly building designed and oriented to reduce noise spill into surrounding residential areas. The new building design included four interconnecting change rooms, a kitchen, an umpire's room, a first aid room and toilets. The pavilion will continue to be used by the Clifton Hill Cricket Club, Fitzroy Junior Football Club and Fitzroy Football Club. The venue will also be available for hire by local, not-for-profit clubs or organisations during the day.

Completion of Victoria Park

The redevelopment of Victoria Park in Abbotsford was officially opened in December 2011, with the former home of the Collingwood Football Club transformed into a major community recreation space. The \$7.2 million redevelopment, funded by Council and the Federal Government, provides the community with a much needed open space to walk their dogs, jog, play sport or have a barbecue. Victoria Park's Social Club Building, leased by the Collingwood Football Club Foundation, has been transformed into a community hub, with the Foundation sub-leasing part of the building to the Collingwood Toy Library, Evolve, Headspace, and other community organisations. The Foundation has also committed over \$1 million to upgrade the facility.

Redevelopment of the Collingwood Leisure Centre

Collingwood Leisure Centre's new aquatic area was opened in January 2012 and is already proving a hit with the community. The \$7.8 million redevelopment has expanded the facility to allow it to accommodate an extra 40,000 visits a year, catering to the needs of Yarra's growing community. Council funded the majority of the project, with \$1.2 million contributed by the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development.

The redevelopment included increasing the size of the existing pools, an upgraded spa and sauna area and refurbished change rooms. Environmentally sustainable design features include a cogeneration system that provides energy-efficient electricity and heating for the pool, and a 100,000 litre underground water tank that captures storm water for reuse throughout the centre.

Collingwood Town Hall refurbishment

In June 2012, Council approved a \$13.8 million upgrade of Yarra's iconic Collingwood Town Hall. A contract for construction works was awarded and work was due to begin in August 2012. The upgrade, expected to take about 12 months to complete, will protect the heritage-listed building and ensure it complies with occupational health and safety requirements and accessibility standards. The project will focus on improving functional aspects of the building, including installing a sprinkler system and a lift to provide access to the second floor, safely removing asbestos from the building, upgrading toilets and installing ramps around the building.

The 150 staff who work in the town hall relocated to a nearby temporary office space in July 2012. A temporary customer service centre is operating next to the Collingwood Library in Stanton Street during the works.

Statutory Planning

Council deliberated on many significant planning matters in 2011–12 including:

The proposed redevelopment of the former Channel 9 site in Richmond

In March 2012, the Planning Minister approved an amendment to the Yarra Planning Scheme which enabled the redevelopment of the former Channel 9 site in Bendigo Street, Richmond.

Following an exhaustive process of consultation with Council and the community, developer Lend Lease agreed to reduce the maximum height of its proposed development on the site from eight to six storeys. This was despite the Minister approving an amendment which would have allowed higher buildings.

Council had earlier approved an overall development plan for the three hectare site in December 2011 on the condition that the height be reduced to six storeys, that Moore Street be retained as a dead end street and that five percent of the total number of dwellings be provided as affordable housing run by a registered housing association.

The revised plan submitted by Lend Lease met Council's requirements and was approved by Council officers (under delegation) in May 2012.

Dimmeys

In November 2011, Council lost its fight to protect the visual prominence of the 100-year-old Dimmeys clock tower when VCAT approved a 10-storey building on the site in Cremorne. Despite objections by Council and 370 people, VCAT directed Council to issue a permit to Richmond Icon Pty Ltd for the mixed-use redevelopment, which will involve a new supermarket and 82 apartments. Council decided not to appeal the decision in the Supreme Court and instead allocated \$20,000 to support the Save Dimmeys group if it decides to run a community campaign against the development.

Yorkshire Brewery site

Council informed Heritage Victoria in November 2011 of its objections on heritage grounds to a redevelopment proposal at the former Yorkshire Brewery in Collingwood.

The proposal put forward by SMA Projects included a 17-storey building that would be constructed near the iconic brew tower. Council was concerned that the height, mass and design of the 17-storey tower and a 14 storey building on the Robert Street site would detract from the heritage value of the 1850s brew tower.

Proposed 17 storey development knocked back in Abbotsford

Council won a major victory in February 2012 when VCAT rejected a proposal for a 17-storey development on the eastern end of Johnston Street in Abbotsford. Council had refused a permit to Abbotsford Joint Venture Pty Ltd for the development on the basis that the proposed building was not in keeping with the character of the existing neighbourhood and would have set a precedent for intensive, high-scaled development.

Strategic Planning

Council advanced a number of key strategic planning projects in 2011–12, including:

Victoria Street Gateway

For much of 2011–12, work continued on preparing concepts for a culturally-themed gateway on Victoria Street near the intersection with Hoddle Street.

The Victoria Street Gateway project is a joint initiative of Council and the Richmond Asian Business Association.

The project is supported by the Federal and State governments, which have committed a combined \$1.5 million towards the gateway's construction.

Council has committed \$500,000 in funding and in-kind support towards the gateway project.

Construction and Building Management

Council plays an important role overseeing development in the municipality, from the planning permit application stage through to construction.

In 2011–12, Council completed an internal staff restructure to allow staff to focus solely on issues relating to large scale developments planned across Yarra.

The Community Amenity Unit was divided into two new sections called Compliance and Construction Management.

This restructure provided more resources to monitor and enforce Construction Management Plans (CMPs).

The CMPs are attached to an applicant's planning permit, and stipulates their responsibilities for managing things like noise, waste and traffic movement around the development site.

Construction Management staff are responsible for ensuring the conditions set out in the CMPs are met by developers.

Sustainability Report

Carbon reduction leaders

The Yarra Energy Foundation has been established to work with Yarra residents and businesses to reduce their carbon emissions.

COUNCIL HAS COMMITTED \$1.2 MILLION TO SUPPORT THE FOUNDATION IN BECOMING THE COMMUNITY LEADER IN CARBON REDUCTION PRACTICE AND EXPERTISE.

The Sustainability Report

The protection of our environment is an important global and local responsibility.

Yarra Council wants to help lead the transformation in how we live and use our resources in the future.

For environmental, economical and social reasons, Council is committed to creating more sustainable lifestyles for the community and its staff.

By the end of 2012, Council will have cut its annual energy use by about 19.5% (from 2000–01 levels). That reduction equates to 3364

tonnes of carbon emissions (tCO²). This will be a major achievement for the organisation despite falling short of Council's ambitious target of a 30% reduction in energy use by June 2012.

The annual reduction figure of 19.5% in 2011–12 improves on a 7% reduction in energy use reported in 2009–10 and 13.4% in 2010–11.

Council is also producing its own low carbon and renewable energy, and by June 2012 was generating approximately 770 tCO² savings per year. A cogeneration system has been ordered for Fitzroy Swimming Pool which should be operational by December

2012. This will generate an estimated 450 tCO² in savings, allowing Council to generate more than 10% of its operational energy needs. By June 2015, Council aims to be producing enough of its own low carbon and renewable energy to meet 25% of its annual energy needs.

Council is also on target to be officially recognised as a carbon neutral organisation. It has calculated its emissions for 2011–12 and purchased the necessary offsets to cover all emissions produced.

Before Council can be officially accredited as a carbon neutral organisation, Council needs to be assessed by an external auditor.

The auditor verifies Council's own methodology and calculations for offsetting its carbon emissions before submitting our application to the certifying body – Low Carbon Australia – for official authorisation.

Low Carbon Australia was expected to advise Council on the status of its application in early 2013.

Working towards our greenhouse targets is just one way Yarra is showing leadership in the area of sustainability.

Yarra named Sustainable City of the Year

In addition to winning the 2011 Victorian Sustainable City of the Year Award (see page 32), Yarra also won the 'Community Action' category for the Yarra Neighbourhood Orchard program, which organises a monthly food swap for home gardeners. At the National Keep Australia Beautiful Awards in November, Yarra won the National Environmental Innovation and Protection Award for work undertaken to restore the Yarra River's natural environment and encouraging greater use of the Main Yarra Trail. Youth-oriented programs Resource Smart Schools and projects based at Collingwood Children's Farm were also commended in the Young Legends category.

Spreading the sustainability message

Council helped to spread the sustainable city message to Yarra's Vietnamese-speaking community by sharing tips on how to make households more energy efficient. Fridge magnets designed to look like houses, with each room featuring a different energy-saving tip in Vietnamese, were distributed to more than 1500 people in December 2011, at the Lunar Festival in January 2012, and through community groups. The project was part of the 'Talking My Language' program developed between Darebin City Council, Yarra City Council, and the Australian Vietnamese Women's Association. Vietnamese residents chose the design, format and messages to suit their community.

19.5%

REDUCTION IN ANNUAL ENERGY USE SINCE 2000–01

Compost Crew

More than 50 Abbotsford households (comprising about 100 residents) joined a home composting pilot program run by Council, Collingwood Children's Farm and Cultivating Community. Food scraps make up 52.6% of the waste Yarra residents put in their rubbish bins.

Participants in the pilot program learned how to reduce their waste by creating a sustainable waste system in their home and community. The program also gave tips on how to avoid food waste by encouraging people to shop with a menu plan, store food correctly and to cook appropriate portions. Participants attended free workshops and received a subsidised composting kit, kitchen bins and a small sign for the front of their property.

Yarra's Urban Agriculture Guidelines

In April 2012, the first street-side planter box established under Yarra's Urban Agriculture Guidelines was installed on the corner of Ramsden Street and Clifton Avenue, Clifton Hill. Local residents Neil Erenstrom and Maude Farrugia began growing a selection of herbs, salad leaves and vegetables with the support of their neighbours who were invited to pick the produce.

At present, there is a long waiting list for plots in existing community gardens in Yarra. The Urban Agricultural Guidelines were adopted by Council in June 2011 to help identify and manage new opportunities for different kinds of urban agriculture activities in Yarra.

Mobile phone round up

More than 100 kilograms of unwanted mobile phones and accessories were saved from landfill through a successful MobileMuster recycling campaign supported in September 2011. A recyclable satchel was included in Council's monthly newsletter Yarra News which is delivered to more than 42,000 households and businesses.

Residents were able to put their old phones, batteries and chargers in the satchel and mail it to Council free of charge. More than 90% of the materials in old mobile phones can be recycled into products such as aluminium cans and plastic fence posts.

New raingardens

Several new raingardens were developed in 2011–12 to improve the environment and storm water quality in Yarra. The Edinburgh Gardens raingarden, opened in October 2011, introduced an important water saving resource to the popular North Fitzroy parkland.

The raingarden captures and filters storm water runoff which is stored in an underground tank and used to irrigate the park's historic trees. The \$920,000 project was funded by Council and Melbourne Water. Raingardens were also constructed in Abbotsford Street, Abbotsford while two further raingardens were due to be constructed in Rowe Street, North Fitzroy in July 2012 to help treat storm water before it reaches the Merri Creek.

2012 Yarra Sustainability Awards

These awards celebrate the community's efforts towards environmental sustainability. They were launched in 2010 to showcase projects that make positive and sustainable changes.

In 2012, a new category called 'Local Heroes' was added to the awards to recognise individuals who have made significant contributions to local sustainability. Other categories include Innovation and Sustainable Design, Business, Community Action, Home and Garden, and Education.

A record 50 nominations were received for the awards in 2012 reflecting Yarra's active community. The 2012 winners were expected to be announced on 16 August 2012.

A greener way to travel

Council supports three car sharing companies in Yarra. Car share schemes offer an alternative for local residents who only occasionally drive, but don't want the expense of owning a vehicle. People who pay a membership fee can hire cars from about \$5–\$17 per hour, with petrol included.

There are 34 on-street car spaces set aside for car share vehicles in Yarra. Council supports car sharing because it helps residents to live more sustainable lifestyles and reduces demand for parking on Yarra's streets.

In a gesture of support for sustainable travel, Council abolished the annual allocation of a car for the Mayor, deeming the vehicle unnecessary due to the easy access in Yarra to trams, trains and buses, a car pool, ordinary and electric bikes, share cars and taxis.

Yarra Energy Foundation

The Foundation was established by Council to help Yarra businesses and residents reduce their carbon emissions. It has received \$900,000 in start-up support from Council to help it make the transition to becoming an independent organisation, with a further \$300,000 committed from Council's 2012–13 budget. In 2011–12, the Foundation began developing its strategic Total Yarra Retrofit plan, a framework for actions to help Yarra reach zero emissions by 2020. It also worked with 11 businesses and a community centre to help them reduce their carbon emissions.

Another initiative, the High Rise Revolution project, investigated opportunities for making Yarra's ageing public housing estates more

energy efficient.

Water reduction target exceeded

In 2008, Council adopted a long term target to reduce its water use as part of the Yarra Environment Strategy. The aim was to cut water use by 40% by 2015 compared with a baseline year of 2000–01.

Council's water use has almost halved over the past decade, falling from 334 megalitres in 2000–01 to around 165 megalitres in 2011–12. This places Council ahead of schedule to achieve its 2015 target.

Savings have been achieved largely due to water restrictions, especially between 2006 and 2010. A key objective now is to maintain savings in a context of less stringent Stage 1 restrictions.

If Council was still using 334 million litres per year it would have paid an extra \$346,000 for water and associated charges in 2011–12.

Key ways Council continued to reduce its water usage in 2011–12 included:

- Completion of the Edinburgh Gardens raingarden that will supply four to five megalitres of alternative water to help irrigate the park.
- Investigation of alternative water projects capable of saving up to 40 megalitres of water by accessing storm water.
- A continued program of sports field upgrades, including planning for the renovation of Fairfield Park Oval with warm season grasses and sub-surface drip irrigation.
- Working with City West Water's allocation for water use on sports fields and open spaces under Stage 1 restrictions.

Environmentally Sustainable Design

Today's buildings emit 20% of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions, and the construction of buildings, including demolition waste, makes up 40% of landfill. On top of this, buildings use large amounts of potable water for non-drinking purposes.

For this reason Council is committed to making its existing buildings more energy efficient and to embedding Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles into the design of new buildings and those being upgraded. Council will aim to construct major new buildings to a six-star Green Star rating developed by the Green Building Council of Australia. The six star rating signifies 'World Leadership' in environmentally sustainable design and/or construction. The new North Fitzroy Library and Community Hub is an example of a new Council building that is being designed to meet a six-star rating.

Council also incorporated a range of ESD principles into the major redevelopment of the Collingwood Leisure Centre. We also encourage planning permit applicants to consider including sustainable design principles at a development's early design stage – when the greatest benefits can be achieved at the lowest costs.

Reducing energy use in Council buildings

One of the simplest ways Council can reduce energy use in its buildings and facilities is by installing energy efficient lighting, solar panels and solar hot water systems. In recent years, more than 60 small and medium sized Council facilities have been assessed to determine how they can be more sustainable. Council has installed solar electricity panels at 25 local sites, including children's centres and libraries. Five solar hot water systems have also been installed at Council facilities. Collectively, these retrofits have saved about 323 tonnes of carbon emissions.

Major retrofits undertaken in 2011–12 included:

- Changeover of more than 1000 additional streetlights to energy-efficient T5 light globes.
- Lighting retrofits at Council's three town halls.
- Installation of 140kW capacity solar electricity panels on nine Council buildings.
- A sustainability retrofit of the Collingwood Swimming Pool, including an energy efficient heating and air conditioning system, a cogeneration unit, and a 100,000 litre underground water tank.

Lowering speed limits on local streets

In July 2011, Council continued its campaign to lower speed limits in local streets by introducing a 40kph limit in an area of Fitzroy bounded by Johnston, Nicholson and Smith streets and Alexandra Parade.

About 80% of Yarra streets now have a 40kph limit. This limit does not apply on major roads which are under the control of VicRoads, except where VicRoads has introduced it. Council also asked VicRoads to consider reducing the speed limit on parts of Lygon Street from 60kph to 50kph and on Rathdowne and Wellington streets from 50kph to 40kph.

Council staff Green Team

In August 2011, Council launched its staff 'Green Team' comprising a committee of 12 staff, paired with an equal number of supporting staff (buddies). The group jointly created an Action Plan to make Council's workplaces more sustainable.

Seven practical staff-driven projects were implemented, including encouraging staff to switch off (lights and computers) at Fitzroy Town Hall after hours, promotion of Yarra as a sustainable city during recruitment, reusing keep cups instead of disposable cups, more use of electronic forms to save paper and printing, Sustainable Transport Wednesdays promotion, water audits, a compost program and stationery reuse at Richmond Library.

Advocacy

Council plays an important role speaking out on issues that affect the Yarra community. Some of the key issues Council has advocated for in 2011–12 include:

Trains not Tollroads campaign

In May 2012, Council launched a major campaign called “Trains not Tollroads”.

The campaign supports the construction of a Doncaster Rail Link and opposes the East-West Road Tunnel that is proposed by the State Government to connect the Eastern Freeway to the western suburbs.

Council believes investment in public transport is the best fix for traffic congestion as experience has shown that providing more roads only encourages more people to use cars.

As part of this, Council called for expressions of interest from the community to form a steering committee which now meets regularly to plan and implement actions. Some of these actions have included installing campaign billboards and banners in areas of high visibility to the thousands of motorists who use Yarra roads every day, stories in the media and information on Council’s website and in Yarra News. Council also sought support from the City of Melbourne and reiterated its opposition to the proposed tollroad at a State and Federal level.

Planning around the Richmond and Fitzroy public housing estates

In July 2011, the Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy, announced a decision to amend the Yarra Planning Scheme that handed him responsibility for planning decisions affecting the Fitzroy and Richmond public housing estates, and other Office of Housing land in Richmond and Fitzroy. Council appealed to the State Government to be included in any planning decisions for the sites so the wider community could have a say in what development occurs.

Residents fight Brunswick Terminal Station expansion

In March 2012, Council wrote to Premier Ted Baillieu to request he meet with residents concerned by the Planning Minister’s approval to expand the electricity substation in Brunswick.

The Brunswick Terminal Stations sits in a residential area on Council’s northern boundary with Moreland Council. Residents living nearby were concerned about the potential health and environmental impacts of expanding the substation.

The meeting proposed with the Merri Creek Residents Group aimed to discuss the community impacts of the Minister’s decision.

Richmond Station redevelopment

Council sought a meeting with the Planning Minister following a Ministerial Amendment, published in the Government Gazette, that foreshadowed high scale and high density developments for the area without Council or the community being consulted. Council requested the meeting in an effort to learn more about what is planned for the area so residents can be kept better informed. The Minister subsequently met with the Mayor and senior officers to discuss planning issues affecting the municipality including the Richmond Station Precinct.

He assured Council that the amendment only applies to railway land and not surrounding streets.

Supporting research into supervised injecting facilities

In July 2011, Council agreed to contribute \$8000 to help fund research into the need for a Supervised Injecting Facility in Yarra. The Burnet Institute, a not-for-profit organisation that undertakes medical research on public health issues, was enlisted to carry out the research.

Supported with funding from the Institute and the Yarra Drug and Health Forum, the research aimed to gather evidence about the impact of drug use on public amenity, and about the number, type and frequency of drug overdoses in Yarra.

Occupy Melbourne at Edinburgh Gardens

In November 2011 a group from the Occupy Melbourne movement set up camp at Edinburgh Gardens for two weeks. Working co-operatively with the occupants and recognising their philosophical right to express their views, Council was able to persuade those involved that Edinburgh Gardens was an inappropriate location for a long term protest due to its close proximity to local houses. The group relocated from Edinburgh Gardens back to Treasury Gardens in Melbourne, not before writing to Council and expressing their gratitude for Council’s conciliatory approach. During this time Council kept its local community informed of the situation.

Engaging our community

Communication

Council places great emphasis on communicating its decisions and activities to the community. We do this in a number of ways. Residents are informed about Council decisions and activities through Yarra News, a monthly newsletter which is delivered to 42,000 households, businesses and community locations. Council also produces electronic e-Newsletters and places weekly advertisements in local newspapers about Council decisions, issues, services and events.

Council's website meets national accessibility and usability standards and is updated daily with information about Yarra. Really Simple Syndication (RSS) enables users to subscribe and receive instant updates about new information being added to the site. Council also uses Twitter to provide information about general Council matters, as well as operating specific Twitter feeds aimed at library and leisure centre members and patrons.

Some other ways Council engages with our community includes:

- Coordinating the Yarra Matters Planning Panel and advisory groups that invite community feedback.
- Implementing and updating plans, policies and strategies to improve life for people living and working in Yarra.
- Organising community events and festivals.
- Acknowledging the achievements of residents through Australia Day Awards and Sustainability Awards.
- Providing grants to local groups that run programs and services in Yarra.
- Disseminating information through Council's five libraries and at customer service centres at the Richmond and Collingwood town halls.

Community Consultation

Council is committed to consulting with the community on issues that impact them. Some of the major community consultations that occurred in 2011–12 were:

Curtain Square Site Management Plan

Residents, ecologists, Councillors and Council officers worked together on a committee in early 2011 to develop a management plan aimed at improving the health of trees and managing the possum population in North Carlton's Curtain Square. In September 2011, Council adopted a series of recommendations put forward by the committee for managing the park. Those recommendations included new tree and garden bed planting, tree banding, a controlled possum feeding program and a two year fertility trial designed to control the possum population. Council sought community feedback on the trial in August 2011 before deciding to proceed.

Social and Affordable Housing Strategy

The community was invited to share their views on affordable housing via online discussion and written feedback in August 2011. A focus group was also established with rooming house clients and people who use, or are connected to local homeless services. The focus group was able to provide insights into the issues faced by people through the lack of affordable housing, drawing informed comments on the draft strategy.

Smoking in public spaces

From April to September 2011, Council sought community feedback about making some public areas in Yarra smoke free. These areas included outdoor dining spaces, playgrounds, sporting facilities and Council-run events. Of the 212 submissions received, about 36% expressed support for more bans and 25% opposed the moves. There was general support among the submitters for smoking bans in playgrounds and around Council facilities.

In November 2011, Council resolved to introduce a new local law as part of its Local Laws Review that would allow it the power to create smoking bans in playgrounds and around entrances to Council facilities. Council also wrote to the State Minister for Health and peak health bodies (VicHealth, Heart Foundation and Quit) seeking a state-wide legislative response to smoking in outdoor areas.

36%

of survey respondents supported more smoke-free public spaces.

42,000

HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVE YARRA NEWS EACH MONTH

New approaches to bicycle parking

In May 2012, Council sought community feedback on a trial to replace two car parking spaces with 14 bicycle parking spaces outside Piedimonte's supermarket in North Fitzroy. The trial proceeded with overwhelming support in June 2012. Council also trialled a new 'pole vault' style bicycle parking facility in three locations from February 2012 to April 2012. Survey responses to the trial were largely favourable, encouraging officers to consider 'pole vault' style facilities for bicycle parking in busy retail/café strips.

Mobile food vans considered for Yarra

In September 2011, Council sought feedback on a proposal to allow mobile food vans to operate locally provided they met certain conditions. Council officers had previously not allowed mobile food vans to operate in Yarra due to concerns about the impact on local businesses and residential areas.

Conditions for mobile food van operations were set out in guidelines created by officers. The conditions included rules about where

vans could set up, how they should handle litter and respecting the rights of nearby residents and businesses.

In February 2012, Council adopted the guidelines and an associated permit application process that would allow mobile food vans to begin operating in Yarra from 1 July 2012.

Local Laws Review

The Local Government Act requires Council to review and update each of its local laws every decade. The review is an opportunity to introduce new laws for activities not recognised by the original laws, to remove ambiguous or invalid wording, and to generally improve the guidelines Council refers to for regulating public behaviour and activities.

Council's Roads and Council Land Local Law No.2 and the Environment Local Law No.3 were set to expire in late 2012 and early 2013. Council officers proposed a number of changes to the local laws which were advertised for community feedback in April and May 2012. New versions of Council's Roads and Council Land Local Law No.2 and the Environment Local Law No.3 were adopted in early July 2012.

Swan Street Structure Plan

The draft Swan Street Structure Plan aims to provide a long term strategic approach for managing future development on Swan Street and the surrounding area. Consultation on an earlier version of the draft plan took place during May and June 2011. However, at its September 2011 meeting, Council deferred its decision due to concerns raised by residents about the plan's preferred heights for new buildings in some areas.

Council asked for further discussion and consultation with the community with the aim of providing a greater focus on good urban design. A meeting with the Minister for Planning was also sought. Council planning officers held information sessions in May and June 2012 to discuss the revised plan with the community.

Lourdes Family and Children's Hub

Planning for a new Family and Children's Hub on the Lourdes site in St Heliers Street, Abbotsford is a priority project for Council due to local demand for long day care child places. The design concept for the Hub was developed with significant input from a Design Reference Group (DRG) made up of representatives from the community and Langridge Ward Councillors.

In April and May 2012, the community was asked to comment on the design concept. In June, Council endorsed a design concept that provides for a single-storey facility with six child care rooms, a maternal child health area, and a community room.

The design also recommends the creation of a new driveway in St Heliers Street to the west of the Hub building, providing access to a 16-space car park. A drop off zone would also be provided.

Significant tree register

In June 2012, community members were invited to nominate a tree or a group of trees for possible inclusion on a Significant Tree Register for Yarra. The register will help prevent unique, historical, rare and environmentally important trees from being removed or lopped without Council's consent.

Each nominated tree will be inspected and assessed by a tree consultant appointed by Council to compile the register. A draft version of the register was expected to be released for community feedback late in 2012.

Volunteers tribute

More than 11,000 volunteers in Yarra share their skills, experience and time with the community. They tirelessly assist in the areas of aged care, the arts, the environment, emergency services, animal welfare, education, sport and much more.

Volunteers give their time to hundreds of not-for-profit and community groups that operate in Yarra including sports clubs, seniors clubs, neighbourhood and community houses, the Yarra Men's Shed, church groups and service clubs.

Council formally recognised volunteers at a special National Volunteer Week event at Fitzroy Town Hall called 'Love Your Work' in May 2012. Over 1500 volunteers registered and received a certificate of appreciation for the invaluable contribution they make to the community. The volunteers were associated with 84 community organisations and not-for-profit groups.

Council thanks all volunteers for their contribution to Yarra.

Calendar of major events in 2011–12

2011

July

National Tree Day Burnley hosted this popular community planting day in 2011.

Gertrude Street Projection Festival brings local artists, residents and community groups together to light up the night with a week-long spectacle of images and film projected onto buildings along the street.

August

Leisure Cycling Network bike rides encouraged residents of Yarra's housing estates to learn basic riding skills and meet people on a group bike ride.

A Solar Panels information session provided free advice to people who wanted to know more about installing solar power at home.

Rock-a-Bye Baby music sessions continued at Fitzroy Town Hall where live bands shared the fun and wonder of live music with young children and their parents.

September

The Moon Lantern Festival, held on the North Richmond housing Estate, brought the community together for a traditional harvest moon celebration.

North Western League Skate and BMX series

Melbourne Overload Poetry Festival celebrated its 10th anniversary with a 10-day extravaganza of spoken word at Fitzroy Town Hall and other venues across Melbourne.

October

Children's Week was celebrated with a free family picnic at Collingwood Children's Farm.

Ride to Work Day encouraged people to swap four wheels for two with a free community breakfast put on for commuters at Edinburgh Gardens.

Stepping out in Yarra for the over 50s – a walking and running event held for seniors at Yarra Boulevard and Kevin Bartlett Reserve in Burnley.

November

The Village Festival in Edinburgh Gardens brought its carnival sideshows to the park for a family friendly weekend of entertainment.

Yarra Remembrance Day celebrations with a wreath laying ceremony on the steps of Richmond Town Hall.

Johnston Street Fiesta showcased the culture, heritage and traditions of Spanish-speaking nations.

December

Peel Street Pride Festival returned to Collingwood in 2011 for a street party organised by Pride March Victoria.

Summer Reading Club in Yarra Libraries encouraged young people to read 10 books over the summer holidays to be in the running for prizes.

Yarra's annual Carols by Candlelight concert was held in Darling Gardens in Clifton Hill with beautiful weather and performances by local school groups.

2012

January

Midsumma Festival celebrating the pride and diversity of Victoria's lesbian, gay and allied communities.

Movies Under the Stars, a series of unique films screened at dusk at the Fairfield Amphitheatre as part of the Melbourne Queer Film Festival.

Lunar New Year Festival in Richmond marked one of Yarra's busiest and most popular events as Victoria Street was closed to traffic for this colourful celebrations.

Australia Day Awards honoured the contributions of local people and organisations that made a difference to the community.

February

Fairfield Amphitheatre Summer Concert Series featured music from across the globe.

Collingwood Leisure Centre's Family Fun Day launched the new look aquatic facilities after a \$7.8 million redevelopment.

Library Lovers Week at all Yarra Libraries offered the chance to borrow a 'blind date' book from the collection.

SoundWaves brought DJs to the Fitzroy Swimming Pool on Sunday afternoons to round off summer with party vibes.

March

Black Harmony Gathering at the Fairfield Amphitheatre celebrating the music and dance of Indigenous and multicultural communities.

International Women's Day Lunch at the Richmond Town Hall.

Cultural Diversity Week included a host of multicultural performers and activities.

Collingwood Harvest Festival brought residents of the Collingwood Housing Estate together for a day of multicultural food and entertainment.

April

Princes Hill and North Carlton Heritage Walk – run to coincide with National Heritage Week, this two day event conducted guided tours to showcase the area's rich history.

Sustainable school holiday activities at Yarra Libraries included worm farm workshops, storytime with a sustainable focus and a look at some of the amazing animals that live locally in Yarra.

May

Koorie Stories and Song (Reconciliation Week) featured performances from celebrated Aboriginal songwriters sharing stories about their family and culture.

National Simultaneous Storytime is an annual literacy campaign that encourages young people to read more by getting together for group reading sessions.

Next Wave Festival – a showcase of young and emerging artists that takes over inner-city spaces every two years.

June

Emerge Festival Part of Refugee Week, the Emerge Festival is a celebration of the contributions made to the cultural life of Melbourne by communities from Africa, Afghanistan, Kurdistan and beyond.

Rising High Showcase launched the musical talents of young people from the Atherton Gardens Housing Estate who had recorded at the Rising High Studio, a resource provided by Council's youth services.

Grants, Awards and Funding

Council and its staff were recognised with several awards during 2011–12:

Awards

Sustainable City Award

In July 2011, Yarra was named Victorian Sustainable City of the Year in Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria's Sustainable Cities and Clean Beaches Awards. The award, announced at a ceremony at the Melbourne Cricket Club, was given to Yarra in recognition of a range of Council and community initiatives aimed at reducing waste, cutting energy consumption and preserving the natural environment.

In Keep Australia Beautiful's national awards held in Perth in November 2011, Yarra won the National Environmental Innovation and Protection Award for work undertaken to restore the Yarra River's natural environment.

Youth-oriented programs Resource Smart Schools and projects based at Collingwood Children's Farm were also commended in the Young Legends category.

Design Excellence

Council's Water Sensitive Urban Design project in Smith Street, Collingwood was recognised at the 2011 Parks and Leisure Australia Regional Awards for Excellence (Victoria and Tasmania region). The project, which won the Award for Sustainable Initiatives, involved planting street trees in pits that catch and remove pollutants from storm water before it flows into local waterways.

Popular Park

Yarra's parks were given the thumbs up in an annual survey of park visitors from across Melbourne. Yarra ranked second best for park maintenance out of the 17 Council areas included in the survey. Yarra's parks were rated as best or equal best in four categories – ground litter removal, taps and drinking fountains, barbecues and land drainage.

LGPro Award

Yarra was a finalist in the 2011 LGPro Excellence in Local Government Corporate and Community Planning Award for a project titled "Better Responding to Hotspots in the City of Yarra". Council and key stakeholders developed a strategic and coordinated approach to respond to community concerns about public drug use in Yarra, particularly around North Richmond and Abbotsford.

Staff recognised

In July 2011, Clare Murrell, a Coordinator in the Community Planning Area, won the LGPro Sally Isaac Award which recognises young women leaders in Victorian Local Government. Clare is photographed (front centre) with fellow Yarra staff at the awards night.

Peter McCauley won the statewide SACS Consulting Award for Leadership in Local Government (non-executive category). Peter helped ensure Council responded quickly to resident requests for street cleaning, and played an instrumental role in a pilot employment project in partnership with the Brotherhood of St Laurence. Director Community Programs, Craig Kenny, was a finalist for the Local Government (executive category).

Council building inspector Mervyn Mumford was named the 2011 Victorian Municipal Building Inspector of the Year at the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors awards.

The Yarra Staff Sustainability Awards began in 2011 to highlight the innovative sustainability initiatives driven by staff. These included one-off workplace projects, and examples of sustainability being integrated into Council's core business in groundbreaking ways.

Australia Day Awards

Council's Australia Day awards recognise individuals and groups who have made an outstanding contribution to the Yarra community. Awards are presented for Citizen, Young Citizen and Woman of the Year, as well as Community Service and Community Event of the Year. The winners of the 2012 Yarra Australia Day Awards were presented at Council's annual Australia Day citizenship ceremony at the Richmond Town Hall on 26 January 2012.

Citizen of the Year

Glenda Lindsay

Glenda has encouraged the local community to grow and share fresh food in many ways, including creating a community garden in her backyard

Young Citizen of the Year

Makot Wol

Makot has worked tirelessly as a music mentor to young people in Yarra.

Woman of the Year

Bich Ha

Bich helps disadvantaged community members become more involved in civic life through her work at North Yarra Community Health.

Community Service of the Year

LiveWires

After school care program.

Community Event of the Year

A Pink Affair to Remember Luncheon

Breast cancer fundraising event.

Community Grants

Council provided more than \$1.71 million in support to community groups in 2011–12 through grants and in kind support. Grants are provided over five funding programs outlined in the table below. As well as these grants, Council subsidised community groups using town halls to the value of \$84,475.

Grant funding by program in 2011–12	
Annual Grants	\$529,230
Emerging Issues Grants	\$154,000
Small Unexpected Project Grants	\$17,455
Community Partnership Grants	\$690,040
Investing in Community Grants	\$234,121
Total Grants	\$1,624,846

Council's Annual Grants program provided \$529,230 in grants funding to 122 projects that will run in 2012. The Neighbourhood Justice Centre contributed \$54,627 to the total amount. Annual Grants are provided to community groups running programs and activities in the areas of arts and culture, the environment, community development, sport and recreation and youth services. These grants support community initiatives and projects that address local issues, increase community resilience, build social capital and enhance the wellbeing of the local community.

In a new initiative in 2011–12, Council partnered with Visy to provide grants to social enterprises either based in Yarra or who were looking to expand or start up in Yarra. The grants were aimed at supporting social enterprises to build a diverse, inclusive and healthy community. In April 2012, Visy awarded a total of \$50,000 to five local social enterprises.

A film celebrating Council's Grants recipients was screened at the end of year event welcoming the new Mayor and then posted to free video sharing website YouTube where it has been viewed by over 800 people. The film can be viewed by searching for 'Yarra City Council 2011 Grants' on YouTube.

Council grants

Council relies on grants from other levels of government and other agencies to assist with projects in Yarra. Some of the projects that attracted grants in 2011–12 included:

Collingwood Leisure Centre Redevelopment \$339,722.

Victoria Park Redevelopment \$753,000.

Victoria Street Gateway project \$100,000. A further \$1.4 million in Federal and State Grants is expected for this project in 2012–13.

Roads to Recovery grant \$205,000.

Atherton Gardens Hub \$500,000.

Premier's Reading Challenge \$10,043.

Open space facilities \$90,000.

Governance

Solar rollout

The solar rollout continued in 2011–12, with nine more Council buildings and facilities equipped with solar electricity panels and/or solar hot water systems.

Council now has 25 facilities with solar capability.

Governance

Council is committed to using its resources effectively and efficiently to ensure that the community is engaged and well connected, and to provide the best possible service to residents.

Responsible, compassionate and comprehensive objectives should be supported by appropriate strategies, policies and action plans. Council's policies and procedures are designed to promote transparency, accountability, and to meet legislative requirements.

Council also works with other levels of government and neighbouring councils to achieve the best outcomes for our community.

This section outlines how Council operates and contains a range of statutory information which the organisation is required to meet under the Local Government Act.

Council Plan

The Council Plan 2009–13 is Yarra's major strategic document. It sets out Council's aims and objectives, and the outcomes that the elected Councillors seek to achieve during this period. This Plan contains two dominant themes – Liveability and Responsiveness. These themes are reflected in the following five key Strategic Objectives which relate to different aspects of Council's service delivery:

Making Yarra More Liveable.

Ensuring a Sustainable Yarra.

Serving Yarra's Community.

Supporting a Diverse and Dynamic Yarra.

Building Council's Capacity and Performance.

Actions relating to the Council Plan's major strategies are updated annually. These actions originate from department plans and are informed by a variety of sources including community consultation and Councillors' priorities.

Council also has a Strategic Resource Plan which indicates how Council is going to manage its financial and human resources to achieve the initiatives outlined in the Council Plan.

Each year, Council produces an Annual Plan identifying how Council will work towards achieving its key Strategic Objectives.

Council priorities, major projects, capital works, service improvements, as well as actions in response to Council strategies and plans, are set out in the Annual Plan.

The 2011–12 Annual Plan contained 70 projects and activities which were reported against in quarterly reports to Council.

Starting on page 52 on this report, we outline those projects and activities and how Council performed against them in 2011–12.

Representation

Councillors

The Yarra community is represented by nine elected Councillors. While individual Councillors are able to consult with their constituents and advocate on their behalf, it is only as a collective that Councillors can make decisions affecting the municipality. Each December, Councillors elect a Mayor from within their ranks to chair formal meetings and speak on behalf of Council in a variety of forums.

The next general election will be held on Saturday 27 October 2012. Successful candidates will serve four year terms.

Wards

The City of Yarra is divided into three wards and each is represented by three Councillors.

Langridge Ward

Langridge Ward incorporates Abbotsford and parts of Alphington, Clifton Hill, Collingwood, Fairfield and Fitzroy. It was named in honour of George Langridge, the former Mayor of Collingwood and a Member of State Parliament who was celebrated for his pioneering work in the field of affordable housing.

Councillor Geoff Barbour

Has served on Council since February 2008. He was elected Mayor in December 2011.

T 0438 034 241E Geoff.Barbour@yarracity.vic.gov.au

Councillor Stephen Jolly

Has served on Council since November 2004.

T 0437 856 713E Stephen.Jolly@yarracity.vic.gov.au

Councillor Amanda Stone

Has served on Council since November 2008.

T 0429 358 170E Amanda.Stone@yarracity.vic.gov.au

Melba Ward incorporates Burnley, Cremorne and Richmond. It was named in honour of Dame Nellie Melba, the internationally renowned soprano, who grew up at Doonside in Richmond.

Councillor Alison Clarke

Has served on Council since November 2008. Cr Clarke served as Yarra's Mayor from 14 December 2010 until 15 December 2011.

T 0428 509 943E Alison.Clarke@yarracity.vic.gov.au

Councillor Josh Funder

Has served on Council since November 2008.

T 0428 386 337E Josh.Funder@yarracity.vic.gov.au

Councillor Dale Smedley

Has served on Council since November 2008.

T 0409 174 747E Dale.Smedley@yarracity.vic.gov.au

Nicholls Ward incorporates North Carlton, North Fitzroy, Princes Hill and parts of Clifton Hill, Fitzroy and Collingwood. It was named in honour of Aboriginal community leader Sir Doug Nicholls, an inspirational sportsman, pastor and statesman associated with Fitzroy for many years.

Councillor Jackie Fristacky

Has served on Council since March 2002.

T 0412 597 794E Jackie.Fristacky@yarracity.vic.gov.au

Councillor Sam Gaylard

Has served on Council since November 2008.

T 0448 586 884E Sam.Gaylard@yarracity.vic.gov.au

Councillor Anthony Main

Has served on Council since January 2011.

T 0407 529 658E Anthony.Main@yarracity.vic.gov.au

Remuneration

Each Councillor is entitled to an allowance, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1989. The Mayor receives \$67,634.00 plus 9% (\$6087.06), being the equivalent of the Superannuation Guarantee Levy, while other Councillors receive \$21,859.00 plus 9% (\$1967.31), being the equivalent of the Superannuation Guarantee Levy.

Decision Making

Council decisions are known as resolutions and require a majority vote at a formal meeting of Council. Before reaching a determination on a given matter, Council typically considers advice from experts in the field, detailed recommendations from Council officers and feedback from the community. In the event of a tied vote, the Mayor has the casting vote.

Meeting Structure

In December 2011, Council resolved to adopt a new meeting structure of two Ordinary Council Meetings per month instead of one. The revised system allows Council to respond to emerging issues in a more timely fashion and increases the potential for community input in decision making. Special Council Meetings are scheduled as required in order to address urgent matters. Council also has the Internal Development Approvals Committee (IDAC), a fortnightly Special Committee with the delegated authority to determine planning applications. All Councillors are members of this Committee. At any one time, IDAC consists of three rostered Councillors.

Public Participation

Council considers community feedback to be a vital part of the democratic process and welcomes public participation in its meetings. During Council Meetings, members of the gallery are invited to ask questions on any topic or make verbal submissions regarding one or more agenda items. During IDAC Meetings, both applicants for and objectors to planning matters have the opportunity to address the Committee.

Agendas are published on Council's website on the Friday prior to each meeting, while hard copies are made available at the Colingwood and Richmond town halls, as well as Council's public libraries.

Council's meeting schedule, and agenda and minutes, are available at www.yarracity.vic.gov.au

Councillors Meeting Attendance in 2011–12

Councillor	Ordinary Council	Special Council	Internal Development Approvals Committee**	Finance & Human Services Committee	Planning, Environment & Infrastructure Committee
Meetings Held	16	5	23	6	6
Cr Barbour	16	5	7 rostered 8 attended	6	*
Cr Clarke	16	5	7 rostered 6 attended	6	6
Cr Fristacky	14	5	5 rostered 5 attended	*	6
Cr Funder	13	5	5 rostered 5 attended	*	4
Cr Gaylard	15	4	11 rostered 9 attended	*	6
Cr Jolly	13	4	11 rostered 10 attended	*	5
Cr Main	16	5	7 rostered 6 attended	6	*
Cr Smedley	15	5	11 rostered 11 attended	5	*
Cr Stone	16	4	5 rostered 5 attended	5	*

* Not a member of this committee during 2011–12

**Three Councillors at a time are rostered onto the Internal Development Approvals Committee on a three-monthly rotation, so three Councillors were rostered twice in the financial year covered by this report.

Advisory Committees and Working Parties

Council is represented on a range of advisory committees and working parties designed to closely examine some of the most important issues facing the municipality. These groups consist of Councillors, staff members and key stakeholders from the community. The groups' purpose is to provide highly specialised advice so Council can make informed decisions on complex topics.

Councillor Representation on Advisory Committees and Working Parties in 2011–12

Group	Purpose of the group	Jul–Dec 2011 Councillor Delegate/s	Jan–Jun 2012 Councillor Delegate/s
Aboriginal Advisory Group	To facilitate consultation with the local Aboriginal community on issues such as culture, health, housing, employment, and social justice.	Cr Stone Cr Jolly	Cr Stone
Active Ageing Advisory Committee	To promote consideration of senior citizens' needs in Council's core planning and inform the development of positive ageing initiatives.	Cr Fristacky	Cr Fristacky
Arts Advisory Com-	To provide advice on the develop-	Cr Smedley Cr Barbour	Cr Gaylard Cr Smedley

mittee	ment of arts policies, the allocation of community grants and the management of Council's art collection.		
Audit Committee	To review Council's activities and develop procedures to promote transparency, accountability and preparedness.	Cr Clarke Cr Funder	Cr Barbour Cr Funder
Australia Day Awards Committee	To select and celebrate individuals and groups who have made an outstanding contribution to the local community.	Cr Clarke Cr Barbour Cr Smedley	Cr Barbour Cr Smedley Cr Stone
Bicycle Advisory Committee	To encourage bicycle use, support responsible riding, assess existing cycling programs and provide feedback on new proposals.	Cr Fristacky Cr Gaylard	Cr Fristacky Cr Gaylard
Business Advisory Group	To boost the profile of Council's business community and provide advice on the creation of economic development strategies.	Cr Clarke Cr Barbour Cr Fristacky	Cr Barbour Cr Fristacky Cr Stone
Disability Advisory Committee	To promote the integration of principles supporting people with disabilities and their carers into Council's core business.	Cr Clarke	Cr Clarke
Early Years Reference Group	To provide comment on the development and delivery of policies and services relating to children and families.	Cr Barbour Cr Clarke (sub)	Cr Barbour Cr Stone (sub)
Environment Consultative Committee	To promote Council's environmental initiatives and provide feedback on the implementation of policies and programs.	Cr Clarke Cr Fristacky	Cr Barbour Cr Clarke Cr Fristacky

Live Music Working Group	To develop recommendations in support of the interests of the live music sector while protecting the rights of local residents.	Cr Jolly Cr Stone	Cr Main Cr Smedley Cr Stone
Municipal Public Health Plan Advisory Committee	To oversee implementation of the mental, physical and Aboriginal health strategies outlined in Council's Health Plan.	Cr Barbour Cr Fristacky	Cr Barbour Cr Fristacky
North Fitzroy Community Hub Design Reference Group	To inform the design of a site incorporating a public library, maternal and child health centre and multi-cultural meeting place.	Cr Fristacky Cr Gaylard Cr Main	Cr Fristacky Cr Gaylard Cr Main
Performance Review Sub Committee	To conduct the annual remuneration and performance review of Council's Chief Executive Officer.	Cr Clarke Cr Funder Cr Stone	Cr Barbour Cr Clarke Cr Funder
Public Transport Advocacy Campaign Steering Committee	To guide a community campaign in opposition to the State Government's proposed east-west road link and advocate for sus-	Cr Fristacky Cr Jolly Cr Clarke	Cr Clarke Cr Fristacky Cr Jolly

	tainable transport solutions like a new rail link from Doncaster.		
Urban Agriculture Advisory Committee	To advise Council on the creation, management and promotion of community gardens and associated support networks.	Cr Gaylard	Cr Barbour Cr Gaylard
Yarra Committee For Women	To provide opportunities for women to enhance leadership skills, overcome gender barriers and build business and community networks.	Cr Clarke	Cr Barbour
Yarra Energy Foundation	To devise and implement strategies, programs and partnerships in pursuit of a carbon neutral municipality.	Cr FunderCr Gaylard	Cr FunderCr Gaylard
Yarra Sustainability Awards Panel	To assess nominations for awards to celebrate and promote innovative community responses to environmental challenges.	Cr BarbourCr ClarkeCr FristackyCr GaylardCr Stone	Cr BarbourCr FristackyCr GaylardCr SmedleyCr Stone

\$529,230

Provided in annual grants.

\$85,475

Provided in subsidies to groups using Yarra town halls.

\$690,040

Provided in community partnership grants.

Councillor representation on external groups

Council is an active participant in a variety of external groups. These bodies address specific issues and often involve working closely with other local governments. Contributing to these forums allows Council to ensure that its community's unique interests are represented, even as it pursues holistic outcomes in partnership with other stakeholders.

External Memberships 2011–12

Group	Purpose of the group	Jul–Dec 2011 Councillor Delegate/s	Jan–Jun 2012 Councillor Delegate/s
Collingwood Children's Farm Management Committee	To oversee the operation of the Collingwood Children's Farm, protect its interests and plan for its ongoing success.	Cr Stone Cr Barbour (sub)	Cr StoneCr Jolly (sub)
Inner Melbourne Action Plan Implementation Committee	To respond to challenges associated with transport planning, residential growth and business development in the inner city region.	Cr Clarke	Cr Barbour
Mayors For Peace	To highlight the impacts of nuclear war and advocate for the total abolition of nuclear	Cr Clarke	Cr Barbour

	weapons.		
Metropolitan(Local Government)Waste Management Forum	To facilitate the implementation of environmental initiatives such as waste reduction and recycling across Metropolitan Melbourne.	Cr ClarkeCr Stone (sub)	Cr BarbourCr Clarke (sub)
Metropolitan Transport Forum	To facilitate discussion on transport issues and develop recommendations for socially and environmentally responsible initiatives.	Cr FristackyCr Clarke (sub)	Cr Clarke
Municipal Association of Victoria	To advocate on behalf of the local government sector and provide its member councils with support and advice.	Cr Clarke	Cr Barbour
Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action	To collaborate with local governments, businesses and communities to develop a co-ordinated response to climate change.	Cr Stone	Cr Stone
Road Safety Action Group Inner Melbourne	To generate and monitor initiatives promoting safe road use by motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.	Cr Fristacky	Cr Fristacky
Victorian Local Governance Association	To provide leadership and advice to its member councils and promote democratic governance principles.	Cr FristackyCr Barbour (sub)	Cr FristackyCr Barbour (sub)

9

Number of external groups that Councillors represented the City of Yarra on.

19

Number of Advisory Committees and Working Parties

Audit Committee

Good governance relies on continuous and comprehensive accountability. Council's Audit Committee comprises three independent experts and two Councillors. The committee closely monitors Council's activities and provides detailed advice in support of sound financial management and ongoing legislative compliance, as well as the development and maintenance of internal controls.

During 2011–12, the Committee met on five occasions and addressed a range of issues including:

- Risk Management and Legal Compliance.
- Disaster Recovery Planning.
- Fraud and Corruption Control.
- Contract Management.
- Corporate Planning.
- Local Laws Enforcement.
- Environmental Objectives and the Yarra Energy Foundation.
- Planning and Construction Management Enforcement.
- Building Maintenance – Essential Safety Measures.
- 2010–11 Audited Financial Accounts and Performance Statement.
- Quarterly Financial Management Reports.

Risk Management Review Panel

Representatives of Council's Executive Team and Risk Management Unit participate in monthly Risk Management Review Panel

meetings. The panel identifies, assesses, mitigates and continuously reviews Council's exposure to financial, strategic and operational risks. It also promotes the creation and upkeep of policies and procedures designed to ensure that Council operates in a safe and ethical manner. During 2011–12, the Panel tackled a range of important issues, including:

- Improvements in compliance with Essential Safety Measures for all Council buildings.
- Extension of the 'Your Call' external disclosure service for anonymous reporting on fraud and corruption.
- Review of the closed circuit television security system (CCTV) for Council buildings and Council's dial before you dig response processes.
- Installation of defibrillator units in town halls.
- Dangerous or restricted dogs legislation and the proposed OH&S National Harmonisation laws.
- Review of operational risk registers for several branches across Council, including Community Planning and Advocacy, Cultural and Library Services, Building and Property, Sustainable Asset Management, Leisure Services, and Family, Youth and Children's Services.

Asset Management System

Significant enhancements to the Asset Management System (AMS) software were delivered in 2011–12 which improved its capabilities. The roll-out of these enhancements to asset maintenance teams commenced during 2011–12, including introduction of the AMS for managing Open Space asset maintenance activities. Also successfully introduced during 2011–12 was the use of mobile computing technology in the field, improving service efficiency and data accuracy. An integration of the AMS and the Customer Request Management (CRM) systems was carried out during 2011–12 to allow for the automatic creation of maintenance work orders from customer requests, further streamlining service delivery. Roll-out of the new system capabilities, mobile technology and the CRM integration to both existing and new user teams is expected to occur during 2012–13.

Whistleblowers

Council employees can report unethical practices within the organisation without fear of repercussions. Close adherence to the Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 is a fundamental component of Council's ongoing commitment to operate in an open and accountable fashion.

Whistleblower Records 2011–12

Whistleblower Protection Activity	Number
The number and type of disclosures made to Council during the year.	1
The number of disclosures referred during the year by Council to the Ombudsman for determination as to whether they were public interest disclosures.	1
The number and type of disclosed matters referred to Council during the year by the Ombudsman.	0
The number and type of disclosed matters referred during the year by Council to the Ombudsman to investigate.	0
The number and type of investigations of disclosed matters taken over by the Ombudsman from Council during the year.	0
The number of requests made under Section 74 of the Whistleblowers Protection Act (WPA) during the year to the Ombudsman to investigate disclosed matters.	0
The number and type of disclosed matters that Council has declined to investigate during the year.	0
The number and type of disclosed matters that were substantiated on investigation and the action taken on completion of the investigation.	0
Any recommendations of the Ombudsman under the WPA that relate to Council.	0

Freedom of Information (Fol)

Council is committed to operating in a transparent and accountable manner pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 1982. The Act provides for a 45 day turnaround for Council to respond to Fol applications. Council took an average of 14 days to provide applicants with the material to which they were entitled. This was achieved despite a significant increase in the number of Fol requests for Council documents (71 in 2011–12 compared with 51 in 2010–11).

Public Register

A range of information is available for public inspection at Richmond Town Hall pursuant to the Local Government Act 1989 and Local Government (General) Regulations 2004.

This includes the following information:

- Assemblies of Councillors.
- Statement of Financial Performance, Financial Position and Notes to the Financial Report.
- Councillors' allowances.
- Senior officers' salaries.
- Interstate and overseas travel.
- Officers' interests.
- Councillors' interests.
- Agendas and minutes for Council meetings.
- Special committees minutes and agendas.
- Defunct special committees minutes and agendas.
- Delegations.
- Public submissions.
- Leases.
- Authorised officers.
- Donations and grants.
- Memberships.
- Non-competitive contracts.

Impartiality

Strict guidelines, including formal codes of conduct, have been developed to ensure that Councillors and staff members declare actual or perceived conflicts of interest and exclude themselves where appropriate. Such processes include (but are not limited to) planning applications, tender evaluations and grant assessments. Councillors and senior staff also routinely declare ownership of shares and property, as well as the receipt of gifts and hospitality.

Privacy Plan

Victorians are protected from unlawful publication and/or distribution of their personal details and health information by Federal and State legislation. Council maintains a detailed Privacy Plan supported by an Information Privacy policy to ensure that it is organised and judicious in its treatment of sensitive information.

The Privacy Plan can be viewed on Council's website at www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Your-Council/Governance/Privacy-Policy/
Council's Privacy Officer Ivan Gilbert can be contacted on 9205 5110.

Local Laws

Council has adopted a number of Local Laws pursuant to the Local Government Act 1989. Designed to safeguard community amenity and regulate Council operations, these local laws are available for inspection on Council's website at www.yarracity.vic.gov.au

Current Local Laws

Local Law	Purpose
Meeting Procedures Local Law No. 1 of 2011	To determine the structure and conduct of formal Council Meetings and the use of Council's common seal.
Roads and Council Land Local Law No. 2 of 2012	To govern a range of matters including traffic and parking hazards, responsible pet ownership, damage to Council assets and fair use of public space.
Environment Local Law No. 3 of 2012	To address compliance issues related to building works, parks and gardens, certain commercial activities, public behaviour and more.
Consumption of Liquor in Public Places Local Law No. 8 of 2009	To discourage alcohol related violence and self harm by regulating the hours in which alcohol may be consumed in the majority of public places.
Anti Slavery and Sexual Servitude Local Law No. 14	This Local Law has not been applied due to the in-

of 2009 (inactive)

roduction of superior legislation in the form of a new
Section 60A of the Sex Work Act 1994.

Our people

Innovate and inspire

SINCE 2009, COUNCIL HAS CELEBRATED INNOVATIVE AND INSPIRING IDEAS FOR PRE-SERVING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT THROUGH THE YARRA SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS.

City Of Yarra Organisational Structure

As at 30 June 2012

Executive Management Team

Council's Executive Management Team comprises a Chief Executive Officer, four Directors and three Executive Managers. They, along with more than 900 staff, are responsible for implementing the actions in the Council Plan and delivering services and programs across Yarra.

Ivan Gilbert (Acting)

Chief Executive Officer

(Note: Vijaya Vaidyanath started as Chief Executive Officer of the City of Yarra on 2 July 2012 replacing Dr Andi Diamond who resigned after four years to take up the position of Chief Executive Officer at the City of Monash. Executive Manager of Governance Ivan Gilbert acted in the position between April and June 2012 prior to Ms Vaidyanath commencing.)

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the implementation of Council policies, providing strategic advice to Council, staffing and the day to day management of operations.

Justin Hanrahan (Acting)

Director Infrastructure Services

(Note: Guy Wilson-Browne started in this role on 6 August 2012. Justin Hanrahan acted in the position from April to August 2012.)

The Infrastructure Services Division is responsible for waste and recycling collection, upgrades of local roads, drains and footpaths, maintenance of parks, gardens and sports grounds, and managing Council's annual capital works program to improve local assets.

Jack Crawford

Director Corporate and Financial Services

The Corporate and Financial Services Division is responsible for managing Council's financial performance, corporate business processes and information systems. It also provides strategic procurement and risk management support to the organisation. Services include finance, information services, risk management and insurance, and contracts and procurement.

Craig Kenny

Director Community Programs

The Community Programs Division promotes and enhances community wellbeing through funding programs, service provision and community partnerships. Program areas include aged and disability services, leisure facilities, cultural and library services, community planning and advocacy, family, youth and children's services and corporate planning.

Bruce Phillips

Director City Development

The City Development Division is responsible for the protection, enhancement, management and development of the City's economy and social and physical environment. The services provided by the Division relate to building services, economic development, environmental management, environmental advocacy, local laws and animal management, parking services, planning enforcement, public health, statutory planning, strategic planning, strategic transport, urban design and implementation of the Inner Melbourne Action Plan.

Joanne Mulcahy

Executive Manager Communications & Customer Service

Communications and Customer Service is responsible for providing residents and visitors with information about Council services and decisions, as well as responding to public enquiries and requests for service. Key areas of responsibility are communications (media relations, publications, online communications and civic events) and customer services (Access Yarra call centre and customer service centres).

Joanne Mulcahy (Acting)

Executive Manager Governance

(Note: Joanne Mulcahy acted in this role from April to July 2012 while Ivan Gilbert was acting Chief Executive Officer. Mr Gilbert returned as Executive Manager Governance in early July 2012.)

Governance provides overall governance support to the organisation. Services include Office of the Mayor and Councillors, and council business papers.

Frank Rog

Executive Manager Human Resources

Human Resources is responsible for ensuring the staff and culture of the City of Yarra is aligned with the organisation's vision and values so Strategic Objectives can be achieved. Human Resources is responsible for industrial relations, learning and development, occupational health, safety and staff wellbeing, organisa-

Our values

Council is guided by the following values and agreed behaviours. These values underpin efforts to deliver the Council Plan and build a service culture based on positive relationships among staff and with the community:

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Teamwork
- Respect
- Innovation

During 2011–12, these values have been further integrated into Human Resources strategies and initiatives, including Staff Performance Development Reviews and team workshops relating to organisational culture and customer responsiveness.

Staff profile

As at 30 June 2012, Council employed 915 people, comprising 440 full time, 231 part time, and 243 casual employees.

Employees Full Time Equivalent					
Division	Full Time	Part Time	Casual	WorkCover	Total
City Development	116.97	16.86	11.30		145.13
Community Programs	152.98	105.21	44.68		302.87
Corp. & Financial Services	47.75	5.18			52.93
Executive	33.97	7.88	1.45		43.30
Infrastructure Services	85.98	3.61	2.41		92
WorkCover				0.03	0.03
Total	437.64	138.74	59.84	0.03	636.25
Number of Employees					
Division	Full Time	Part Time	Casual	WorkCover	Total
City Development	118.00	27.00	52.00		197.00
Community Programs	154.00	178.00	183.00		515.00
Corp. & Financial Services	48.00	8.00			56.00
Executive	34.00	11.00	5.00		50.00
Infrastructure Services	86.00	7.00	3.00		96.00
WorkCover				1.00	1.00
Total	440.00	231.00	243.00	1.00	915.00

440

FULL TIME EMPLOYEES AS AT 30 JUNE 2012

Equal opportunity

Council has a strong commitment to Equal Opportunity (EO) which is incorporated into all Council activities. EO principles are part of our recruitment and selection processes, general employment issues, induction and training, health and safety, grievance pro-

cesses, and dispute resolutions. For the purpose of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act 1989, the Staff Consultative Committee acts as the Equal Employment Consultative Committee for the development and implementation of the Equal Opportunity Program.

We have 12 Equal Employment Opportunity Contact Officers (EEOs) on staff and all have participated in training in accordance with the Equal Opportunity Act. EEO Officers are located across seven sites and all receive EEO training based upon Council's updated EEO guidelines.

The organisation's Enterprise Agreement 2010–13 committed to establish "Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Programs" at Council. To meet this commitment, a Gender Equity Committee was formed to oversee the implementation of the Yarra Gender Equity Strategy.

The objectives of this strategy are:

- To improve the gender balance by increasing the number of women in senior decision making roles and in non-traditional women's roles across the organisation.
- In collaboration with the Yarra Cultural Change program, to develop a culture which embraces gender equality, and provides an environment where every person can fully contribute, where work/life needs are valued, and where women's and men's career aspirations are supported.
- To be recognised as an employer of choice for women as measured against the Employer of Choice for Women (EOCFW) criteria, as set out by the Equal Opportunity for Women Agency (EOWA).

One of the key areas where Council addressed an internal review of EO implementation in 2011–12 was to pursue options to upgrade the Collingwood Town Hall to make it a safe and accessible workplace. This started in 2009–10 with the installation of an upgraded air conditioning plant, and continued in 2010–11 with the commencement of the Collingwood Town Hall Accommodation project. The primary objective of this project is to upgrade and refurbish the Collingwood Town Hall offices to meet modern standards, and to provide a fully accessible building and modern reception for the community and for Council business operations. The Collingwood Town Hall redevelopment project reached a major milestone on 5 June 2012 when Council formally approved the project. Construction is due to commence in August 2012 and plans are progressing to settle staff into temporary office accommodation at Smith Street, Fitzroy.

Employee relations

Council has continued to implement initiatives and entitlement provisions and flexibilities introduced by the City of Yarra Enterprise Agreement 2010–13. In 2011, Council introduced a dedicated Employee Relations function. This has helped improve internal customer service standards by providing greater consistency of advice and more efficient progress on Employee Relations matters.

Workplace accidents and incidents

There were 173 workplace accidents reported in 2011–12 which increased from the 138 reported in 2010–11. Reporting enables workplace hazards to be addressed and also raises awareness of health and safety for all staff. The percentage of incidents being investigated for cause and remedy remained constant indicating there is room for improvement.

Worker's Compensation claims significantly increased from 11 accepted claims in 2010–11 to 25 in 2011–12. This also meant the number of days lost to workplace injuries increased from 175 in 2010–11 to 920 in 2011–12. Despite these statistics, Council managed successful return to work programs for 21 injured staff members during the financial year, resulting in a lower number of people off work due to injury moving into the new financial year.

Workplace safety

Council maintains a proactive approach to Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) in a bid to prevent injuries and ensure a safe and healthy workplace.

During 2011–12 Council:

- Continued accreditation for SafetyMAP at Yarra Road Services.
- Maintained accreditation for ISO9001:2000, Quality Management Systems at Yarra Leisure Services.
- Continued statutory training in relevant OH&S areas, running courses for OH&S Representatives plus courses in First Aid, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation, and Manual Handling.
- Ran successful emergency evacuation exercises at all three town halls with fully trained and equipped Emergency Wardens.
- The new Chief Executive has made Occupational Health and Safety an organisational priority for 2012–13.

Strategic Objective Making Yarra More Liveable

Introduction

Council will work to improve the services that affect the liveability of Yarra. Town planning, roads and transport as well as waste management all impact on our local amenity. Continued construction and development, as well as sustained population growth place significant pressure on Yarra's liveability.

Services covered in this Strategic Objective

- Sustainable Transport
- Parking Services
- Community Infrastructure
- Strategic and Economic Planning
- Statutory Planning
- Environmental Services
- Building and Amenity

Interesting facts about these services for 2011–12

Community Infrastructure

- \$1.6 million was dedicated to road pavement reconstruction and repairs.
- \$2.27 million was spent on maintaining Yarra's 491 kilometres of footpaths.
- \$1.1 million went towards repairing Council laneways.

Sustainable Transport & Environment

- 23% of Yarra residents used public transport to get to work.
- More than 12% of Yarra residents walked to work.
- More than 6% of Yarra residents cycled to work.

Source: 2006 Census figures (note the 2011 Census travel to work data was not available at time of publication).

Traffic Works

- \$265,300 was spent on traffic management measures.
- \$250,950 went to planning and implementing Local Area Traffic Management Schemes (LATMs).

Statutory Planning

- Council determined 1443 planning applications and amendments (1113 applications and 330 amendments).

Building and Amenity

- 2783 inspections were conducted on 1386 food premises under the Food Act.
- 369 inspections were conducted on 279 premises under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act (formerly the Health Act).
- 4174 dogs and 2194 cats were registered in Yarra in 2011–12.

Strategies

The following Strategies will be implemented to achieve this Strategic Objective:

- Ensure appropriate land use planning.
- Advocate for public transport improvements.
- Increase bicycle use through improved access and infrastructure for bicycles and pedestrians.
- Promote improved community amenity and liveability in the context of the late night economy and other contested factors.
- Ensure access to, and improve, public space, activity centres and neighbourhood centres.

2009–13 Council Plan Initiatives, Actions and Status

Initiative	Actions to achieve this initiative in 2011–12
Streamline planning applications	Targets were introduced for Fast Track and Simple applications and for Average and Complex applications. These targets were reviewed after three months. Applications over 100 days are now monitored on a fortnightly basis. The last review of this for the 2011–12 year was completed on 26 June, 2012. Of the 633 current applications, 51 applications were over 100 days, equat-

	<p>ing to 8% of applications. This result compared with 48 of 606 applications being over 100 days in 2010–11. This will continue to be monitored fortnightly with the aim of improving.</p> <p>New marketing strategies were developed to encourage greater participation in the Sustainable Design Assessment in the Planning Process (SDAPP) program, including a series of fact sheets which were released late in the financial year.</p> <p>Status: 100% complete</p>
<p>Implement structure plans, urban design frameworks and the Open Space Strategy</p>	<p>The draft Swan Street Structure Plan (SSSP) was exhibited and submissions were considered.</p> <p>Status: 50% complete. Council resolved to defer a decision on the SSSP pending further discussion and consultation, and a meeting with the Minister for Planning.</p>
<p>Clear communication of Local Laws dealing with amenity issues</p>	<p>A school education program has been developed and approved. Council has contacted schools to schedule presentations.</p> <p>Early in 2011–12, all Local Laws and animal management officers were issued with iPhones to assist with communication and safety in the field. Animal management officers also received laptops and printers to assist with interviews and investigations in the field.</p> <p>Local Laws fact sheets have been produced and existing ones updated. These are available on Council's website in addition to Local Laws frequently asked questions.</p> <p>Status: 99% complete. The first school education programs were not expected to start until 2012–13.</p>
<p>Advocate to State and Commonwealth governments on public transport</p>	<p>Yarra is leading a major advocacy campaign supporting State and Federal funding and construction of the long awaited Doncaster Rail and opposing the East-West Tollroad that has been proposed by the State Government to connect the Eastern Freeway to the western suburbs. Council has participated in monthly meetings of a Local Government Group involving representatives from six Melbourne Councils with an interest in the Doncaster Rail Study during 2011–12. Officers also attended expert and community workshops concerning route option selection and successfully advocated for a community workshop to be held at Richmond Town Hall in March 2012. Council has also established a Public Transport Advocacy Community Committee to champion its campaign.</p> <p>Council continues to strongly advocate for an improved bus service along Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade. In May 2012, the Department of Transport (DoT) and VicRoads representatives advised Council that a report into proposed changes to bus lanes on Hoddle Street and Victoria Parade had not been released for distribution. Discussions between Council officers and representatives from DoT and VicRoads on suitable locations for peak hour bus lanes are continuing.</p> <p>Council supported improvements to tram stops in Bridge Road to allow better access for all community members. VicRoads lodged planning permits for proposed stops, and requested that Council permanently obstruct a lane at 101–107 Bridge Road to facilitate safety at the stop next to the Epworth Hospital. Council officers completed the statutory process required under the Local Government Act, including the necessary consultation.</p> <p>Council has been working with VicRoads on opportunities to achieve improved tram reliability and frequency on routes within Yarra. For example, discussions have occurred with VicRoads concerning potential and current improvements to trams along Nicholson Street (route 96).</p> <p>Status: 82% complete (not complete due to the State Government's decision to shift its study focus to Victoria Street).</p>

<p>Produce and implement a Parking Management Strategy</p>	<p>Yarra has a Parking Management Strategy to assist Council to take a more proactive and strategic approach to managing parking across the municipality.</p>
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	<p>Status: Not started. The review of the parking permit scheme and the development of guidelines for parking rates in new developments were deferred until 2012–13.</p>
<p>Implement further traffic calming measures through Local Area Traffic Management Studies (LATMS)</p>	<p>Key activities undertaken by Council in Local Area Traffic Management Studies (LATMS), identifying traffic calming measures and safety improvements this year were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of works on LATMS 5 (West Clifton Hill) and LATMS 14 (North Richmond). Commencement of planning and consultation on LATMS 7/8 (Alphington) and 18 (Coppin). <p>Status: 100% complete.</p>
<p>Review and implement the Waste Management Strategy</p>	<p>Year Two actions from the Waste Management Plan were implemented in 2011–12. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing the Waste Savers behavioural in-home program targeting waste avoidance, sustainable purchases and best practice waste management techniques for up to 150 households. A pilot project to recycle food waste was delivered at the Collingwood Housing Estate in partnership with Cultivating Community. The feasibility of changing Yarra owned and managed centres from disposable to cloth nappies was researched. A New Initiative Bid has been developed to seek funding for this project. Through the Public Place Recycling program, 22 parks and 15 sports grounds are now equipped with recycling bins. This program has also involved working with the sporting clubs to help them manage their waste better. The Compost Crew was delivered to 100 residents around the Collingwood Children’s Farm. A grant was received to expand the program to 1000 residents in 2012–13. <p>Status: 100% complete.</p>
<p>Develop and implement a Bicycle Strategy</p>	<p>Council continued implementation of its Bicycle Strategy 2010–15. Key projects in 2011–12 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and construction of improved bike lanes on Elizabeth Street, between Hoddle and Lennox Streets, in Richmond. Creation of concept designs for a Wellington Street Bike Route (Stage A) between Victoria Parade and Johnston Street, Collingwood. <p>Status: 83% Not completed as the risk assessment and road safety audit of the Wellington Street design have been deferred pending Council’s decision whether or not to progress to a more detailed design.</p>
<p>Review the amount of road pavement in Yarra that can be made available for other uses, with a view to increase open space, porous surfaces and bike paths</p>	<p>A June 2011 report identified opportunities to convert paved spaces to green spaces and guided site selection for tree planting and food production across Yarra. Some actions identified will be led by Council, while others will be coordinated for community involvement and leadership with the support of an Urban Agriculture Facilitator. The Urban Agriculture Facilitator has been appointed and has been working with applicants on community garden initiatives. The first community planter box was</p>

	installed in Clifton Hill in March 2012. Status: 100% complete.
Complete a Heritage Review and seek to incorporate these controls in the Planning Scheme	The three year Heritage Gaps study will review existing heritage precincts in Richmond and southern parts of Fitzroy, as well as investigate properties identified as being of potential heritage significance in central Richmond. Council began preparing an amendment to the Yarra Planning Scheme to implement recommendations of the study. The amendment was on public exhibition until July 2012. A report summarising submissions will be prepared for Council with a recommendation to appoint a panel. Status: 100% complete.

Other Highlights and Actions in 2011–12

Council undertakes a range of other actions on behalf of the community that may not necessarily be listed in the Council Plan. Here are some examples:

Off-road shared pathways upgrade

Council completed the construction of two off-road shared pathways in 2011–12. The works included:

- An upgrade of the Main Yarra Trail between St Heliers Street and Dights Falls in Abbotsford. The first stage of works, consisting of a retaining wall and path widening, has been completed.
- An upgrade of the Linear Reserve Trail, between Lygon and Nicholson streets, and Park Street and Edinburgh Gardens. The section between Park Street and Edinburgh Gardens was funded through a Federal Government program.

Status: 100% complete

Richmond–Kew Transport Study

This study aims to understand the transport issues facing Richmond, particularly the area identified as Victoria Street East Precinct where it is likely some 3000 apartments will be built within the next few years. Council is advocating for lead agencies to conduct a transport study to determine the likely impacts and what options can be pursued to optimise integrated transport outcomes. Despite its supportive comments, VicRoads, did not provide funds for a study in 2011–12. Instead, Council officers attended three workshops coordinated by VicRoads which did not reach a solution. Subsequently, VicRoads and Council officers have met to identify a new approach to help progress the issue.

Status: 87% complete.

The appointment, in May 2012, of the new VicRoads North-West Metro Regional Manager brings a new opportunity to revisit the study.

Abbotsford Convent Precinct Traffic and Parking Plan

No substantive changes have been made to traffic and parking arrangements in this precinct in 2011–12. Proposed road closures at the east end of Abbotsford Street and on Yarra Street (near Clarke Street) were abandoned in October 2011 following community consultation. In January 2012, Council formed an Advisory Group to develop new actions.

The group met three times in February and March 2012. A report on the group's recommendations for improving traffic and parking in the area was presented to Council in April 2012 and a further report on possible implementation of those works was presented for consideration in June 2012. This report was subsequently deferred by Council until July. If approved, some of works outlined in the report will commence in the 2012–13 financial year.

Status: 80% complete.

The report presented to Council in June was deferred until July.

3000

apartments likely to be built within the next few years

Housing Strategy 2010–13

This strategy provides a framework for the planning and management of housing growth and change across the municipality. The following priority areas were scoped and project plans prepared for commencement in early 2012:

- Strategic Redevelopment Sites – developing key characteristics for identification and selection.
- Development of a framework and methodology for data collection to monitor housing growth.
- Review of Clause 22.05: Interface Uses Local Planning Policy in response to emerging interface issues.

Status: 100% complete

Channel Nine Site redevelopment

Council considered Amendment C104 to the Yarra Planning Scheme and a draft Development Plan for the Channel Nine site redevelopment in December 2011. Both were adopted subject to some changes and then submitted to the Minister for approval. The Minister for Planning approved Amendment C104 in April 2012 (See Page 21 for more information).

Status: 100% complete

Review of Local Laws No. 2 and No. 3

Council reviewed the Roads and Council Land Local Law No. 2 and the Environment Local Law No 3. Both Local Laws contained a 10 year sunset clause recommending them for review, a requirement of the Local Government Act. A report was presented to Council on 3 July 2012 to consider submissions received on drafts of each Local Law. The report recommended adoption of both Local Laws.

Status: 100% complete

Urban Design Strategy

Yarra's Urban Design Strategy was adopted by Council in June 2011. The purpose of the Strategy is to promote good design outcomes that contribute to a coherent and appealing urban environment and encourage desired continuity, growth and change. In 2011–12, the Urban Design Strategy Implementation Plan was prepared in consultation with other Council branches to seek agreement on milestones and timeframes for the strategy.

Status: 100% complete

Strategic Indicators

Council will measure its success in meeting this Strategic Objective against the five Strategic Indicators below that are listed in the Council Plan 2009–13. Under each indicator is an explanation on whether the indicator has been met in 2011–12 or is on track to be met by 2013 when this Plan ends. Further explanation is provided where required.

1 Sustained decrease in the number of amenity complaints to Council (both new and repeat complaints).

Result: Council experienced a small decrease in total amenity complaints of 3% in 2011–12, reversing the trend of increases in this area over the previous two financial years. However, the total number of complaints received remained higher than the 2009–10 baseline. The total number of complaints comprise 3904 reactive requests and 1450 proactive responses to issues by officers. Reactive amenity requests in 2011–12 are as follows: Animals (661), Local Laws (1822), Noise (834), Planning Enforcement (579), and Public Behaviour (8).

2 Significantly rejuvenate at least four key public places (urban spaces) across Yarra.

Result: This indicator was met. Council completed new works at the intersection of Webb and Smith streets in Collingwood in this financial year. This was the fourth urban space to be rejuvenated since 2009–10, the period of the Council Plan. The others were Balmain Street in Cremorne, and Stanley and Otter streets in Collingwood.

3 Reduction in 'failure to determine' planning appeals to 10% or below by 2011.

Result: This indicator was met. The percentage of appeals by applicants against Council's failure to determine their applications within 60 days was 10% in 2011–12. This was a 2% reduction from the previous year.

4 Achievement of at least five separated on-road bike routes and five major off-road bike route upgrades by 2013.

Result: Off-road bicycle route upgrades were completed in 2011–12 on the Edinburgh Gardens north-south path and the Linear Reserve spur track between Park Street and Alfred Crescent. On-road bicycle route updates involved Stages A and C of the Clifton Hill–Abbotsford Route (the sections not travelling under the freeway) and Elizabeth Street, between Church Street and Hoddle Street. A total of nine on-road and off-road bicycle routes have been completed since 2009–10, the period of the Council Plan.

5 Complete at least three Structure Plans.

Result: This indicator was not met. It was anticipated that the Swan Street Structure Plan would be completed in 2011–12. Following consideration of submissions on the draft plan, Council resolved to defer adoption of the Plan pending further discussions and consultation and a meeting with the Minister for Planning. Since the beginning of the Council Plan, one Structure Plan – the Victoria Street Structure Plan – has been completed.

Strategic Objective Ensuring a Sustainable Yarra

Introduction

Council is committed to reducing Yarra's eco-footprint and working to restore our local environment. Addressing climate change, reducing our use of limited resources such as energy and water, as well as minimising our waste and pollution, are important Council priorities. Increasing and improving local open space and biodiversity are also critical.

Services covered in this Strategic Objective

Environmental Management

Open Space

Interesting Environmental Facts in 2011–12

- The Yarra River, and Merri and Darebin Creeks form three of Yarra's boundaries to the south, east and north. Merri Creek and the Yarra River have adjoining open space reserves which are highly valued for their recreation and conservation values.
- Council maintains 122 parks, 39 playgrounds and 19 sporting fields.
- Council manages 235 hectares of open space.
- 26,295 plants were planted and established in bush land and habitat sites and 10,236 new plants were planted in parks and gardens across Yarra.
- About 4000 plants were planted in garden beds at 100 traffic treatments across Yarra to make them look more attractive.
- 920 street trees were planted including 278 new trees.

Strategies

The following Strategies will be implemented to achieve this Strategic Objective:

- Ensure access to a high quality 'green' open space network aiming for fully accessible features.
- Reduce Yarra's negative environmental impacts, with a focus on maximising early improvements.
- Encourage local food production and community gardens.
- Enhance Yarra's environmental performance.
- Promote Yarra as a leader in environmental programs including responding to climate change and engaging residents in programs through the neighbourhood house network.
- Work to increase the proportion of planning applications that incorporate Environmentally Sustainable Design and Accessibility Design principles.

920

STREET TREES PLANTED IN 2011–12

235

HECTARES OF OPEN SPACE MANAGED BY COUNCIL

Initiative	Actions to achieve this initiative in 2011–12
Introduce five new parks by 2013	<p>Detailed design work for the Oxford Street Park in Collingwood was completed in October 2011.</p> <p>The Richmond Terrace/Docker Street park in Richmond was endorsed by Council in March 2012 to go to detailed design. Community feedback on a proposed road closure required to make way for the park was expected to be sought in August 2012.</p> <p>A draft concept plan for the Butler/Lennox Street park in North Richmond was endorsed by Council in June 2012 for community consultation. This was to occur in July followed by the development of a revised final concept plan.</p> <p>Status: 46% The Oxford Street project was not put out to tender due to access negotiations with an adjoining property owner that delayed Council's formal application to discontinue a section of Oxford Street to make way for the park.</p>
Build Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) projects including wetlands, raingardens, street tree pits and tanks, and provide support for residents to introduce their own water tanks and grey water systems	<p>A review of the Water Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines was completed but had not been considered by Council before 30 June.</p> <p>A raingarden was completed at Myrtle Street and Gordon Street, Clifton Hill. Work started on raingardens at the Rowe Street/Rushall Crescent intersection in North Fitzroy (two sites), the intersection of Abbotsford and Nicholson streets in Abbotsford (two sites), and in Bendigo Street, Richmond in July 2012.</p> <p>Status: 95% All work was completed on the guidelines but was not considered by Council. Construction of the raingarden in Bendigo Street was deferred until winter.</p>
Implement the other actions from, and reach the targets set, in the Environment Strategy	<p>A project plan to review the Yarra Environment Strategy (YES) was endorsed by Council in March 2012. The draft strategy is expected to be endorsed by Council in June 2013.</p> <p>Promotion and judging of the 2012 Yarra Sustainability Awards was completed. This year 50 nominations were received, the highest yet. A new category was introduced called Local Heroes. Winners of awards were announced on 16 August 2012.</p> <p>The internal Green Team action plan was developed with input from staff across the organisation, and was signed off by the Executive in December 2011.</p> <p>The Council Environmental Footprint Report for 2010–11 was endorsed by Council in April 2012. More than 90% of the 89 actions for 2010–11 were completed.</p> <p>A review of the Greenhouse Steering Committee's first year of operation was completed. It found there was strong support for the committee.</p> <p>At its September 2011 meeting, Council endorsed the strategy to claim carbon neutrality as an organisation against the National Carbon Offset Standard (NCOS). It also resolved to stop purchasing GreenPower and instead purchase</p>

NCOS accredited offsets for all emissions. Savings from not purchasing GreenPower will be spent on corporate greenhouse reduction actions. Following 30 June 2012, Council will engage an independent auditor to evaluate its energy consumption. This audit will form the basis of Council's application to Low Carbon Australia to receive accreditation as a carbon neutral organisation.

Based on Council choosing to stop purchasing GreenPower and divert savings to Council actions, an additional \$765,000 of capital works projects from the Carbon Neutral Action Plan (CNAP) were delivered in 2011–12. See the Sustainability Report on page 22.

Implementing and monitoring WaterMAPs for sites that use more than 10 megalitres of water per year was a State Government requirement. Although this is no longer required, Council is continuing to report on Yarra's top 10 water users on a monthly basis and these are distributed to the relevant service managers. Smart Meters have been installed to assist with investigation of further opportunities to reduce water use.

Status: 100%

Other Highlights and Actions in 2011–12

Council undertakes a range of other actions on behalf of the community that may not necessarily be listed in the Council Plan. Here are some examples:

Significant Tree Register

Council started developing criteria for the identification of significant trees to be included on a Significant Tree Register as referred to in the Environment Local Law No. 3.

Homewood Consulting was selected to inspect and assess each tree nominated for the register. The project commenced in April 2012, with nominations for significant trees sought from the community in June 2012.

Status: 100% complete

Streetscape Precinct Master Plan review

This plan prioritises streets for planting and nominates preferred species selection. It was due for review in 2011–12. Officers prepared the draft plan for review. The draft plan was to be presented to Council in July for endorsement for public consultation.

Status: 92% – Draft document still to be endorsed by Council for consultation.

Strategic Indicators

Council will measure its success in meeting this Strategic Objective against the seven Strategic Indicators below that are listed in the Council Plan 2009–13. Under each indicator is an explanation on whether the Indicator has been met in 2011–12 or is on track to be met by 2013 when this Plan ends. If further explanation is required it is given.

1 Increase in residents living within 400 metres walking distance to open space

Result: This indicator is measured by the introduction of five new parks being established in Yarra by 2013. Ongoing negotiations about access with a property owner adjoining the proposed park space delayed the tender process for the Oxford Street Park in Collingwood. The tender process was expected to begin in late 2012. Council also endorsed concept plans for a new park at the intersection of Richmond Terrace and Docker Street in Richmond. Officers were preparing detailed designs at 30 June 2012. Despite this Council is still on track to meet this target by 2013. Council has opened four new parks in response to this indicator since 2009–10.

2 40% reduction in potable water consumption in Council operations by 2013 (below 2000–01 baseline)

Result: The target for this indicator has been met with a 55% reduction. Council is still ahead of target to reduce water consumption to 40% by 2013. However, the relaxation of water restrictions has seen a slight increase in overall water use. Regular monitoring of high use sites and options to install alternative irrigation systems are being explored.

3 Council to be carbon neutral by the end of 2012

Result: A plan has been endorsed for reaching Council's target to be carbon neutral by the end of 2012, including setting the emissions boundary. Council has purchased the necessary offsets to cover the organisation's annual emissions in order to claim carbon neutrality for 2011–12. To claim certification, Council's methodology and numbers must first be assessed by an external auditor. Once that assessment has been approved, Council will make an application to the certifying body – Low Carbon Australia – which provides Council with accreditation as a carbon neutral organisation. Council expects to have submitted its application to Low Carbon Australia before the end of 2012.

4 Reduction in Council's energy consumption by 30% below the 2000–01 baseline

Result: By June 2012, Council had reduced greenhouse gas emissions against the base year by 3364 tCO₂ to a total of 13,456 tCO₂. This equated to a reduction of 19.5% (including projected emissions from Collingwood Leisure Centre based on a full year of operations. The aquatic facilities reopened in January 2012 following a redevelopment). Population growth partially contributed to Council not meeting the 30% target due to the increase in energy consumption linked to higher demand on Council services.

5 Increase Yarra's street trees by at least 250 per annum.

Result: This target was exceeded with 920 street trees planted including 278 new trees.

6 Treat storm water runoff to the 10% of Best Practice Performance Objectives for storm water quality improvement as set out in Melbourne Water's 'Water Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines'

Result: By treating storm water through its raingardens, Council is currently capturing an estimated 35,400kg of total suspended solids, which is 5.46% of our target. In accordance with the Water Sensitive Urban Design Policy for Council infrastructure, Council aims to capture a total of 64,800 kilograms of suspended solids by 2020, which is 10% of Best Practice.

7 Implement at least 10 community sustainability initiatives

Result: Council set the target to implement at least 10 community sustainability initiatives by June 2012. A total of 16 initiatives have commenced since 2009–10, exceeding the target. Some of these initiatives included: Yarra Energy Foundation helping Yarra businesses and residents to reduce their carbon emissions; Greenhouse Savers, a pilot greenhouse reduction behaviour-change program; the "Good for baby, good for you, good for the environment" program at all Yarra Maternal and Child Health Centres; new environmental resources at Yarra Libraries; the Sustainable Small Facilities program run to audit, retrofit and educate (users) through Council's smaller community facilities; Yarra Environmental Sustainability Network (YES Network) which aims to increase the capacity of local community agencies to provide collaborative and just responses to environmental issues; Yarra Cloth Nappy Library which allows new parents to try out different modern cloth nappies; Council signed up the municipality to CitySwitch – a national energy management program; Energy saver – it all starts at home program offering renters and home-owners free or low-cost improvements to the energy performance of households; 1000 low-income households had access to a free, yet comprehensive service to improve the energy and water efficiency of their homes; a quarterly electronic newsletter called Environment E-news; a Green Star Business Program which assists businesses in Victoria Street, Collingwood and Fitzroy to reduce litter in the precincts through behaviour change; and Sustainable Neighbourhood Walking Maps.

Strategic Objective Serving Yarra's community

Introduction

Council provides many of the local human services and facilities important to the community's health and wellbeing. This includes ensuring early childhood health, education and development, providing support and opportunities for younger adults, supporting positive ageing, as well as assisting older residents to remain in their homes. Sport and recreation facilities are also important to local wellbeing.

Services covered in this Strategic Objective

- Family and Children's Services
- Aged and Disability Services
- Leisure Services

Interesting facts about these services for 2011–12

Family and Children's Services

- 312 kindergarten places were provided for three and four year olds.
- 534 children used Council's childcare and education programs.
- 1119 babies (0–12 months) were registered with the Yarra Maternal Child Health Service.
- 1600 young people aged 10–25 accessed Council's Youth Programs.
- 259 families received 45,852 hours of after school care.
- 487 families received 46,460 hours of vacation care.
- 398 families accessed Family Support Services

Aged and Disability Services

- 47,000 hours of care were provided for aged residents and/or residents with a disability.
- 23,288 hours of home care were provided
- 4992 hours of respite care were provided.
- 18,668 hours of personal care were provided.

Leisure Services

- Yarra leisure centres had their busiest year ever with more than one million visits.
- Yarra Leisure is a Quality Assured Business maintaining certification in the Quality Management Standard AS/NZS: ISO 9001/2008.
- All facilities achieved Lifesaving Victoria Five Star Platinum Pool Certification.
- Renovations were completed to the fifth and eighth greens at Burnley Golf Course.
- \$350,000 worth of cardio equipment was purchased for the Richmond Recreation Centre.
- A cogeneration plant was commissioned at the Collingwood Leisure Centre.

Strategies

The following Strategies will be implemented to achieve this Strategic Objective:

- Create community hubs including children's services and facilities for parents and children.
- Be a leader in Local Government, ensuring social justice principles are fundamental to our community services.
- Deliver accessible and integrated services to support our community.
- Improve community facilities to support local services and community activity.
- Ensure access to a range of quality recreational and sporting places, spaces and activities.
- Review and improve Council's services to ensure they are cost-effective, accessible and appropriately targeted.
- Encourage social inclusion through understanding and addressing local needs.
- Advocate for, and participate in, affordable housing initiatives.

23,288

Hours of home care were provided.

1119

Babies (0–12 months) were registered with the Yarra Maternal Child Health Service.

Initiative	Actions to achieve this initiative in 2011–12
Complete the planned upgrade of the Collingwood Leisure Centre	This project has been delivered within budget allocations. It was officially opened with a successful Family Fun Day in February 2012. Status: 100%
Deliver affordable housing as part of Council's three year project	The Social and Affordable Housing Strategy which provides direction for Council's ongoing work around social and affordable housing was adopted in December 2011. A draft submission to the Minister for Housing in response to the Minister's review of the future of social housing was presented to Council in July 2012 for endorsement. Status: 100%
Work with State Government and service providers to develop the Atherton Gardens Hub	The Hub will provide a fully integrated suite of services to the local community and is due for completion in 2013. During 2011–12, the HUBCO Board engaged an interim Executive Officer until December 2012. Discussions around the strategic and operational management of the three strategic partners commenced in December 2011, and communication and service transition plans are now under development. Development of the service delivery protocols commenced with Council officers actively contributing to these. Status: 65% Building works have been completed and the Hub development will be handed over to project partners ahead of schedule. There have been some delays in transition planning but the partners are confident that operations will commence in January 2013. An Interim Executive Officer for the Hub has been appointed to work with partner agencies to ensure the project remains on track.
Plan for the development and operation of the Lourdes Children's Centre	This is year two of the development of the hub which will increase the child care available within the municipality by 75 places and provide an integrated suite of family and children's services. In 2011–12, a Design Reference Group (DRG) was established to ensure consultation and engagement with key stakeholders and community representatives. Council endorsed the schematic design for the project in June 2012 with a further progress report scheduled for April 2013. Detailed design and development will now proceed to inform the planning and proposal for construction. Status: 90% Extended consultation and engagement on design and related issues has caused a slight delay in the process.
Commitment to the redevelopment of the North Richmond Community Health Centre which will in-	The redevelopment of North Richmond Community Health Centre is an external project with benefits

<p>clude a new Maternal and Child Health Centre</p>	<p>for residents and Council. The redevelopment cost \$24 million, with Council committing \$1.5 million to the project cost. Stage two of the redevelopment incorporated a new Maternal and Child Health Centre.</p> <p>Status: 92% The centre is expected to open in September 2012.</p>
<p>Work with service providers and the local community to review and update Council strategies including the Municipal Public Health Plan, Municipal Early Years Plan and Youth Strategy</p>	<p>Municipal Public Health Plan: This year Council concentrated its efforts on undertaking consultation on decreasing the harms from smoking. A background paper was prepared, advisory signs about smoking were installed in playgrounds, and consultation and forums were held. Council advocated for a state-wide approach to managing smoking in all fresco dining areas, public buildings and playgrounds.</p> <p>Status: 85% Some actions have been held over until the release of 2011 Census Data.</p> <p>Safer Yarra Plan 2011–14: Key projects this year were the implementation of the new contract for collection of used syringes from collection boxes throughout the city, regular sweeps of parks, and community education and support. The contractor regularly completes spreadsheets on the volume and locations of needle and syringe sweeps and bin collections. This information has been converted into geographic format by the GIS team and is regularly analysed and reported on by the Community Safety Officer.</p> <p>Status: 100%</p> <p>Early Years Strategy 2009–13: A consultation and engagement plan was developed to provide advice and direction on engagement with stakeholders. The Early Years Reference Group was reviewed and recommenced with increased participation and a strong quality agenda. Research has begun on the development of an approach for Yarra regarding the Child Friendly Cities model.</p> <p>Status: 95%</p> <p>The Child Friendly Cities model will progress when the new Coordinator Children’s Services commences in early 2012–13.</p> <p>Youth Services Strategy 2009–13: Key activities have included: researching and identifying of best practice information and referral models to inform the development of new models for implementation by Yarra Youth Services; establishment of a new Yarra Youth Advisory Committee which was considered by the Executive in July 2012; the Yarra Youth Education Commitment was signed to acknowledge the commitment to education and employment as a priority; and more than 20 young people graduated from the Yarra Youth Ambassador Program.</p> <p>Status: 83% A comprehensive review of the Transitional Support Program has delayed the completion of this action.</p>
<p>Council will plant new trees next to all playgrounds for long-term natural shade and construct shade sails where no current shade is provided for playgrounds</p>	<p>The Shade Policy supports the establishment of appropriate shade for Council open spaces and playgrounds. This year a shade implementation plan and a program of shade works was developed in draft form and is awaiting final endorsement. Funding for installation of a shade sail was included in the 2012–13 budget. Shade sails were installed at Annette’s Place (River Street Reserve) and Charles Evans Reserve in Richmond, as well as Holden Byrne Reserve in North Fitzroy during the year.</p> <p>Status: 100%</p>
<p>Gain government and community commitment to the development of an indoor sports facility as part of the overall redevelopment of the gasworks site in North Fitzroy</p>	<p>The development of an Indoor Sports Facility has been a priority project for Council for many years. Recent studies have suggested that the gasworks site in North Fitzroy could be redeveloped to deliver mixed-use and residential development plus the creation of</p>

	<p>a new sub-regional indoor sports facility in a manner that is consistent with the adopted Urban Design Framework. A Project Steering Committee has been formed and has met regularly. The focus has been on developing government relationships and monitoring the potential availability of the preferred former Gasworks site in North Fitzroy.</p> <p>Status: 57% The overall project has stalled due to uncertainty related to future government use of the site.</p>
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Other Highlights and Actions in 2011–12

Council undertakes a range of other actions on behalf of the community that may not necessarily be listed in the Council Plan. Here are some examples:

Victoria Park development

The \$7.2 million redevelopment of Victoria Park in Abbotsford, funded by Council and the Australian Government, was completed in December 2011. The project has transformed the former home of the Collingwood Football Club into a major community recreation space. The major work undertaken in 2011–12 was on the Ryder Stand.

Result: 97% complete.

A small amount of work needs to be done on the Ryder Stand which should be completed in late 2012 or early 2013.

The Municipal Wide Infrastructure Plan

This is a 10-year master plan to guide the progression of neighbourhood based integrated care and education services for families and children. A review of the plan commenced in 2011–12 to update the key variables in the document and to strengthen its accuracy and relevance to existing and emerging planning issues.

Result: 25% complete.

This project was delayed to ensure that the 2011 Census data informed the demographic data from which development assumptions will be drawn.

Supporting social housing residents

Council is committed to continuing to offer high quality services to around 8000 public housing residents in Yarra, to foster their participation in community life and to support and empower these communities through its grants program and skills development training. Council auspices the Collingwood Community Information Centre (CCIC) and is working with State Government partners on a sustainability project for the Centre. Council approved New Initiative funding of \$50,000 to be paid to the Collingwood Community Information Centre in 2011–12. Discussions are planned with the Department of Human Services to look at the future of the CCIC as the current funding agreement ends in June 2013.

Result: 100% complete.

The Smith Street Community Plan

This plan was developed as part of a broader coordination of effort around public behaviour and social issues in Smith Street Fitzroy / Collingwood. It supports the establishment of MAYSAR (Melbourne Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation) as a community cultural centre for the Aboriginal community including the Parkies. Council made a payment of \$50,000 to MAYSAR in 2011–12 – its third year of funding. A report reviewing the Smith Street Community Plan was adopted by Council in February 2012. Progress was noted on the plan's implementation and some of the actions were clarified so as to be specific, measurable and achievable.

Result: 100% complete.

Yarra Gaming Strategy – a Community Wellbeing Approach 2011–2014

This strategy and the Year One Action Plan were adopted by Council in August 2011. Two highly successful Responsible Gambling Awareness Week events were held in May 2012. Both were in partnership with Multicultural Gambler's Help Service, with one focusing on the Vietnamese community and the other on youth.

Result: 100% complete

River of Life: Positive Ageing Strategy 2007–2016

The strategy aims to improve opportunities for older residents to participate in the community and remain active and independent. Key activities this year included: supporting the Yarra Men's Shed initiative through representation on the community reference group and by providing funding to employ a program coordinator; implementing the pilot Companion Animal Program to assist older

residents keep and enjoy pet ownership; engaging with the community to broaden the utilisation and diversity of the Richmond and Collingwood Seniors Community Hubs and planning for the North Fitzroy Community Hub; and supporting two events held as part of the Celebration of Life project.

Result: 100% complete

Review of Annual Grants Program

The review of the 2012 Annual Grants process was completed and recommendations were made for improvements to the process including better engagement of Council staff at the beginning of the process and engaging public high-rise residents through the Housing Estate Panels. These have been incorporated in the Initiation Report: 2013 Annual Grants.

Result: 100% complete

Home and Community Care service improvements

This was the second year of the Home and Community Care (HACC) service improvements program to build the capacity of Council to support older people and people living with a disability to access services or ensure appropriate referral to other support. A key objective this year was the recruitment of an Information and Referral position within Aged and Disability Services to support access to services and other community options for older people and people living with a disability. The officer was appointed in December 2011.

Result: 100% complete

Delivered-meals dispatch centre

In 2010–11, Council introduced a new delivered meals program as part of a partnership of 20 local councils. This year a feasibility study into future dispatch centre options was completed and recommendations will be presented to Executive in August 2012. An assessment of resources has been established and the Aged and Disability Unit is currently working with Infrastructure Services on implications for the existing facility.

Result: 67% complete.

The project was unavoidably delayed in February/March and timelines were adjusted accordingly.

Active Service Model (ASM) – Aged Care

Council will work with local HACC agencies in implementing the ASM by changing practices and processes, increasing community awareness and staff training and program development. This year ASM approaches were promoted within intake, Council publications, through assessment and service provision. Residents were proactively encouraged to participate in the model. ASM activity has continued to focus on activities at Willowview Centre, Collingwood with person-centred care approach continuing to be encouraged among staff and clients.

Result: 100% complete

Home Maintenance Service

Implementation of a new in-house arrangement for the Home Maintenance Service that Council provides as part of its Home and Community Care service was completed this year. This included resourcing, equipment purchasing and system changes right through to advising residents. Positive feedback has been received from service users. The next phase is to revise and tender specialist services to complement the in-house arrangements and complete the Year One performance report.

Result: 88% complete. This action is on track for completion, however, initial reporting has been held over to be included in the Year 1 performance report, scheduled for Council's November meeting cycle.

Strategic Indicators

Council will measure its success in meeting this Strategic Objective against the four Strategic Indicators below that are listed in the Council Plan 2009–13. Under each Indicator is an explanation on whether the Indicator has been met in 2011–12 or is on track to be met by 2013 when this Plan ends. If further explanation is required it is given.

1 Timeliness of delivery of Council's home care, personal care and respite care services for older people and people with a disability: target 95%

Result: This indicator measures the percentage of care service visits that occur at the scheduled time and on the nominated day, based on an audit sample each quarter. Based on the quarterly results, the overall result for 2011–12 was 91% against the target of 95%. Council continues to work with contractors to improve this result while recognising that a range of variables impact on its achievement.

2 Council long day care places occupied by Yarra residents: target 85%

Result: Council did not meet this target in 2011–12 with 80% of long day care places occupied by Yarra residents. The demographic breakdown varied from 90% to 67% across our four long day care settings. The take-up of places is based on the City of

Yarra Priority of Access which gives priority to vulnerable and at risk children, some of who may not live in the municipality. Given this there will always be variations to resident participation year to year.

3 Targets for key age and stage visits as per Department of Education and Early Childhood Development requirements: 12 months 80%, 18 months 88%, 2 years 81% and 3.5 years 77%

Result: Achieved 86% for 12 month visits, exceeding the 80% target.

Achieved 82% for 18 month visits which was short of the 88% target.

Achieved 76.6% for 2 year visits which was short of the 81% target.

Achieved 75.5% for 3.5 years visits which was short of the 77% target.

4 At least 25 rental units available through Council's affordable housing projects: 239 Brunswick Street project and the Affordable Rental Housing Development Fund

Result: This indicator was achieved in 2010–11 when the affordable housing project at 239 Brunswick Street was opened, providing 14 rental units. In addition, Council provided \$600,000 funding over a three-year period to Yarra Community Housing to contribute toward building and managing affordable housing in Yarra. This contributed to an additional 15 affordable housing unit.

Strategic Objective Supporting a Diverse and Dynamic Yarra

Introduction

Council supports Yarra's vibrant and diverse neighbourhood and activity centres through arts and cultural activities and events, libraries and broader economic development, a dynamic mix of galleries, retail and hospitality businesses, cultural events, education, and recreation activities.

Services covered in this Strategic Objective

- Cultural and Library Services
- Strategic and Economic Planning
- Community Planning and Advocacy
- Aged and Disability Services

Interesting facts about these services for 2011–12

Community Planning and Advocacy

- \$1.71 million in grants provided to community groups by Council.
- \$529,230 was provided in Annual Grants.
- \$154,000 was provided in Emerging Issues Grants.
- \$690,040 was provided in Community Partnership Grants.
- \$234,121 was provided in Investing in Community Grants.
- \$17,455 was provided in Small Project Grants.
- \$85,475 was provided in subsidies to groups using Yarra Town Halls.

Cultural and Library Services

- 868,801 items were borrowed from Yarra libraries.
- 49,430 people were members of Yarra libraries.
- 19,492 toddlers and preschoolers attended 412 storytime sessions at Yarra libraries.
- 3739 culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) items were added to the Yarra Libraries collection.
- Yarra Libraries joined Twitter and now has 226 followers.
- Yarra library members placed over 149,000 requests for items.

Economic Development

- 2476 people receive Council's monthly business e-bulletin.
- 920 people attended the BRAINfoodforbusiness training and networking program in 2011–12.

Strategies

The following Strategies will be implemented to achieve this Strategic Objective:

- Enhance local employment activities.
- Support vibrant and diverse neighbourhoods and centres.
- Foster and promote vibrant arts, cultures and communities.
- Contribute to, develop and maintain the local and regional economy.
- Support lifelong learning, including through libraries and Neighbourhood Houses.
- Recognise and celebrate our cultural heritage and diversity.

Initiative	Actions to achieve this initiative in 2011–12
<p>Complete the design and construction of the North Fitzroy Library</p>	<p>The profile of the North Fitzroy Hub is under review following a report to Council in November 2011. Council directed the project team to review the schematic design in response to proposals made by the Design Reference Group. Commencement of the detailed design phase of the project will be deferred until these aspects of the Schematic Design phase are completed.</p> <p>Status: 32% The project was delayed pending further advice from the Design Reference Group.</p>
<p>Review the Arts and Culture Strategy</p>	<p>The Arts and Cultural Plan 2011–15 was adopted by Council in early 2011.</p> <p>The major projects undertaken in 2011–12 included:</p> <p>Partnerships grants: Council appointed a Consultant to develop recommendations on the future multi-year funding program.</p> <p>Live Music Working Group: A report outlining recommendations on a future live music festival in Yarra was completed and will be presented to Council in July 2012.</p> <p>Yarra Talking Arts Forum: Two themes that emerged from these Forums for further exploration were the Gertrude Street Aboriginal Precinct and Creative Spaces in the City of Yarra. In response to this, arts led practice has been used to engage the community on the future of Gertrude Street and a workshop involving internal and external stakeholders was conducted to develop ideas and actions for Spaces in the City of Yarra.</p> <p>Room to Create Program: Council continues to support creative practitioners to develop and present their works in Yarra via a range of initiatives to reduce the burden of increased land value in the municipality. Council also supported a number of community organisations and artists in advice and referral for their creative spaces needs.</p> <p>Art and Heritage acquisition program: Nineteen new artworks were acquired for the Art and Heritage Collection. Six new works were donated into the Collection to the value of \$48,000.</p> <p>Status: 90% The recommendations of the Live Music Working Group were to be reported to Council in July 2012. Council was also expected to consider a report in the first quarter of 2012–13 recommending the establishment of a Room to Create Foundation to support artists.</p>
<p>Review the Aboriginal Partnerships Plan</p>	<p>The Aboriginal Partnerships Plan 2011–14 was adopted by Council in November 2011.</p> <p>A key action of the plan is the development of a Yarra Reconciliation Plan. Work on this began but was put on hold until the appointment and commencement of the Wurundjeri Council CEO, to ensure their endorsement of the Plan. Work was expected to resume in August 2012.</p> <p>In the meantime officers have focused on initiating the Celebrating Aboriginal Culture on Gertrude Street project including running seven walking tours exploring the Aboriginal History of Fitzroy, which were attended by more than 120 people, and the</p>

	<p>creation of Council's first Facebook page to support this consultation.</p> <p>Status: 72% Work on the plan was put on hold until the appointment and commencement of the Wurundjeri Council CEO.</p>
<p>Implement actions from the Economic Development Strategy</p>	<p>A total of 5000 copies of the 2012 BRAINfoodfor-Business events calendar promoting affordable business seminars and events hosted by the City of Yarra in 2012 were distributed.</p> <p>Council entered into partnerships with the Kangan Institute Enterprise Centre (BEC) to provide a free business counselling session, and the Small Business Mentoring Service (SBMS) to offer Yarra residents a range of programs facilitated by mentors with real-life small business experience. Approximately 100 participants attended the business breakfast held in March.</p> <p>In 2011 Destination Melbourne was engaged to develop a model for a local tourism body in Yarra. The model they presented was the formation of a Yarra Visitor Partnership (YVP). This model was presented to key tourism businesses and Council's Business Advisory Group (BAG) and it was agreed that rather than establish an independent body, the BAG would assist Council with the implementation of the Tourism Strategy.</p> <p>The Economic Development Unit participated in the Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP) Student Placement Program with the University of Melbourne involving four post-graduate students completing a four month student placement to investigate and determine the most appropriate methodology for Council to monitor business confidence and identify inhibitors to investment in Yarra, as perceived by the business community. The students drafted a report with recommendations for conducting the 2012 business survey.</p> <p>Status: 92% Business surveys due for implementation in the final quarter of 2011-12 were still being prepared at 30 June 2012.</p>
<p>Promote local activities where people can meet with neighbours such as street parties</p>	<p>Council supported a range of arts projects, events and festivals across the year including the Emerge Festival cultural event, Rock-a-bye Baby Music Session, National Heritage Week, Next Wave Festival, Fairfield Amphitheatre Summer Concert Series, Black Harmony Gathering and Collingwood Harvest Festival.</p> <p>Status: 100%</p>
<p>Review and develop the Disability Access and Inclusion Strategy</p>	<p>Council's Recruitment Policy was reviewed in line with established best practice recruitment policies.</p> <p>Council's website was redesigned and upgraded to ensure it is accessible.</p> <p>Accessible signage was incorporated into the Collingwood Leisure Centre redevelopment.</p> <p>An access map of Fitzroy and Richmond town halls has been developed and a disability access and inclusion guide for event organisers and patrons is now available on Council's website and is included in hirer's information emails.</p>

	<p>All of Council's existing policies have been reviewed for compliance with the relevant provisions of the Disability Act 2006, the Equal Opportunity Act 2007 and the Victorian Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. New policies are checked as they are provided to Governance.</p> <p>The upgrade and re-siting of the remaining seven accessible parking bays in commercial strip shopping areas was completed.</p> <p>Status: 100%</p>
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Other Highlights and Actions in 2011–12

Council undertakes a range of other actions on behalf of the community that may not necessarily be listed in the Council Plan. Here are some examples:

Yarra Libraries Strategic Plan 2008–12

The development of Yarra Libraries Strategic Plan 2013–17 was a major focus in 2011–12 and was informed by the Strategic Plan Issues Paper on Library future directions which was developed during the year with significant input from the community. The draft Yarra Libraries Plan 2013–17 was completed at the end of June and will be presented to Council in August prior to a period for public comment and adoption. The Yarra Libraries Local History Collection Policy and the Yarra Libraries Advisory Committee Terms of Reference were approved by Council in June 2012, and the Resources Acquisitions tender process was expected to be completed for Council's approval in July.

Result: 99% complete

Yarra Volunteer Week event

A Volunteer Week event was held during National Volunteer Week in May 2012. Over 1500 volunteers were registered and received a certificate of appreciation. These volunteers were associated with 84 community groups and not-for-profit organisations. The event, held at Fitzroy Town Hall, was attended by more than 220 people.

Result: 100% complete

Multicultural Policy and Action Plan 2010 – 2014

The Multicultural Policy and Action Plan 2010– 2014, adopted by Council in July 2010, provides six strategic directions for Yarra around Multicultural Affairs: communication and engagement; customer service; partnerships; celebrations and events; advocacy; and governance. This framework highlights the promotion of diversity, a sense of belonging and the eradication of racism. In 2011–12, the plan was implemented through a range of activities, projects, grants and networks including Yarra Settlement Forum, Cultural Diversity Week, Richmond Settlement Network and Refugee Week.

Result: 100% complete

Strategic Indicators

Council will measure its success in meeting this Strategic Objective against the three Strategic Indicators below that are listed in the Council Plan 2009–13. Under each Indicator is an explanation on whether the Indicator has been met in 2011–12 or is on track to be met by 2013 when this Plan ends. If further explanation is required it is given.

1 Increase library use by 5% by 2013 (including website use and loans)

Result: This indicator, which comprises loans and visits (physical and virtual) was not met in 2011–12. There was a small (0.4%) decrease from 1,969,082 in 2010–11 to 1,886,055 in 2011–12. This is a 5% decrease compared to the 2008–09 baseline of 1.98 million loans and visits. Council's website statistical package was changed during 2011. As a result, website statistics logs were processed by a different method, focusing on page views rather than hits, resulting in a drop in the library's website figures, impacting on the overall figures. Despite this, the library website visits remain in the top 10% of Council website usage and use of the online catalogue has risen by 19% from 288,061 in 2010–11 to 355,477 in 2011–12.

2 Maintain the diversity of community groups applying and receiving grants through Yarra's Community Grants Program

Result: This indicator was met. The diversity of grant applicants is reflected by the different funding streams offered: Community Development, Arts and Culture, Environment, Community Justice, Sport and Recreation and Youth.

3 Maintain business participation in Council's business training and development program

Result: This indicator was achieved in 2011–12, with 920 people participating in business events, compared to the target of 386 (2008–09 baseline). Many of these events achieved capacity attendance.

49,430

people were members of Yarra libraries.

Strategic Objective Building Council's capacity and performance

Introduction

Council continues to work to improve its services, responding to changing community needs as well as delivering cost effective and quality local services. Internal services such as Finance, Human Resources or Information Services combine with each service area to drive continuous improvement – adapting existing services and looking for innovative ways to better meet Yarra's needs.

Services covered in this Strategic Objective

- Capital Works
- Customer Service
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Information Services
- Contracts and Procurement

Interesting facts about these services in 2011–12

Capital Works

- Council allocated \$31.62 million for capital works in its 2011–12 budget. Of this \$28.8 million was expended and the remainder was carried over until 2012–13.

Customer Service

- Council received an index score 78 for Customer Contact in the 2012 Annual Community Satisfaction Survey conducted by the State Government through the Department of Planning and Community Development. This result was significantly higher than both the state-wide average of 71 and the Inner Melbourne Metropolitan average of 73.
- 145,754 calls were received by Yarra's Customer Service Centre, 77% of which were resolved by staff at the first point of contact.
- More than 25,000 in person inquiries were handled by staff at the Richmond and Collingwood Town Halls.
- More than 70,000 receipts were processed.
- Bookings were taken for more than 18,800 hard and green waste collections.
- Approximately 8200 parking permits were processed.
- More than 4300 requests to remove graffiti were received.
- Over 5000 street cleaning requests were processed.
- More than 3500 waste and recycling requests were processed.
- More than 8600 parking infringement enquiries were answered.

Finance

- Council was debt free as at 26 June 2012.

Strategies

The following Strategies will be implemented to achieve this Strategic Objective:

- Encourage broad community engagement in Council's planning and decision making.
- Ensure efficient and effective services.
- Ensure a financially sustainable Council, through a balanced budget and maintaining.

Yarra's infrastructure.

- Develop responsive services.
- Develop our people and improve our systems and processes.
- Focus the organisational workload to deliver on agreed Council priorities.
- Encourage and support a workforce that reflects our community's diversity.
- Ensure that our systems and processes are accessible and inclusive.

145,754

CALLS WERE RECEIVED BY YARRA'S CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE IN 2011–12.

Initiative	Actions to achieve this initiative in 2011–12
Roll out the Customer Response Management System	<p>To better manage customer requests, Council is working towards replacing its individual customer recording systems with a single system called Merit. This will lead to an improvement in the tracking of customer requests, efficiency through a reduction in double handling of requests, as well as improved customer experiences and outcomes. In 2011–12, all objectives for the Merit project were achieved within time and budget including the roll out of the system for the Mayor and Councillors, aged and disability services, waste management and street sign maintenance. The project is ongoing.</p> <p>Status: 100%</p>
Develop a Customer Service Guarantee across the organisation	<p>As part of our commitment to improve our service delivery, Council has a Customer Service Guarantee with 64 measurable targets. These targets have been chosen because they are frequently requested services or they are measures we believe are important to the community. We track our performance on the Guarantee and report back to the community on how we have performed in meeting our commitments. For any targets where we have failed to meet our stated standard, we will develop improvement plans so that we meet our commitment. The end of year report show 36 targets were met or exceeded; 7 targets were within 3% of being achieved; and 21 targets were not met. Full details are available on Council's website http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Your-Council/Customer-Service-Guarantee/</p> <p>Status: 100%</p>
Improve the integration, capacity and performance of IT systems	<p>Implementation of the Performance and Development Review (PDR) system was to be undertaken this year as part of the initiative to improve the integrations, capacity and performance of IT systems. However, the project has been deferred until next financial year when the requirements will be reviewed and a further tender process undertaken.</p> <p>Status: 25%</p> <p>The project was deferred until 2012–13</p> <p>Implementation of the e-Property module will facilitate online services such as payments, applications submissions, issuing of permits and certificates. This has proceeded for debtors payments, appli-</p>

	<p>cations for building property information certificates, and vehicle crossing permits.</p> <p>Status: 73%The implementation of online processes for other regulatory applications, permits and payments, including rates payments and animal renewals, has been delayed but is on track for completion in the new financial year.</p>
Complete the staff accommodation review	<p>The refurbishment of the Collingwood Town Hall was a major recommendation of the accommodation review completed in 2009. The tender for building works for this project was awarded in May 2012 and construction was scheduled to start at the end of July. Staff were relocated to temporary accommodation at 433 Smith Street in July. Temporary portable offices were installed in Stanton Street next to Collingwood Library for customer service staff.</p> <p>Status: 80%Construction was initially scheduled to commence in June 2012, but was delayed until the end of July 2012.</p>

Other Highlights and Actions in 2011–12

Council undertakes a range of other actions on behalf of the community that may not necessarily be listed in the Council Plan. Here are some examples:

Implementation of Capital Works program

A total of \$31.62 million was allocated in Council's 2011–12 budget for its capital works program.

Of this, approximately \$12.97 million was allocated for renewal projects, \$4.49 million for upgrades and \$9.49 million for the acquisition of new assets and/or discretionary works. \$1.8 million was also transferred as operating expenditure for costs that could not be classified as an asset. Major works included the completion of the Collingwood Leisure Centre, the start of construction for a new Ramsden Oval sports pavilion and the commencement of the Victoria Street gateway project.

Result: 91% complete

Asset Management Strategy review

Council's Asset Management Strategy was reviewed in accordance with the National Asset Management Framework. The Draft Asset Management Strategy was presented to Council in March 2012. Following feedback from Council, amendments were made to the strategy and the amended strategy was adopted by Council in April.

Result: 100% complete

Buildings Asset Management Plan review

A review of Council's Buildings Asset Management Plan (BAMP) was completed in accordance with Council's Asset Management Strategy. The draft BAMP has progressed slower than expected. The development of service levels and the determination of whether buildings are fit for their intended purpose has been complex and requires further work with service managers. Condition assessments for all Council-owned buildings have been completed. However, the data obtained required further analysis and costing before detailed renewal and maintenance programs could be developed. Risk assessments for Council buildings have been identified and documented, and a comprehensive buildings operational plan is being developed to support the BAMP.

Result: 85% complete. It is anticipated this work will be completed by February 2013 in time to inform the preparation of the 2013–14 capital works program and budget.

Municipal Emergency Recovery Plan review

Relief and recovery from emergencies is an enabling and supportive process which allows individuals, families and communities to attain a proper level of function through the provision of information, specialist services and resources. The Municipal Emergency Recovery Plan identifies designated emergency relief and response centres throughout the municipality.

This year Council participated in a regional project to streamline and integrate recovery processes and resource sharing, reviewed Council's Municipal Emergency Recovery Plan and conducted a forum with local lead agencies to improve coordination and planning.

Result: 100% complete

\$31.62m

allocated in Council's 2011–12 budget for its capital works program.

Improving fraud and corruption control

Council reviewed and updated its Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and associated processes to reflect its adopted approach to controlling fraud and corruption exposure at both the strategic and operational levels, and to apply leading practice by complying with applicable Australian Standards. This included an Expression of Interest process for the provision of a Fraud and Corruption Control Services Panel. This Panel will be formally engaged in 2012–13 so that Council can contract for such services as required. Result: 88% complete. The development of a policy position on how Council will address ethical issues into the future has been deferred to the next reporting year to enable input from the incoming CEO and the new Executive Team.

Leadership development and organisational culture

The Leadership Development Program gives leaders skills to deliver a constructive culture which supports the growth of people, teams and process improvements. This includes undertaking the measure of the Organisational Culture Inventory (OCI) every two years and follow up workshops, supporting more leaders to undertake specific coaching skills training and training leaders in conducting team planning workshops. Organisational, Divisional and Branch OCI feedback and planning have been completed. Result: 75% complete. The Organisation Development plan and initiative was expected to be completed in the first half of the 2012–13 financial year.

Purchasing Champion and Procurement Steering Groups

Council's Procurement Policy and Procedures Manuals were reviewed and updated to include sustainable procurement practices and to ensure that all tendering programs deliver contracts of best value. The Procurement Policy and Procedures were endorsed by Council in June 2012.

Result: 95% complete

Supplier recognition, accreditation and award program

The supplier recognition, accreditation and award program will enable Council to assess and recognise supplier performance. Performance Measurement guidelines have been developed and included in the updated Procurement Procedures Manual. These are due to be rolled out in September 2012. The category format for preferred suppliers has been completed and performance measure and KPI development guidelines have been developed and will be implemented following contract management training in September 2012.

Result: 85% complete. Some aspects of this action, including a certification and grading system for suppliers, will not proceed due to a change of priorities. The final stages of this action will be completed in September 2012.

Annual Customer Service Survey

Council completed its Annual Customer Service Survey in August and September 2011 with results presented to staff and Councilors in December. Overall, Council's performance continues to rate highly. Further work is underway to incorporate the results into a geographical information system (GIS) to support staff to analyse the data and inform the continuous improvement of Council services.

Result: 100% complete

Strategic Indicators

Council will measure its success in meeting this Strategic Objective against the four Strategic Indicators below that are listed in the Council Plan 2009–13. Under each Indicator is an explanation on whether the Indicator has been met in 2011–12 or is on track to be met by 2013 when this Plan ends. If further explanation is required it is given.

1 80% of Capital Works completed within one year

Result: Council achieved a better than target result of 91% capital works completed within the year. This is based on a capital budget of \$31.62 million and an actual expenditure of \$28.8 million.

2 Council's overall performance rating > 65 (measured in the Department of Planning and Community Development survey)

Result: Council recorded an overall performance rating of 68, which was higher than the state-wide average of 60 and the average index score of 66 for the inner Melbourne metropolitan group of Councils.

It should be noted that the results from the 2012 Survey are not comparable to previous surveys as the rating scale has changed, as well as the sample size and recruitment method.

3 Successful achievement of Customer Service Guarantee targets

Result: This target was not met for this indicator. Customer Service Guarantee results for 2011–12 indicated that 36 out of the 64 indicators were either on or exceeded target. This is a result of 56.25%. A further seven indicators, or 10.94%, were within 3% of target. The balance of 21 indicators, or 32.81%, was off target.

4 Debt Servicing Cost Ratio 2% (the ratio of debt repayments to Council's total revenue)

Result: Council achieved a better than target result for this indicator. The debt servicing cost ratio for 2011–12 is less than 1%. Council has repaid all loans and is debt free as at 30 June 2012.

920

People attended the BRAINfoodforBusiness training & networking program

Our perform-ance

The rains are coming

Edinburgh Gardens in North Fitzroy is now home to Yarra's largest raingarden.

Constructed in 2011, the raingarden captures, filters and stores stormwater runoff in a 200,000 litre tank.

THIS WATER IS USED TO IRRIGATE THE PARK, WITH EXCESS WATER REDIRECTED TO THE MERRI CREEK.

Certification of the Performance Statement

Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Local Government Indicators	Actual 2011–12	Actual 2010–11	Actual 2009–10
Community satisfaction rating for overall performance	68	68	67
Community satisfaction rating for Council's advocacy and representation on key local issues	62	62	63
Community satisfaction rating for Council's engagement in decision making on key local issues	63	62	63
Average rates and charges per assessment	\$1,686	\$1,635	\$1,576
Average rates and charges per residential assessment	\$1,365	\$1,320	\$1,252
Average liabilities per assessment	\$858	\$619	\$539
Operating result per assessment	\$451	\$251	\$201
Average operating expenditure per assessment	\$3,128	\$2,737	\$2,703
Average capital expenditure per assessment	\$601	\$668	\$559
Infrastructure renewal	95%	99%	107%
Infrastructure renewal and maintenance	96%	99%	105%

Financials

Public space gardening

Yarra became the first Council in Australia to formally promote public space gardening when it created and adopted its Urban Agriculture Guidelines in June 2011.

A community planter box erected on Spensley Street in Clifton Hill in March 2012 was the first project to bear fruit from these guidelines.

Understanding the Financial Report

Council's Financial Report is presented in accordance with the Australian Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards, and therefore particular terms required by the Standards may not be familiar to some readers.

Furthermore, as Council is a 'not for profit' organisation, some of the generally recognised terms used in private sector company reports are not appropriate to Council's reports.

Council is committed to accountability, and it is in this context that this simple guide has been developed to assist readers understand and analyse the Financial Report.

What does the Annual Financial Report contain?

Council's Financial Report has two main sections: the Report and the Notes.

There are four Statements and 42 Notes.

These are prepared by Council staff, examined by Council's Audit Committee and by Council itself, and then audited by the Victorian Auditor-General.

The four Statements included in the first few pages of the report are the:

- Comprehensive Income Statement.
- Balance Sheet.
- Statement of Changes in Equity.
- Cash Flow Statement.

Notes to these Statements explain Council's accounting policies and how values contained in these Statements were calculated.

Income Statement

The Income Statement shows:

- Sources of Council's revenue under various income headings.
- Expenses incurred in running the Council during the year.

These expenses relate only to the 'operations' and do not include the cost associated with the purchase or building of assets.

While asset purchase costs are not included in the expenses there is an item for 'depreciation'.

This value is the value of the assets consumed during the year.

The key figure to look at is the net result for the reporting period which is the equivalent to the profit or (loss) of Council for the year.

A positive result means that the revenues were greater than expenses.

Balance Sheet

This is the most important of the Financial Statements.

This one page summary is a snapshot of Council's financial situation as at 30 June.

It shows what the Council owns as assets and what it owes as liabilities.

The bottom line of this Statement is net assets.

This is the net worth of Council, which has been built up over many years.

The assets and liabilities are separated into current and non-current.

Current means those assets or liabilities which will fall due in the next 12 months.

The components of the Balance Sheet are described below.

Current and Non-Current Assets

- Cash assets include cash and investments, i.e. cash held in the bank and in petty cash, and the market value of Council's investments.
- Receivables are monies owed to Council by ratepayers and other service users.
- Accrued income represents revenue due to Council, which had not been received.
- Prepayments reflect accounts which have been prepaid.
- Inventories represent Council's stock of merchandise and fuels.
- Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment is the largest component of Council's worth and represents the value of all the land, buildings, roads, vehicles, equipment, etc. which has been built up by Council over many years.

Current and Non-Current Liabilities

- Payables are monies owed to creditors by Council as at 30 June.
- Trust funds represent monies held in trust by Council.
- Income in advance represents revenue received by Council, which relates to future periods, e.g. prepaid leisure centre fees.
- Employee benefits is the accounting term for accrued annual leave and long service leave entitlements.

- Interest-bearing liabilities represent the loan borrowings held by Council.

Net Assets

This term is used to describe the difference between the value of total assets and the value of total liabilities.

It represents the net worth of Council as at 30 June.

The net assets of Council are also synonymous with the total equity of Council.

Equity

This is the term used to describe the components of net assets.

These components are:

- Accumulated surplus – the value of all net assets accumulated over time.
- Asset revaluation reserve – the difference between the previously recorded value of assets and their current valuations.
- Other reserves – allocations of the accumulated surplus for specific purposes.

Statement of Changes in Equity

During the course of the year the value of total equity as set out in the Balance Sheet changes. This Statement shows the values of such changes and how these changes arose. The main reasons for a change in equity stem from:

- 'Profit or loss' from operations, described in the statement as result for the year.
- Revaluation of the assets – this takes place every two years in accordance with Council policy. It also occurs when existing assets are 'taken up' in Council's financial records for the first time.
- Transfer of monies to or from Council's reserves.

Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement summarises Council's cash payments and cash receipts for the year.

This Statement is presented according to a very specific accounting standard and requires careful analysis.

The values may differ from those shown in the Income Statement because the Income Statement is prepared on an accrual accounting basis.

Cash in this Statement refers to bank deposits and other forms of highly liquid investments that can readily be converted to cash, such as cash invested with fund managers.

Council's cash arises from, and is used in, three main areas:

Cash flows from operating activities:

Receipts: All cash received into Council's bank account from ratepayers and others who owed money to Council. Receipts also include the interest earnings from Council's cash investments. It does not include the proceeds associated with the sale of assets.

Payments: All cash paid by Council from its bank account to staff, creditors and other persons. It does not include the payments associated with the creation of assets.

Cash flows from investing activities: The accounting term investing activities relates to assets such as new capital plant and other long term revenue-producing assets. This part of the Statement includes all payments associated with the creation of assets and proceeds associated with the sale of assets.

Cash flows from financing activities: This part of the Statement is where the receipt and repayment of borrowed funds are recorded. The bottom line of the Cash Flow Statement is the Cash at end of financial year. This shows the capacity of Council to meet its debts and other liabilities.

Notes to the Financial Report

The Notes are a very important and informative section of the report. The Australian Accounting Standards are not prescriptive in relation to much detail. Therefore, to enable the reader to understand the basis on which the values shown in the Statements are established, it is necessary to provide an explanation of Council's accounting policies. These are described in Note 1.

Apart from the accounting policies, the Notes also give details behind many of the summary figures contained in the Statements.

The Note numbers are shown beside the relevant items in the Income Statement, Balance Sheet and the Cash Flows Statement.

Where Council wishes to disclose other information, which cannot be incorporated into the Statements, this is shown in the Notes.

The Notes include the cost of the various functions of Council, the breakdown of expenses, revenues, reserves and other assets, transactions with persons related to Council and financial ratios (performance indicators). The Notes should be read together with the other parts of the Financial Report to get a clear picture of Council's financial performance and position.

Statements by Principal Accounting Officer and Councillors

The certification by the Principal Accounting Officer is made by the person responsible for the preparation of the Financial Report. It certifies that in their opinion, the report has met all the statutory and professional reporting requirements.

The certification of Councillors is made by two Councillors on behalf of Council that, in their opinion, the Financial Report is presented fairly and is not misleading or inaccurate

Auditor-General's Report

The Auditor-General's Report is the external and independent opinion on the Financial Report.

It provides the reader with a totally independent opinion on the Financial Report and the information it contains.

The opinion covers both the statutory and professional requirements and also the fairness aspects of the Financial Report.

Financial Glossary

Annual budget

This document is framed within Council's strategic resource plan and sets out the short-term goals and objectives as part of the overall strategic planning framework.

Annual operating budget

The budgeted operating result in the forthcoming year with a distinction made between revenue received for operating purposes and revenue received for capital purposes.

Capital expenditure

Capital expenditure is large (material) expenditure that produces economic benefits expected to last for more than 12 months, such as renewal, expansion and upgrade. Where capital projects involve a combination of renewal, expansion and upgrade expenditures, the total project cost needs are allocated accordingly.

Capital renewal

Capital renewal is expenditure on an existing asset, which returns the service potential or the life of the asset, up to that which it had originally.

Capital outlays/rate revenue

This ratio represents the capital outlays as a percentage of rate revenue and therefore Council's relative ability to convert rate revenue into Capital Works.

Current assets/current liability

Otherwise known as the working capital ratio, this indicator expresses Council's short-term ability to meet its liquidity requirements within the current financial year.

Debt servicing/total revenue

This ratio contrasts the amount of interest expense that Council is incurring on its interest bearing liabilities as a percentage of the total revenue base.

Financing activities

Financing activities means those activities which relate to changing the size and composition of the financial structure of the entity, including equity, and borrowings not falling within the definition of cash.

Grants/total revenue

This ratio provides an indication of the percentage of total revenue that is comprised of grant income.

Indebtedness/rate revenue

This ratio measures the total amount of interest bearing liabilities compared to the annual rates levy.

Infrastructure

Physical assets that contribute to meeting the community's need for access to major economic and social facilities and services.

International Financial Reporting Standards

Australian reporting entities are currently addressing the introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) effective for financial years commencing on or after January 1, 2005.

Investing activities

Activities which relate to acquisition and disposal of non-current assets, including property, plant and equipment and other productive assets. Investments are not cash.

Key financial indicators

Ratios and comparisons of critical financial data over a period of years to provide a better understanding of key measures, such as indebtedness and liquidity which are often undisclosed when financial information is presented in a standard statement format.

New assets

New assets or capital expenditure does not have any element of expansion or upgrade of existing assets. New capital expenditure may or may not result in additional revenue for Council. New assets will require maintenance and capital renewal in the future.

Operating expenses/assessment

This ratio measures the average operational spending (as drawn from the income statement) on a per assessment basis.

Operating activities

Operating activities relate to the provision of goods and services.

Operating Expenditure

Operating expenditure is defined as consumption or losses of future economic benefits, in the form of reductions in assets or increases in liabilities; and that result in a decrease in equity during the reporting period.

Operating revenue

Operating revenue is defined as inflows or other enhancements, or savings in outflows of future economic benefits, in the form of increases in assets or reductions in liabilities; and that result in an increase in equity during the reporting period.

Rate revenue/total revenue

This ratio measures Council's reliance on rate revenue as its principal source of funding.

Rate revenue/assessment

This ratio provides an illustration of the average rates paid on a per assessment basis across the municipality.

Standard Statements

The standard statements are the Standard Income Statement, Standard Balance Sheet, Standard Cash Flow Statement, and Standard Statement of Capital Works.

Statutory reserves

Statutory reserves are funds set aside for specified statutory purposes in accordance with legislative and contractual requirements. These reserves are not available for other purposes.

Total liabilities/assessment

This ratio expresses the sum total of current liabilities and non-current liabilities expressed on a per assessment basis.

Working capital

Working capital is the funds that are free of all specific Council commitments and are available to meet daily cash flow requirements and unexpected short-term needs.

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Comprehensive Income Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2012

Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2012

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the year ended 30 June 2012

Cash Flow Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2012

Notes to the Financial Report

For the year ended 30 June 2012

Certification of the Financial Report

Yarra City Council 2011–12 Standard Statements

Standard Income Statement

For the Year Ended 30 June 2012

Standard Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2012

Standard Cash Flow Statement

For the Year Ended 30 June 2012

Standard Capital Works Statement

For the Year Ended 30 June 2012

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For the Year Ended 30 June 2012

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For the Year Ended 30 June 2012

Notes accompanying the Standard Capital Works Statement

For the Year Ended 30 June 2012

Certification of the Standard Statements

Independent Auditor's Report

Other

Inform-ation

Hard waste

Yarra households are offered two free hard waste collections each year.

This helps Council manage illegal dumping in local streets.

More than 18,800 hard and green waste pick up bookings were made by residents and businesses in 2011–12.

GLOSSARY

Access Yarra

Council's Customer Service Unit comprising of a call centre and customer service centres at the Richmond and Collingwood Town Halls.

Budget

Council's planned allocation of monetary resources for a financial year.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

Community members of culturally diverse backgrounds, who speak languages other than English.

Environment Strategy: Towards Local Sustainability

Council's updated environmental strategy that sets the direction for environmental initiatives in Yarra over the next four years.

Environmentally Sustainable Design

Environmentally Sustainable Design aims to reduce the impacts of the construction and use of buildings on the natural environment, in addition to improving the comfort of inhabitants.

Freedom of Information (FOI)

The Freedom of Information Act 1982 gives the public the right to access official government documents.

Key Performance Indicators

These are quantifiable measurements that can be applied to assess the success of something.

Local Area Traffic Management Studies (LATMS)

Targeted studies in specific areas that seek to improve the flow of traffic and divert high volumes of traffic from residential streets.

Master Plan

A Master Plan describes how proposals for a site will be implemented.

Melbourne 2030

The Victorian Government's long-term planning policy to manage our growing population over the next 25 years.

Metropolitan Transport Forum (MTF)

An advocacy group comprising members from Melbourne metropolitan Local Government, and associate members including community, environment and Local Government organisations, transport companies, and participants from State Government.

Municipal Early Years Plan (MEYP)

A framework for Council to work in partnership with the community, local service providers and other levels of government to achieve a range of education, care and health outcomes for families and children in Yarra.

Municipal Public Health Plan (MPHP)

A framework for improving community health and wellbeing that contains a number of specific actions and projects that will enable Council to better respond to identified health needs over the next three years.

Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)

Council's primary strategic land use planning document that forms the basis of all other controls in the Yarra Planning Scheme.

Neighbourhood Renewal Program

A State Government program to narrow the gap between disadvantaged communities and the rest of the State.

Positive Ageing Strategy

Council's 10 year framework for providing services and facilities to support our ageing population.

Strategic Resource Plan

A plan that outlines the resources required to achieve the objectives detailed in the Council Plan.

Urban Design Framework (UDF)

Strategic planning tools that set out an integrated design vision for the desired future development of urban places.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)

A Victorian tribunal that resolves a range of civil disputes.

Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD)

The integration of water cycle management into urban planning and design to aid water flow and enhance water quality.

Yarra Leisure

The unit responsible for managing Council's three leisure centres (Richmond Recreation Centre, Collingwood Leisure Centre and Fitzroy Pool) and the Burnley Golf Course.

Yarra Matters Panel

A representative sample of 700 Yarra house-holds developed as part of Council's Consultation Strategy to provide Council with feedback on services and programs.

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Collingwood Temporary Customer Service Centre Stanton Street, Abbotsford (next to Collingwood Library)

Mailing Address

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