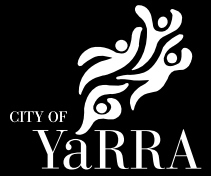


# Yarra Moves

Physical Activity  
Strategy 2021 – 2031



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Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra. We pay our respects to Elders from all nations and to their Elders past, present and future.

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العربية 9280 1930

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REF 19,266



## Executive summary

It is widely acknowledged regular physical activity is a primary factor in preventing chronic disease and supporting lifelong mental and physical health. Data at national and international levels consistently reports that uptake is too low despite the recognised benefits.

Yarra Moves Action Plan prioritises short to mid-term initiatives that will contribute to the strategy's long-term goals. Each version of the Action Plan will be reviewed and updated in line with agreed timeframes or as required. This process will enhance the plan's relevance for the community and ensure resources are assigned in the most effective manner.

Within Yarra, only 50% of adults and less than 20% of young teenagers meet recommended physical activity guidelines and over 40% are susceptible to sedentary behaviours in the workplace and at school. These statistics highlight the need for more people to be more active, reducing the risk of health conditions and enhancing overall wellbeing of the community.

Yarra Moves provides a strategic framework to increase physical activity levels in Yarra, and the vision is for Yarra to be synonymous with active living. The strategy presents an evidence based and balanced approach to achieve the mission of supporting the lifelong mental and physical health of all people who live, work, learn and play in the municipality. Attachment 1 – Yarra Moves Research – Literature Review outlines the research used in creating Yarra Moves.

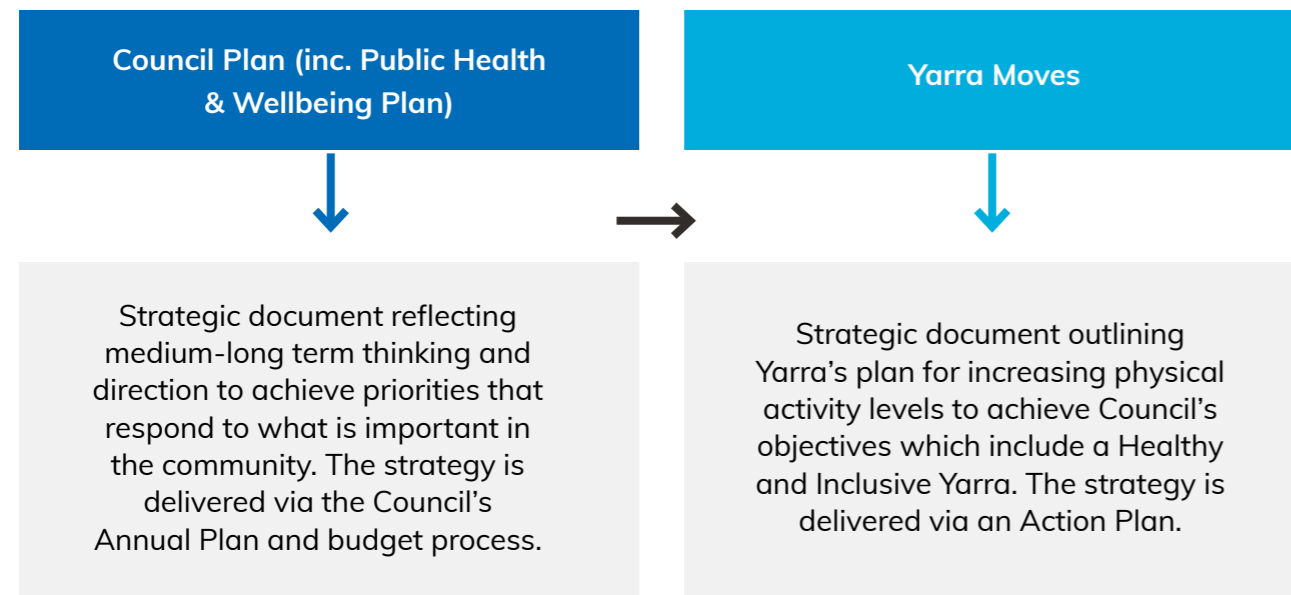
Providing health promoting environments that encourage active living is a key strategy of Yarra's Council Plan (2017-21) objective for a 'Healthy Yarra' whereby community health, safety and wellbeing is a focus in everything we do. This is underpinned by an indicator of the 'percentage of adults undertaking adequate levels of physical activity' to measure Council's health and wellbeing status.

Addressing this objective through physical activity, supporting healthy habits and reducing sedentary behaviour, Yarra Moves goals are:

- Increase proportion of population that is physically active
- Reduce sedentary behaviour
- Support lifelong healthy habits for optimal health

The relationship between the Council Plan and Yarra Moves is summarised below in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1: Relationship between the Council Plan and Yarra Moves

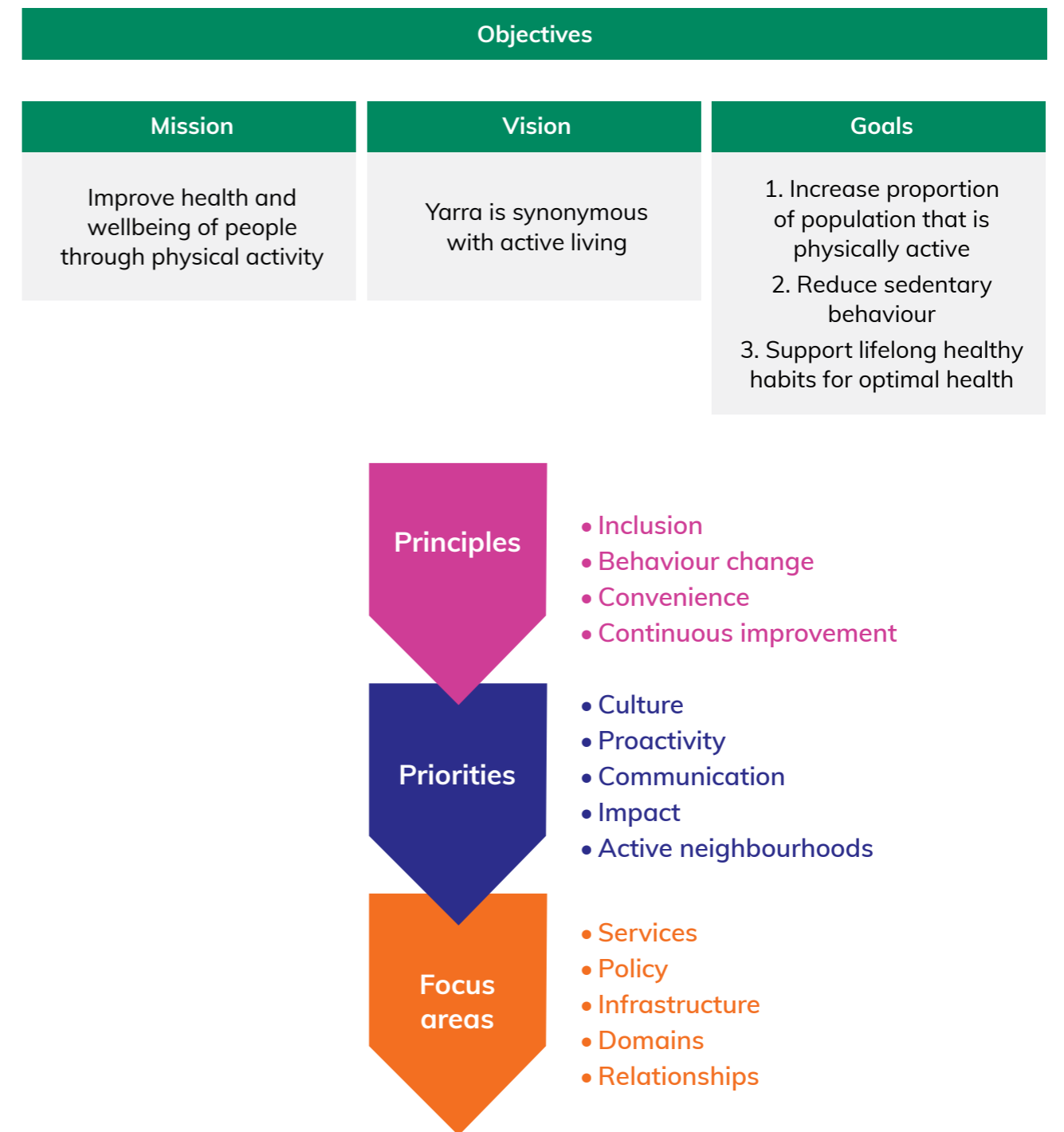


Yarra Moves is one plan within a wider policy and planning framework aiming to improve the health and wellbeing of all people. Summarised in Attachment 2 - Connection to Wider Strategy, are the relevant strategic documents that Yarra Moves either directly supports or seeks to influence.

Yarra Moves is an overarching strategic framework that aligns business units, partners and local organisations to achieve a Healthy Yarra and broader Council objectives that contribute towards improved community well-being. Identified networks for collaboration are outlined in Attachment 3 – Staff Consultation in section 3.4.



Diagram 2: Objectives, Principles, Priorities and Focus areas



Yarra Moves **objectives** aim to identify and promote opportunities to improve the health and wellbeing of all people who live, work, learn and play in Yarra by establishing a strategy with a vision to be a municipality synonymous with active living. In order to increase the proportion of people in Yarra that are both physically active and non-sedentary every day, Yarra Moves seeks to influence a shift in social norms that embrace active living.

All initiatives are to be guided by strategic **principles**, planning **priorities** and local government **focus areas** to ensure that meaningful change can be achieved in creating an active Yarra.

The **principles** provide a foundation for decision making, setting core guidelines to achieve the plan's objectives through:

- Inclusion will drive the allocation of resources to ensure all people can participate in physical activity, regardless of individual circumstance.
- Behaviour change will drive the cultural shift towards active living.
- Convenience will ensure that active choices are a simple and enjoyable option for all; and
- Continuous improvement will be sought in all aspects of the provision, ongoing development and participation of physical activity in Yarra.

The **priorities** identify the most important areas where Council can integrate the strategy's principles to positively impact active living by developing actions that:

- Focus on establishing a culture of active living throughout Yarra.

- Proactively address positive health and wellbeing outcomes through physical activity.
- Are supported by appropriate communication to ensure the community is informed and engaged.
- Positively impact behaviour that supports active living; and
- Contribute to active neighbourhoods that are safe, accessible and well connected optimising and encouraging active transport.

The **focus areas** reflect the key roles of local government where the strategy's priorities can best influence physical activity:

- Opportunities will exist for all people to access and participate in physical activity. Council's influence on services and policy will ensure there is always the opportunity to be active.
- Environments will enable people to be active in all the spaces and places they interact with every day. Council's influence on the infrastructure and domains throughout Yarra will ensure the environment always encourages physical activity.
- People of Yarra will contribute to active living at all stages of life. Council's influence on formal and informal relationships and the deliverers of physical activity services will ensure that the community is always valued as a key contributor to an active Yarra.

Yarra Moves is designed to influence increased physical activity levels by inspiring and guiding actions that will have a positive impact. Research demonstrates a multifaceted approach is required to reshape behaviours, as reflected in the diversity of the strategy.

## COVID 19

During the development of Yarra Moves, COVID-19 was declared a worldwide pandemic. The medium and long-term impacts are not known at the time of writing this strategy.

Short term community impacts of COVID-19 have created challenges including:

- Loss of income
- Heightened anxiety and hesitation to engage in public spaces.
- Increased hygiene protocols and compliance requirements of community organisations and volunteers.
- Change in routines.
- Limited and competing access to open space.
- Loss of opportunities for group activities and socialisation.
- Required physical distancing.
- Sport and Recreation facility and community sport closures and restrictions.
- Restrictions on travel and movement; and
- Government-ordered lockdowns.

These factors and more, will influence physical activity levels in Yarra. Participation barriers highlighted in this strategy are likely to increase, potentially placing a larger portion of the community at risk of not having means to access, nor the ability to prioritise physical activity in their daily lives. For this reason, activity trends and statistical forecasts quoted throughout Yarra Moves are likely to be impacted.

Whilst acknowledging the impact of COVID-19, the strategic framework presented in Yarra Moves remains unchanged. The importance of physical activity for health and wellbeing remains relevant, as does the long-term goal of this strategy and its approach to flexibility in short- and medium-term action planning. This will allow Yarra Moves to respond to the pressing needs of the Yarra community whilst maintaining sight of a future where active living is the social norm.



## Introduction

### The challenge

Regular physical activity is the second most important factor in promoting good health and preventing chronic disease in Australia (behind tobacco control).<sup>1</sup> With a focus on the health and wellbeing of Yarra's community, increasing physical activity levels can positively contribute to each of Yarra's Council Plan objectives.<sup>2</sup> By considering physical activity in all decision making, Council can contribute to a healthy, inclusive, sustainable, liveable, prosperous, connected and leading Yarra.

In order to achieve this, more people need to undertake greater levels of physical activity every day, in addition to reducing the amount of time they spend sedentary.

The need to improve behaviours towards physical activity is demonstrated by the following data:

- 2 in 5 Victorian adults and 1 in 5 Victorian children meet the recommended Australian physical activity guidelines.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 in 2 adults in Yarra meet the recommended physical activity guidelines.<sup>4</sup>
- 1 in 6 year 8 students (13-14 years old) in Yarra meet the recommended physical activity guidelines.<sup>5</sup>
- 2 in 5 adults in Yarra spend over 7 hours sedentary\* each weekday.<sup>4</sup>
- 1 in 2 year 8 students in Yarra meet the recommendation for avoiding sedentary behaviour.<sup>5</sup>

Table 1: Portion of population meeting physical activity guidelines

Physical activity levels	Yarra	Vic
Sedentary	2.7%	2.5%
Insufficient	41.4%	44.1%
Active	54.9%	50.9%
Sitting 7+ hours per weekday	40.8%	26.6%
Sitting 7+ hours per weekend day	11.3%	14.1%

Source: Victorian Population Health Survey, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) (2017)<sup>4</sup>

\*'Sitting' is used in DHHS surveys as a health indicator. To ensure inclusive representation within Yarra Moves planning, the term sedentary is used to describe any behaviour outside of sleep that involves no physical activity resulting in minimal energy expenditure and posing health risks.

### Risks of physical inactivity

Insufficient physical activity is a known contributor to a number of negative health and wellbeing outcomes including:

- Fourth leading risk factor of premature mortality.<sup>6</sup>
- Key risk factor of non-communicable disease such as cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes.<sup>7</sup>
- Second greatest contributor to cancer in Australia.<sup>8</sup>

Sedentary behaviour, independent of physical activity, is associated with negative health consequences such as increased insulin resistance.<sup>9</sup>

### Benefits of increasing physical activity

Sufficient physical activity is a known contributor to a number of positive health and wellbeing outcomes including:

- Reduces risk of health conditions like heart disease, type 2 diabetes and cancer.<sup>10</sup>
- Management of blood pressure, weight gain and muscle development for improved bodily function.<sup>11</sup>
- Improves wellbeing by alleviating feelings of stress, anxiety and depression.<sup>12</sup>
- Reduces social isolation and strengthens social connection.<sup>13</sup>
- Improves and maintains cognitive function.<sup>14</sup>
- Provides positive economic contribution.<sup>15</sup>
- Improves academic performance and workplace productivity.<sup>15</sup>
- Supports active transport and limits the negative impact of climate change.<sup>16</sup>

### The strategy

Yarra Moves details Council's strategy to support the lifelong mental and physical health of all people who live, work, learn and play in Yarra by identifying and promoting opportunities for increased levels of physical activity.

The strategy supports Yarra's 2017–21 Council Plan and has been endorsed as a deliverable in line with Council's 2020-21 Annual Plan. It also pre-empts alignment with future Council Plans in addressing active living as a preventative health and wellbeing outcome. In addition to Council policy, this document is to be considered alongside all relevant strategy and policy relating to physical activity and health, as it is one piece of a wider, interconnected approach to addressing inactivity.

This strategy informs and supports decision making affecting physical activity levels and sedentary behaviours within Yarra. An approach of regular action planning is a key

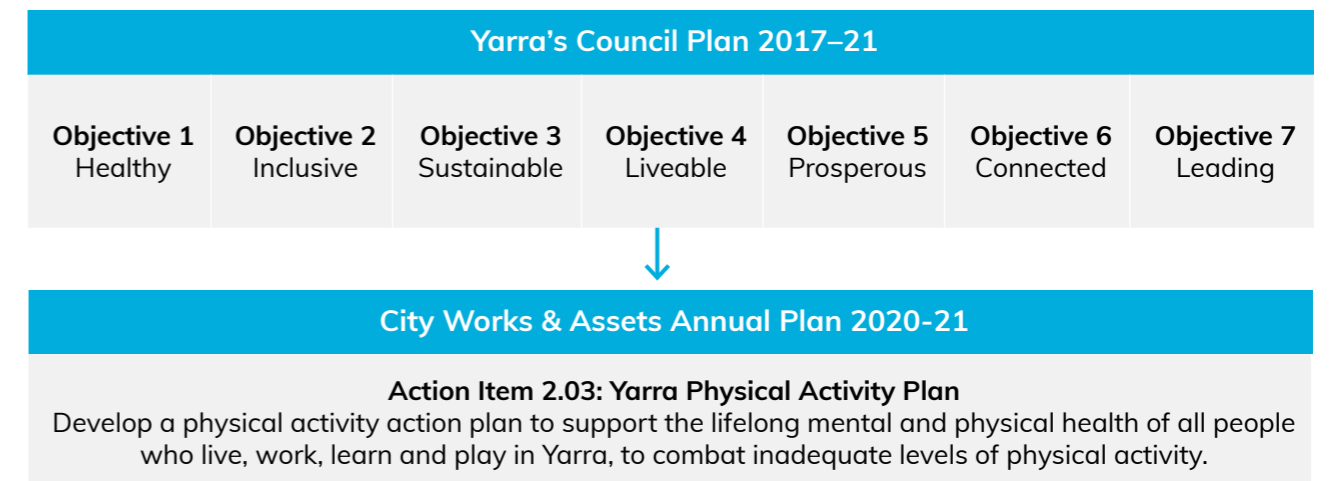
element of the strategy to have the greatest impact on the health and wellbeing of Yarra's residents. This approach to flexible action planning supports Council's Social Justice Charter (2020) in recognising that, "Community continues to evolve and the strengths and barriers of diverse groups will also continue to change," and its commitment, "To continue to understand these changes and to respond accordingly."<sup>17</sup>

Yarra Moves is strategically aligned to Yarra's Council Plan and is informed by research. Additionally, extensive internal consultation was conducted with 42 Officers; the process and results are outlined in Attachment 3 - Staff Consultation.

Yarra Moves is a strategic document outlining the objectives, principles, priorities and focus areas that have been identified as having the highest potential positive influence on decision making at local government and community levels for sustainable cultural change towards active living.



**Diagram 3: Connection between Council Plan, Annual Plan and Yarra Physical Activity Plan**



The strategy will be used throughout the next ten years to guide the direction of the Action Plan, in order to achieve the vision of Yarra being synonymous with active living and to remain agile in

its approach to addressing the identified risk factors to sedentary behaviours throughout the lifecycle of the policy.

Objectives		
Purpose	Mission	Vision
Develop a strategic framework to increase physical activity levels in Yarra	Improve health and wellbeing of people through physical activity	Yarra is synonymous with active living

Principles		
Inclusion	Behaviour change	Convenience
Equity of access ensuring all people can be physically active	Reframe daily physical activity as the social norm	Make being physically active simple and enjoyable

Priorities		
Culture	Proactivity	Communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yarra supports active living</li> <li>Champion active role models</li> <li>Collaborative decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support existing service providers</li> <li>Address gaps in service delivery</li> <li>Develop policy for an active Yarra</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open communication</li> <li>Promote active living</li> <li>Lifelong engagement</li> </ul>

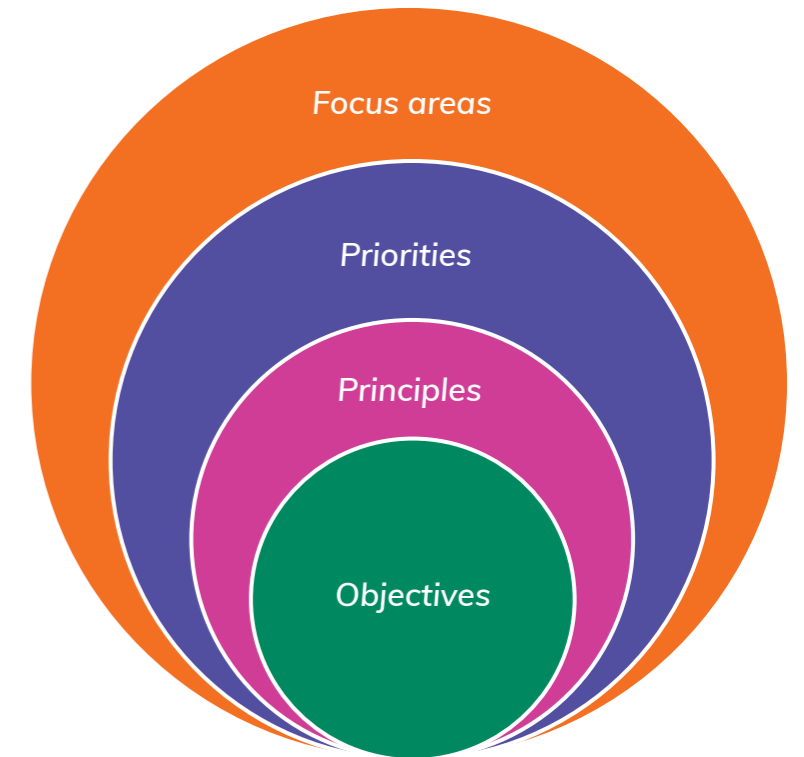
Focus areas		
Opportunity		Environment
Services	Policy	Infrastructure
People-centric service design, delivery and promotion	Council policy supports and encourages physically active lifestyles	Environments encourage movement

Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase proportion of population that is physically active</li> <li>Reduce sedentary behaviour</li> <li>Support lifelong healthy habits for optimal health</li> </ul>

Continuous improvement
Learn, adapt and respond for ongoing positive outcomes

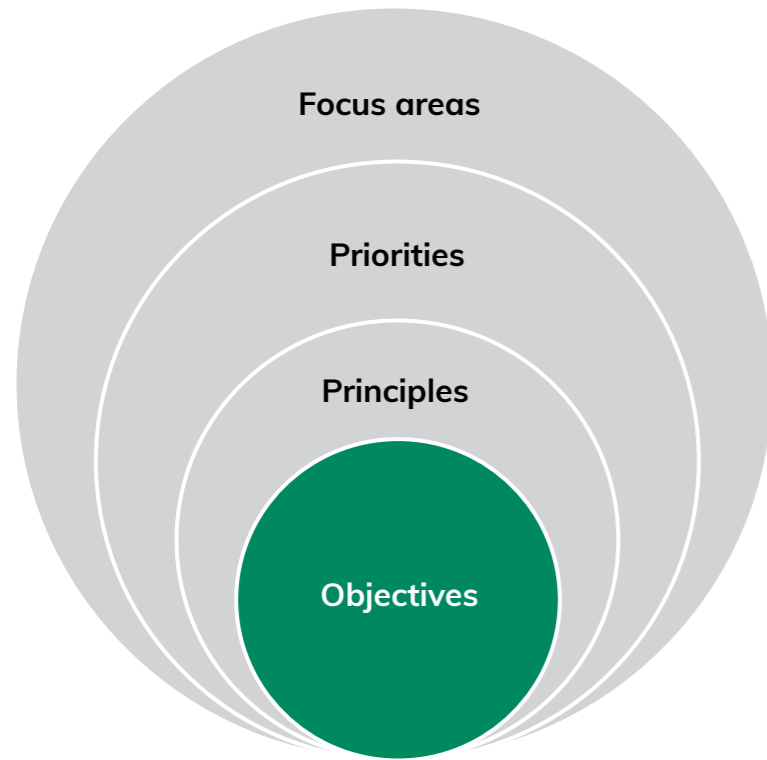
Impact	Active neighbourhoods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and engage at-risk people</li> <li>Design services to meet needs</li> <li>Target sedentary domains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement active design</li> <li>Activate underutilised space</li> <li>Increase walkability and cycling</li> </ul>

Domains	People	Deliverers
Relationships		
Movement happens wherever people live, work, learn and play	Connecting with others to achieve more physically active lifestyles	People that facilitate and influence physical activity are supported





# Objectives



<b>Purpose</b>
Develop a strategic framework to increase physical activity levels in Yarra
<b>Mission</b>
Improve health and wellbeing of people through physical activity
<b>Vision</b>
Yarra is synonymous with active living
<b>Goals</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase proportion of population that is physically active</li> <li>• Reduce sedentary behaviour</li> <li>• Support lifelong healthy habits for optimal health</li> </ul>

The objectives provide a set of aspirational targets to guide decision making that positively influences the health and wellbeing of the Yarra community through physical activity

## Purpose

Yarra Moves provides a strategic framework to increase physical activity levels in the municipality. It is designed to influence planning, policy and health outcomes by providing guiding principles, priorities and focus areas for all stakeholders.

## Mission

Support the lifelong mental and physical health of all people who live, work, learn and play in Yarra by identifying and promoting opportunities for increased levels of physical activity.

## Vision

Yarra is synonymous with active living; a place where all people are able to enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle every day.

## Goals

### Increase proportion of population that is physically active

- Support Sport Australia<sup>1</sup> and the World Health Organisation<sup>2</sup> in achieving a 15% decrease in global inactivity by 2030.
- Increase the number of people in Yarra that meet the Australian physical activity guidelines.<sup>3</sup>

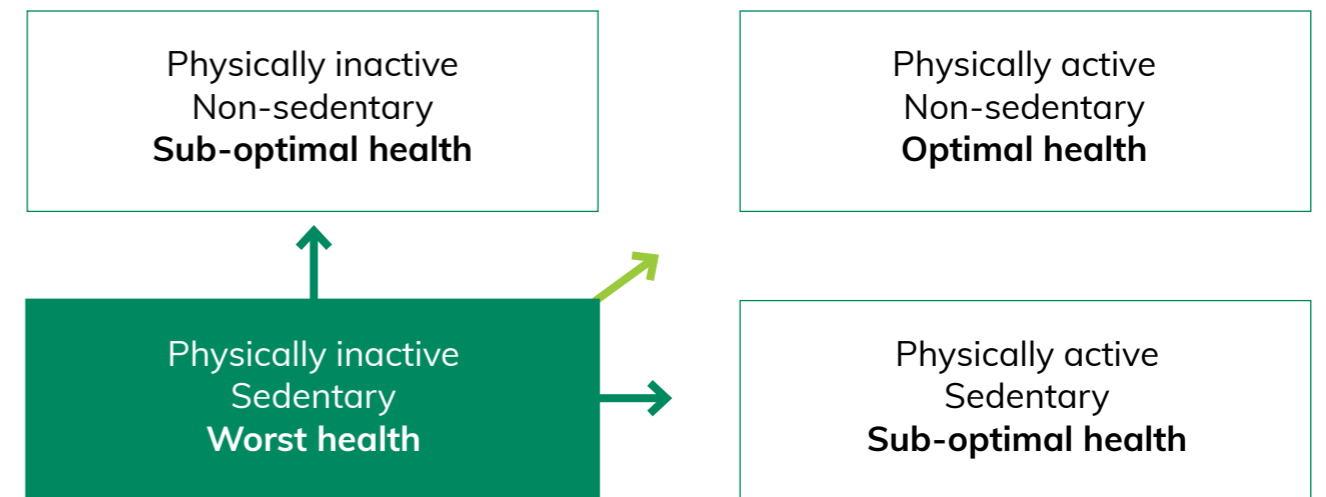
### Reduce sedentary behaviour

- Decrease the amount of time people spend sedentary in Yarra each day at home, place of learning, work and commuting.

### Support lifelong healthy habits for optimal health

- Increase the proportion of people in Yarra that are both physically active and non-sedentary every day.

Diagram 4: Possible lifestyle behaviour patterns



Source: Moving Forward, Participation (2015)<sup>4</sup>

## Measuring success

Accurately measuring physical activity levels presents several challenges. There are a range of sources that report on physical activity, however, there is no standardisation in methodology. Unless part of a controlled study, data is also self-reported, which further impacts accuracy. In addition, there are many factors that will influence the data on physical activity levels in Yarra, outside of the improvements that will be achieved by Yarra Moves.

Yarra Moves, therefore, will not determine success based on any single data set. Success will be measured on improvements over time across the areas outlined within the strategy. Contemporary industry data that has informed this strategy and will be used as ongoing benchmarks for levels of physical activity will include:

- Department of Health and Human Services' Victorian Population Health Survey<sup>5</sup>
- Sport Australia's AusPlay Survey<sup>6</sup>
- Victorian Health Promotion Foundation's LGA Profile.<sup>7</sup>

2.5% of Australia's burden of disease is attributed to physical inactivity.<sup>10</sup>

55% attributed to sedentary behaviour.<sup>11</sup>

42% attributed to low activity levels.<sup>11</sup>

Irrespective of the accuracy issues, the above data sources have been selected as they represent the most current (as of 2020) benchmarking in physical activity related health indicators and active recreation participation. It also provides data specific to Yarra and is used to inform wider Yarra health and wellbeing planning.

Aligning to Yarra's Council Plan, physical activity data provides insight into the impact Yarra Moves has on contributing to a healthy and inclusive Yarra. The impact on wider Council objectives will be benchmarked against liveability indicators as reported in Yarra City Council's:

- Annual Customer Satisfaction Survey<sup>8</sup>
- Health and Wellbeing Status Reports<sup>9</sup>

Embracing continuous improvement as a guiding principle, this strategy welcomes any sanctioned data sets developed in the future.



## Context

Accessing and participating in physical activity that contributes to physical fitness, mental wellbeing and social interactions is a recognised human right, essential for individuals of all ages to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.<sup>12</sup>

It is widely reported people are not engaging in enough activity to benefit their health. In response, physical activity is now the focus of many local, state, national and global policies.

International research on physical activity levels ranks Australian adults at 93 of 161 countries<sup>13</sup> and Australian youth at 127 of 133 countries.<sup>14</sup> In Victoria inactivity levels are the second highest of all states and territories.<sup>6</sup> Contemporary and relevant industry learnings from a range of environments are vital to understanding what is key to achieving physically active communities, for example, industries, transportation and civic pride through sporting events.

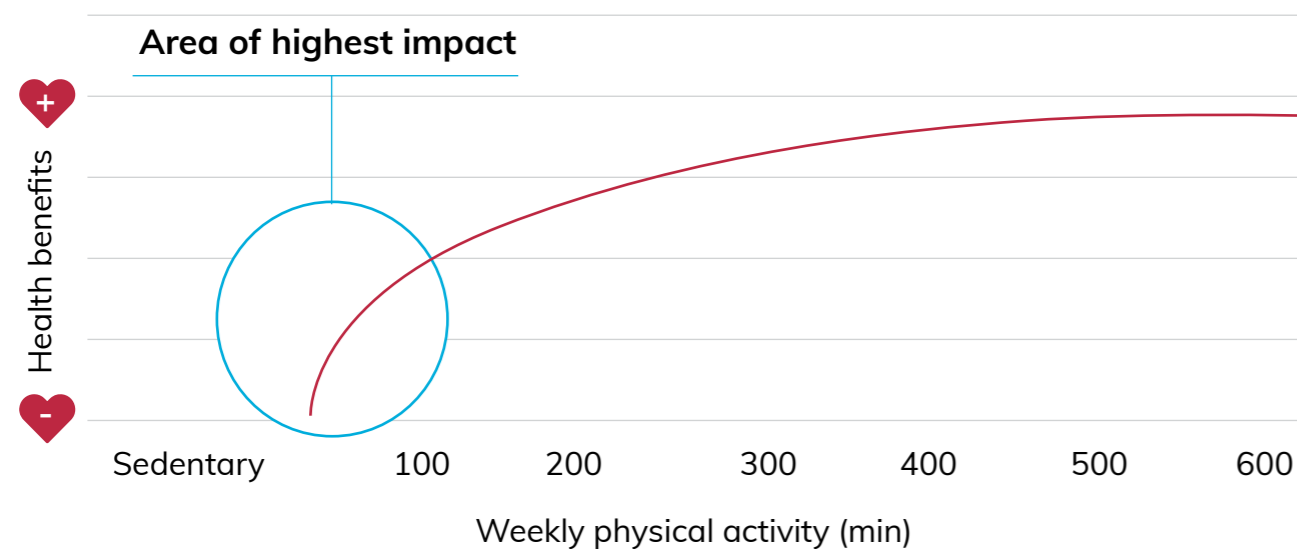
This needs to be in conjunction with understanding which cohorts of Victorian adults and children disproportionality are inactive, and why.

Acknowledging the physical activity rates of Yarra's community (refer to Table 1: Portion of population meeting physical activity guidelines), Yarra's Council Plan outlines a strategic priority to, "Provide health promoting environments that encourage healthy eating and active living," in its commitment to creating a healthy and inclusive Yarra.<sup>15</sup>

From a health perspective, research shows the greatest gain in benefits can be achieved by activating those people that are currently inactive (as shown in Diagram 5: Relationship between health and time spent active graph below).<sup>16, 17, 18</sup>

Yarra Moves drives health outcomes by supporting movement for all people at all stages of life. It highlights local government's role as a leader in making active living the cultural norm.

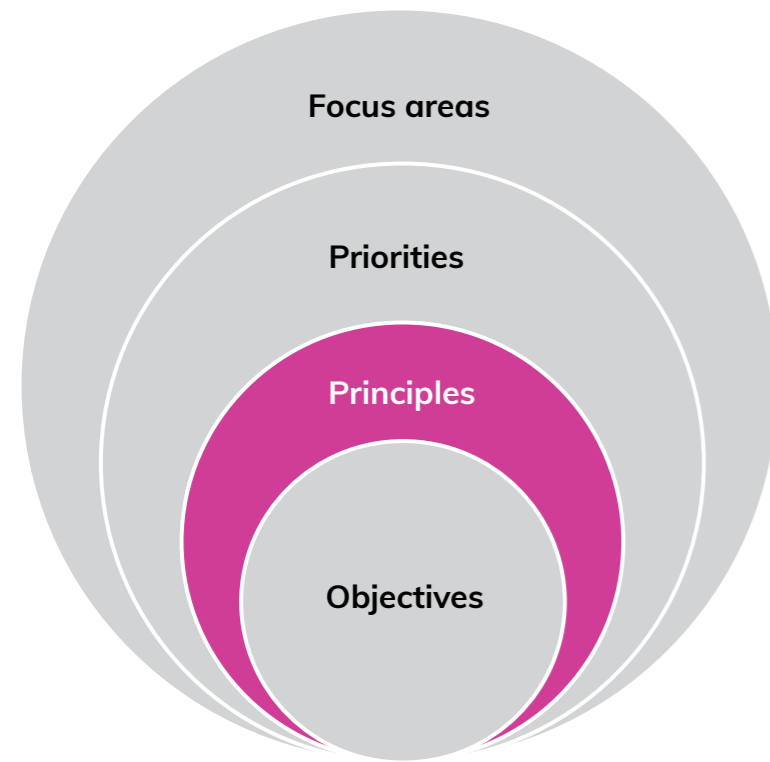
Diagram 5: Relationship between health and time spent active



Source: Towards an Active Nation, Sport England (2016)<sup>16</sup>



# Principles



The principles provide a foundation for decision making, setting core guidelines to achieve the plan's objectives

- Inclusion**  
Equity of access ensuring all people can be physically active
- Behaviour change**  
Reframe daily physical activity as the social norm
- Convenience**  
Make being physically active simple and enjoyable
- Continuous improvement**  
Learn, adapt and respond for ongoing positive outcomes

Yarra Moves recognises the need for long term, sustainable cultural change to make physical activity a part of everyone's daily life. Achieving this cultural shift requires a commitment to:

- Inclusion;
- Behaviour change
- Convenience; and
- Continuous improvement

## Inclusion

Inclusion is the fundamental right of all people to partake in physical activity regardless of individual circumstances.

Focusing equitable provision and inclusive access to physical activity in Yarra for community members who are at greater risk of inactivity, including:

- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds/communities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Females
- Older adults (people aged over 65 years)
- Children/youth (people aged 0 to 17 years)
- People with disabilities
- People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning (LGBTIQ+)
- People experiencing mental illness
- People experiencing poor health
- People experiencing disadvantage due to:
  - Economic status
  - Level of education

## Yarra community insight



29% Yarra residents born overseas.<sup>3</sup>



23% Yarra residents speak language other than English at home.<sup>3</sup>

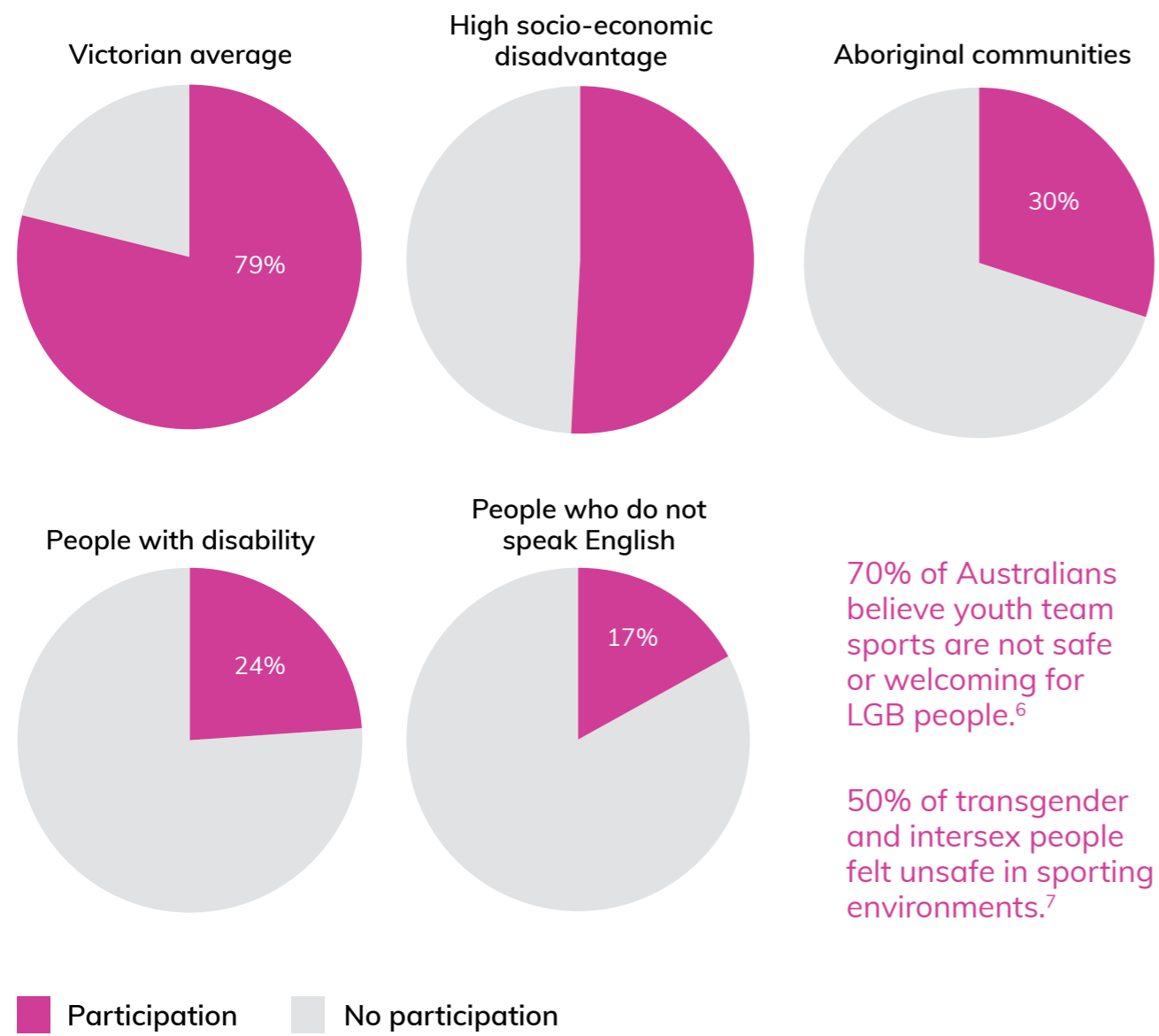


22% Yarra residents in lowest income quartile.<sup>3</sup>



4 out of 5 people with disability in Yarra are over 50 years old.<sup>4</sup>

Diagram 6: Lower levels of participation in sport and recreation



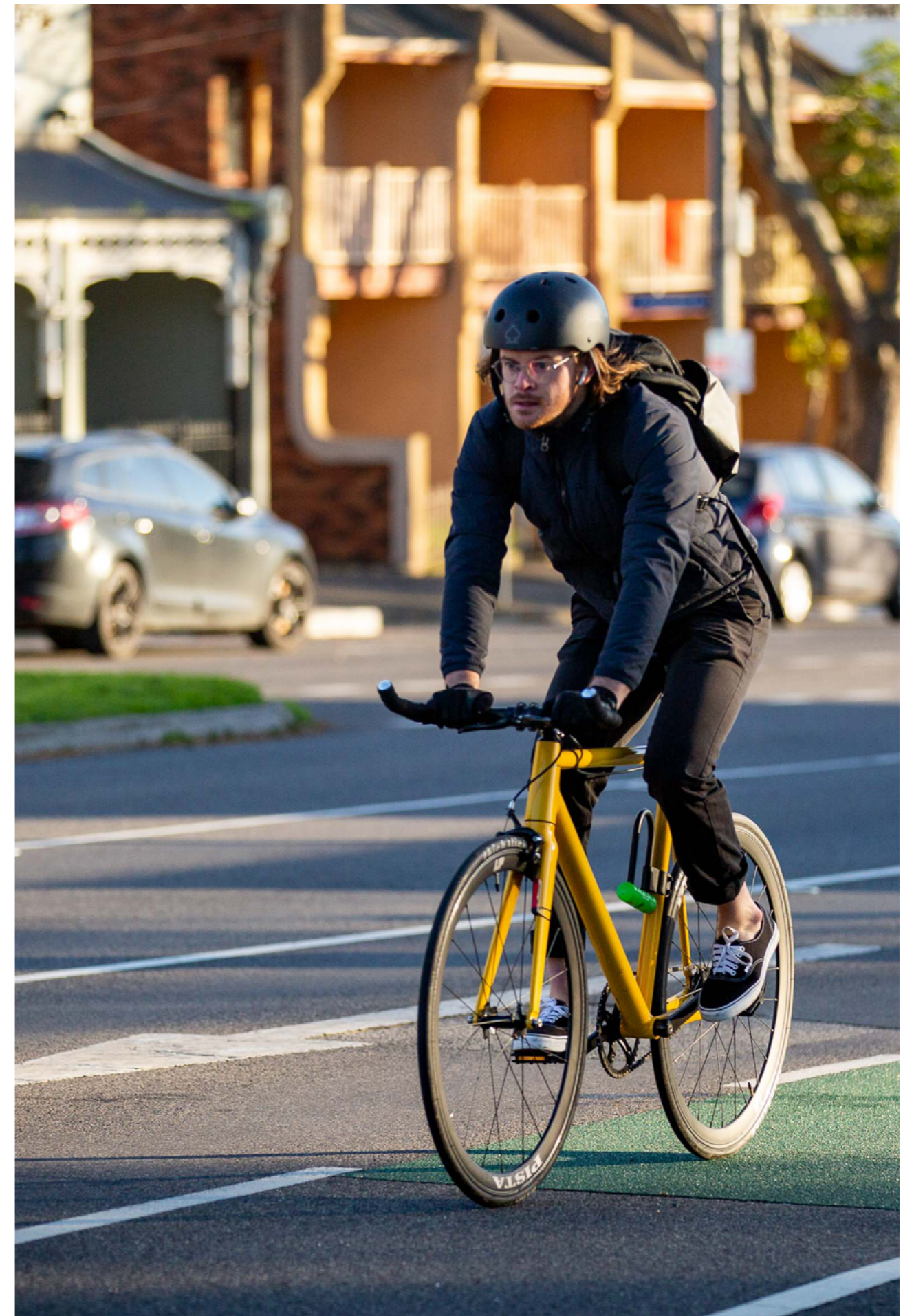
70% of Australians believe youth team sports are not safe or welcoming for LGB people.<sup>6</sup>

50% of transgender and intersex people felt unsafe in sporting environments.<sup>7</sup>

**Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action**

- Establish working groups to identify and deliver physical activity opportunities. Engage key stakeholders across the domains (home, work, school, etc.) and communities at greater risk of inactivity to collaborate on community driven solutions.
- Produce campaign resources that are informed by working groups to ensure messaging is accessible and representative.
- Ensure policies and procedures supporting people to be physically active are inclusive; in particular, for the community members who are at greater risk of inactivity.
- Continue to utilise and build on the opportunities, environments and people within Council that can support the equitable provision and inclusive access to physical activity in Yarra.

Source: Active Victoria, Sport and Recreation Victoria (2017)<sup>5</sup>



## Behaviour change

Behaviour change in the context of public health is the process of influencing a person's attitudes and habits to prevent disease. For inactive populations, this change involves a series of lifestyle adjustments for physical activity to become a normal part of daily routines.

To positively influence activity throughout Yarra, a cultural shift is required at both community and individual levels. Active living needs to become a social norm and not an optional part of life reserved for leisure time.<sup>8,9</sup> Yarra Moves priorities and focus areas are designed to have a significant impact on behaviour change.

Achieving meaningful behaviour change requires the understanding of individual:

- Motivations – the influences in people's lives that cause them to act a certain way.
- Barriers – the influences in people's lives that hinder involvement or progress.
- Influencers – those who are able to change the behaviour or thinking of someone.<sup>10</sup>

### Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Engage Council departments who have direct relationships and expertise across the wide range of life stages and circumstances in order to help facilitate a cultural shift and behaviour change in people's physical activity behaviours. Examples of Council branches/units include:
  - Maternal Child Health
  - Family, Youth and Children Services
  - Aged and Disability Services
  - Aboriginal Partnerships
  - Community Development.

- Engage external organisational partnerships and consultation with people who have firsthand experience within Yarra's community to provide an insight into the motivations, barriers and influencers that could be used to achieve meaningful behaviour change.
- Establish working groups to identify and deliver physical activity opportunities. Engage key stakeholders across the domains (home, work, school, etc.) and communities at greater risk of inactivity to collaborate on community driven solutions.
- Establish support structures that can apply a collaborative, consultative approach and facilitate key community driven solutions. An example of how this could be achieved might be through creating networks with external community organisations and Council departments to share ideas, success stories and work together to overcome barriers.
- Encourage positive behaviour change by establishing physical activity as a Yarra health and wellbeing priority through socialising Yarra Moves.
- Strategic and well-thought-out marketing and communication campaigns to have a greater impact on behaviour change in the community. Messaging is relevant and accessible to a wider proportion of the population.
- Establish a cultural change within the Yarra City Council as well as workplaces across Yarra with a focus on driving behaviour change, embedding active living and reducing sedentary behaviour. This cultural change can be achieved through a staff engagement program, marketing and communications campaign and resources to support staff to be more active.



### Establishing healthy foundations

The transitions to and from secondary school are key life stages at which to influence behaviours that establish lifelong healthy habits.<sup>11</sup>

Children who grow up playing sport are 10% more likely to remain active as adults.<sup>12</sup>

## Behaviour change models

Behaviour change models are theories designed to explain how and why behaviour changes. The models provide insight of how to develop initiatives that are likely to positively influence the uptake and maintenance of physical activity. In *Attachment 1 – Yarra Moves Literature Review* two key behaviour change models are outlined (refer to *Diagram 16: COM-B model of behaviour change* and *Diagram 17: Transtheoretical model of Behaviour Change*).

### Convenience

Convenience requires physically active choices to be both simple and enjoyable. Convenience can help movement become part of daily routines. It reduces the option of choosing not to be active, contributing to a cultural shift towards active lifestyles.

Many of the barriers identified (refer to *Table 12: Barriers to engaging in physical activity* in *Attachment 1 – Yarra Moves Literature Review*) can be overcome through ensuring physical activity is a convenient option at every stage of the day. Easy and enjoyable experiences also satisfy many of the identified motivations (refer to *Table 13: Motivating factors to engaging in physical activity* in *Attachment 1 – Yarra Moves Literature Review*) to being active.

Ensuring convenience underpins each of Yarra Moves' focus areas (opportunity, environment and people) can only improve all physical activity experiences for participants, deliverers and influencers at all stages of life.

## Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Review policies and strategies to help incorporate the concept of active lifestyles, rather than people needing to choose to be fit.
- Review and update the Recreation Unit policies to ensure physical activity is the focus rather than the traditional model of sport. This impacts convenience for people in Yarra by:
  - Having greater opportunities in Yarra for social sport, unstructured sport or sports that are less traditional.
  - Having more diversity across the current sport and recreation clubs.
  - Grants to clubs providing more opportunities for all people to be physically active.
- Continue to support active transport and making it convenient for people to walk, ride, scoot and skate as a means of transport.
- Provide infrastructure that makes active living a convenient option, such as paths, lighting, safety audits, etc.
- Develop and implement an engaging campaign and communication to support people to choose an active lifestyle, in particular those people who are at greater risk of inactivity.
- Implement initiatives within the Yarra City Council workplace that make active living a convenient option for all employees while working on site and at home.
- Provide support across Council to make physically active choices the convenient option across all programs, services and policies.

Those who do little or no physical activity are more likely to get active and stay active when the activity is social and unstructured and can be fitted into everyday life.<sup>26</sup>

VicHealth insight

## Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement is the ongoing improvement of products, services or processes in response to environmental, individual and organisational changes.

The long-term approach to this strategy considers Yarra's forecast population growth, which is projected to increase by more than 140% by 2031.<sup>27</sup> Yarra Moves caters for a changing and growing target audience through continuous improvement.

Continuous improvement will apply to the delivery and evaluation of Yarra Moves as both a strategic document and an action plan. In addition, continuous improvement applies to individual behaviours amongst Yarra's community. Individuals of all ages and abilities are encouraged to improve their own lives through physical activity and this in turn will contribute to the wider social shift towards active living.

Appropriate engagement and support in continually improving their health and wellbeing through physical activity should be given to all people, from the community members taking part in physical activity to those individual and organisations delivering services.

39% of Australian sport participants use some form of wearable technology.<sup>12</sup>

SportAus insight

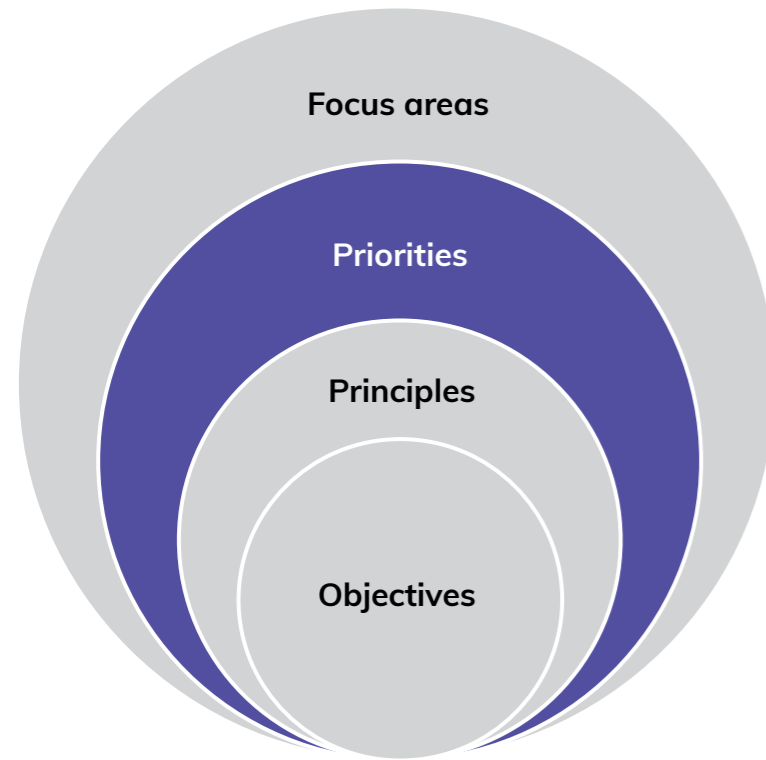
## Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Provide support through services, programs and campaigns via Yarra Moves to encourage people to take ownership of their decision-making to positively influence a culture of active living.
- Create collaborative working groups used to drive systematic continuous improvement.
- Complete physical activity audit/gap analysis to provide insight into what is currently available, what is needed and how the community engages with physical activity.
- Create workplace physical activity plan/staff engagement program for Yarra City Council employees that can be used as a case study for an active workplace.
- Ensure continuous improvement is embedded in the delivery of Yarra Moves, as well as the creation and review of the action plans.

Research, evidence and evaluation are indispensable components for the development of physical education, physical activity and sport.<sup>2</sup>

UNESCO insight

# Priorities



The priorities identify the most important areas where Council can integrate the strategy's principles to positively impact active living

- Culture**
  - Yarra supports active living
  - Champion active role models
  - Collaborative decision making
- Proactivity**
  - Support existing service providers
  - Address gaps in service delivery
  - Develop policy for an active Yarra
- Communication**
  - Open communication
  - Promote active living
  - Lifelong engagement
- Impact**
  - Identify and engage at-risk people
  - Design services to meet needs
  - Target sedentary domains
- Active neighbourhoods**
  - Implement active design
  - Activate underutilised space
  - Increase walkability and cycling

Yarra Moves addresses the need for a strategic approach to increasing physical activity levels in the community. Priorities are established to support the development of action plans that are aligned to the strategy's objectives and principles and address the strategy's focus areas.

The delivery of physical activity is impacted by many elements of local government operations, both directly and indirectly. Not all initiatives are able to be delivered. To ensure action plans are achievable and effective, within available budgets and resourcing, the below priorities will be used to inform decisions accordingly.

## 1. Culture

This priority concerns the shared values of Yarra City Council and the Yarra community that influence social norms.

### Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Demonstrate proactive, strong and consistent leadership in supporting physical activity.
- Position Yarra as a role model in active living, inspiring others.
- Share resources and collaborate with all stakeholders to deliver meaningful outcomes that are reflective of community needs.
- Review and update policies to reflect a culture that drives and support active living opportunities for all.
- Create working groups that drive a culture of collaborative decision making.
- Embed a culture of active living in the Yarra City Council workplace, influencing the wider community to see active living as the accepted social norm and reduce sedentary behaviour.

## 2. Proactivity

This priority concerns the conscious efforts to actively make a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of people in Yarra, instead of responding to problems after they have occurred.

### Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Provide support to people, organisations and initiatives already providing physical activity opportunities, positively influencing active lifestyles throughout Yarra.
- Identify and address gaps in physical activity services.
- Develop policy that actively encourages people in Yarra to be physically active.



### 3. Communication

This priority concerns the exchange of information between all members of Yarra's community and the wider physical activity and health systems that impact active living.

#### Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Ensure Yarra Moves campaigns and communication engages with the community and provides avenues for feedback.
- Raise the awareness of physical activity within Yarra by promoting opportunities and encouraging healthy lifestyles.
- Engage people throughout their lifetime, targeting trigger points at key life stages to encourage movement for life.
- Encourage collaboration amongst key stakeholders and the community on developing community led solutions to physical inactivity.
- Provide a portal to communicate the opportunities with Yarra to be physically active.

### 4. Impact

This priority concerns the level of influence, or strength of effect that initiatives have on people's behaviour.

#### Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Identify and engage underrepresented and at-risk community groups.
- Support a range of tailored services that meet the various needs of Yarra's diverse community.
- Facilitate behaviour change to reduce time spent sedentary at home, place of learning, work and commuting.
- Utilise resources currently available to have an immediate impact on physical activity outcomes.

- Engage stakeholders who understand the barriers faced by Yarra's most at risk.
- Engage vulnerable communities in campaigns and promotions that are meaningful to them.
- Use the physical activity service audit and gap analysis to inform initiatives that will have the greatest impact.

### 5. Active neighbourhoods

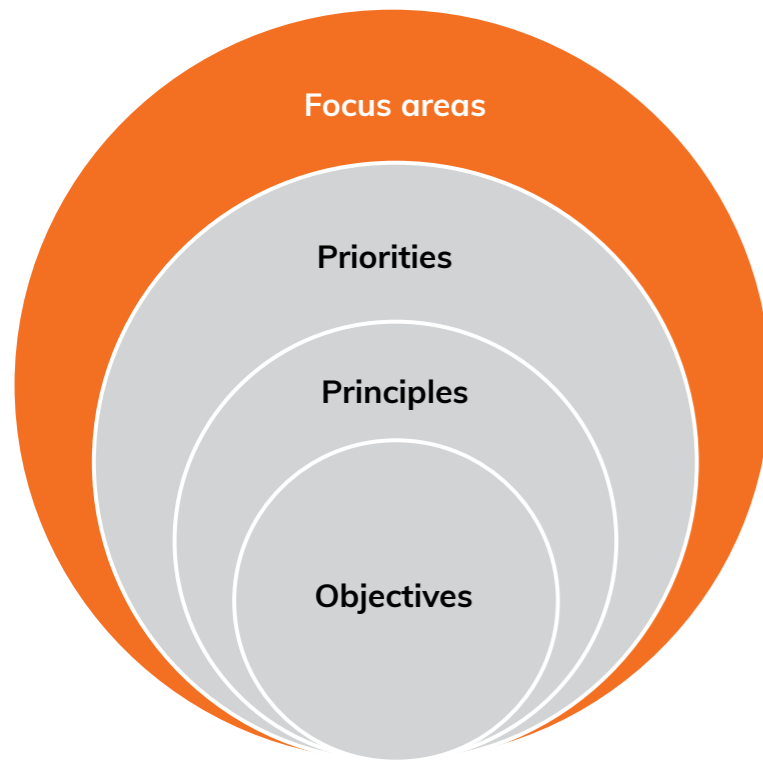
This priority concerns the development of safe, accessible and well-connected neighbourhoods that optimise and encourage active transport.

#### Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Promote active design to ensure physical activity is safe, enjoyable and convenient.
- Encourage and support greater walkability and cycling throughout Yarra.
- Introduce the concept of active neighbourhoods by bringing a range of service providers together to collaborate on holistic solutions.
- Identify the various needs for development of active neighbourhoods through Yarra by completing an open space audit.
- Influence the consideration of active neighbourhoods in planning by influencing key decision makers through first-hand experience.



# Focus Areas



<b>Opportunity</b>	
<b>Services</b>	<b>Policy</b>
People-centric service design, delivery and promotion	Council policy supports and encourages physically active lifestyles
<b>Environment</b>	
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Domains</b>
Environments encourage movement	Movement happens wherever people live, work, learn and play
<b>People</b>	
<b>Relationships</b>	<b>Deliverers</b>
Connecting with others to achieve more physically active lifestyles	People that facilitate and influence physical activity are supported

The focus areas reflect the key roles of local government where the strategy's priorities can best influence physical activity

Yarra Moves highlights the role local government can play in increasing physical activity. Council is able to impact the community by directly influencing:

- Opportunity;
- Environment; and
- People

Informed by Yarra Moves priorities, all focus areas are important and interconnected when developing action plans. Success depends on holistic approaches to engaging people in physical activity.

## Opportunity

This focus area acknowledges that time and circumstances affect people's ability to be physically active. It highlights how local government can positively impact these factors to encourage more movement through the availability and influence of appropriate:

- Services; and
- Policy

Every Australian, at all stages of their life regardless of gender, ability or ethnicity, and no matter where they live, are able to undertake the exercise they need and want in a safe, fun and inclusive way, whether it is through sport or other types of activity.<sup>1</sup>

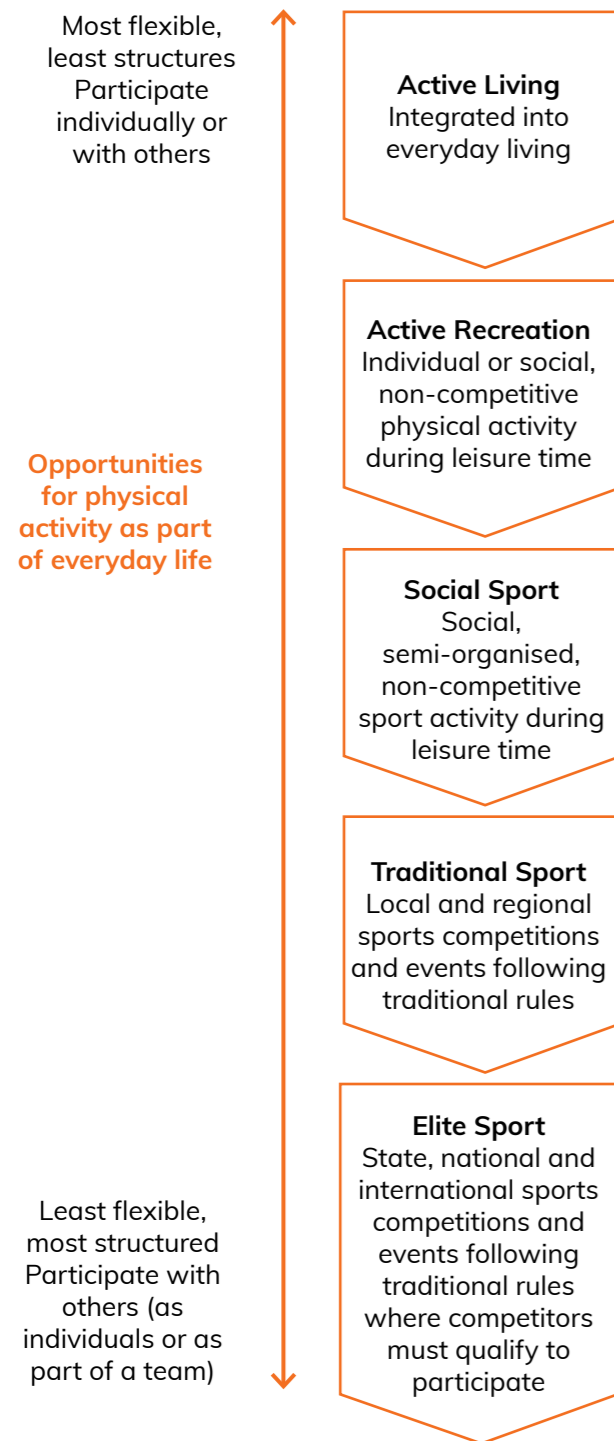
SportAus insight



## Services

Services are the supply and promotion of a public need (e.g. amenities) and/or actions (e.g. health screening) that assist people to engage in physical activity.

**Diagram 7: Doing sport differently**



Source: Doing Sport Differently, VicHealth (2019)<sup>3</sup>

## Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Delivery of a physical activity service audit.
- Identify and address gaps in service delivery, such as physical activity opportunities that are aligned with the principles of active living.
- Better promotion of all opportunities for people to be active. Initiatives need to be supported by appropriate messaging to be successful, including:
  - Simple, clear, coordinated and accessible messaging helps to ensure people are aware of all opportunities to be active within and around Yarra and how to access those opportunities; and
  - Messaging addresses a range of emotional motivations and promotes the overall experience of any activity, not just the health benefits.
- Informal promotion driven by community members and role models. The strength of informal relationships (refer to Focus Area - People, page 26), indicates that information conveyed by personal or community

influencers is more likely to be heard and resonate than if communicated directly by Council. This concept is pivotal for reaching people who are unlikely to be connected with opportunities by traditional means such as those who do not have access to mainstream technology, or those who have difficulty accessing official publications.

- Facilitate collaboration between Council and community and reliance on wider, interconnected systems to drive success as opposed to a top-down approach to positive behaviour change.
- Embrace people-centric service design, delivery and promotion by proactively seeking community driven solutions. Solutions should be focused on providing more opportunities for physical activity as part of everyday life.

In Victoria 80% of time spent participating in exercise, sport and recreation is active recreation.<sup>2</sup>

SRV insight



## Policy

Policy is a set of formal principles formulated and/or adopted by Council to communicate and deliver on strategic intent, guiding community life in Yarra.

### Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Embed physical activity in all policy development and operational practices. This involves periodic review of policy and re-imagining of structures to ensure access and benefits are available for everyone to be physically active.
- Ensure policy is reviewed, updated and representative of the community's needs.
- Utilise Council policy to enact positive change in the delivery of physical activity services.
- Support all Council departments in embedding physical activity outcomes into policy and planning.
- Formalise workplace policy to positively influence people's uptake of physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour.

Do it with us, not to us.<sup>5</sup>

Sport England insight

## Environment

This focus area acknowledges the design of Yarra and how people interact with their surroundings. The strategy emphasises the need for the physical elements of Yarra to be designed for movement. It also encourages the community to prioritise movement in all spaces and places. The environment can be influenced via:

- Infrastructure; and
- Domains

Active neighbourhoods foster positive social connections, promote feelings of safety and belonging, stimulate local business activity and can reduce the environmental impacts associated with car emissions and traffic congestion.<sup>6</sup>

Vic Gov insight

## Infrastructure

Infrastructure is the combined built and natural environments. Yarra Moves calls for infrastructure that facilitates safe, enjoyable and convenient active lifestyles.

To address Yarra's forecast population growth (>140% in 15 years<sup>7</sup>), Yarra's infrastructure needs to cater for daily activity in an environment that faces competing demand for access. Yarra Moves supports the principles for 20-minute neighbourhoods (refer to Diagram 8: 20 minute Neighbourhood) enabling all people to meet most everyday needs within a 20-minute journey from home by active transport.<sup>8</sup>

### Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Delivery of an open space audit.
- Use the results from the audit to better utilise the available spaces and places throughout Yarra as places for people to be active.

## Yarra community insight



56% Yarra residents felt safe walking after dark.<sup>9</sup>



46.5% Yarra residents felt they live in a close-knit neighbourhood.<sup>10</sup>



46% Yarra residents live in a flat or apartment.<sup>11</sup>

Diagram 8: 20-minute neighbourhood



Source: Plan Melbourne, Victorian Government (2017)<sup>8</sup>

## Domains

Domains refer to the different aspects of life where physical activity occurs. They are the spaces and places that people engage with and are influenced by social norms.

With more than 320,000 trips made within Yarra on any given weekday<sup>12</sup>, active transport has a significant role in improving the overall health and wellbeing of Yarra's community. Exchanging sedentary modes of transport for active travel not only provides an opportunity for daily physical activity, but also reduces the amount of carbon emissions that contribute negatively to climate change.

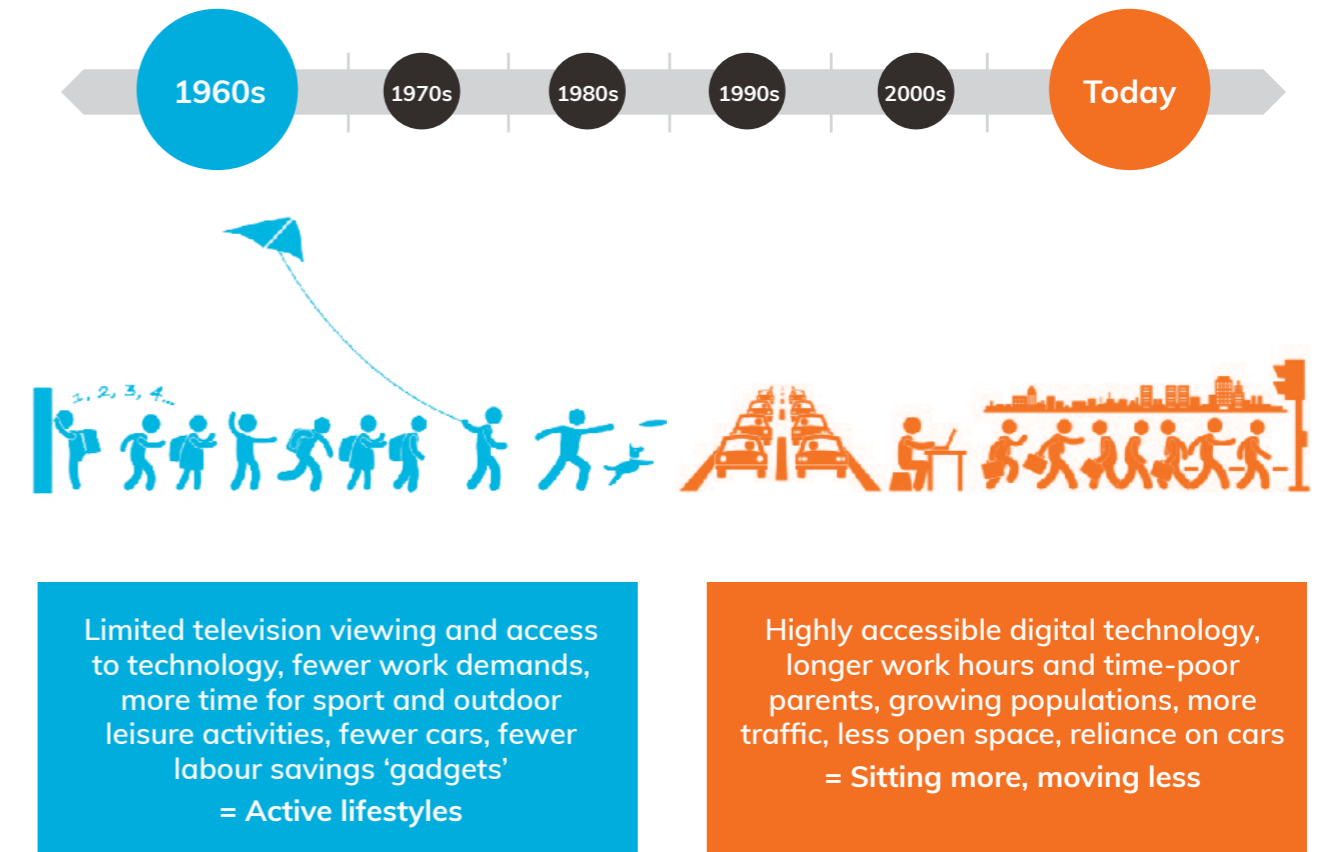
This focus area seeks to embed physical activity as the norm within all domains including:

- Aged care
- Community hubs
- Health care
- Homes
- Leisure
- Places of learning
- Sport
- Travel
- Workplaces

## Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Identify opportunities for relationship building within each domain.
- Development of strong relationships between stakeholders from multiple domains to drive informed, people-centric services and policy.
- Better understand how messaging can be delivered effectively in each domain.
- Deliver a series of initiatives promoting physical activity in the workplace, a domain associated with sedentary behaviour.

Diagram 9: Active for life



Source: Active for Life, VicHealth (2014)<sup>13</sup>



## Yarra community insight



49% Yarra residents rent properties.<sup>9</sup>



15% of Yarra workers live in Yarra.<sup>10</sup>



20% Yarra households have no car.<sup>9</sup>

## People

This focus area acknowledges all the people of Yarra and the role everyone has in positively influencing behaviour towards an active society. It recognises Council as a leading community partner to combat inactivity. The influence of people is explained through:

- Relationships; and
- Deliverers.

## Relationships

Relationships describe how people or organisations are connected. Relationships can be formal, or informal and can assist in identifying the influencers in a person's life that can positively impact individual behaviour change.

### Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Deliver physical activity initiatives in cooperation with both formal and informal networks to have the greatest possible impact on delivering positive community health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Identify opportunities for relationship building within each domain.
- Conduct audits of services and establish appropriate relationships to address identified gaps.
- Influence deliverers to consider the needs of a wider target audience and support them in building strong community relationships.
- Strengthen relationships with community leaders and deliverers by supporting health promotion in a meaningful way.
- Identify key stakeholders that can positively influence increased physical activity levels across Yarra and develop the tools to best facilitate outcome focussed working groups.

- Facilitate key community representatives in collaborating on developing community driven solutions to achieving common health and wellbeing goals through physical activity. Yarra Moves champions the sharing of knowledge and resources amongst networks to achieve optimum results. Networks that can positively influence physical activity include:
  - Aged care services
  - Arts
  - Community organisations
  - Disability services
  - Faith based organisations
  - Government - local, regional, state and national
  - Health sector/health care
  - Informal relationships
  - Media
  - National/state sport governing bodies
  - Neighbourhood houses
  - New and emerging industries
  - Physical activity/leisure/recreation organisations
  - Private sector/commercial businesses
  - Schools, including early learning, primary, secondary and tertiary institutions
  - Social care services
  - Sport clubs
  - Transportation
  - Users/customers/community/individuals
  - Women's health services
  - Workplaces.

## Deliverers

Deliverers are the people and organisations that directly facilitate and influence physical activity opportunities within the community. Examples include coaches, officials, administrators, facilitators and support people that provide physical activity services. They take many forms, from Council employees to private providers and community volunteers. Whether the deliverer is a professional or not, Yarra Moves supports the recruitment, retention and training of this vital cohort.

### Yarra Moves identified opportunities for action

- Deliverers are considered in any initiative developed through the implementation of Yarra Moves:
  - A stronger physical activity workforce (paid or unpaid) can strengthen the opportunities for the community to engage in meaningful physical activity
  - The principle of inclusion must be applied to deliverers as much as possible to ensure that people facilitating physical activity in Yarra are representative of the community they are supporting.
- Provide strategic support to facilitators of informal physical activity opportunities such as those that promote active living. These could be facilitators of social sport, neighbourhood house activities, gardening workshops, opportunities provided in aged care, carers and support people.
- Influence deliverers to consider the needs of a wider target audience and support them in building strong community relationships.

- Build working groups to support deliverers through an engaged network of stakeholders.
- Create a marketing campaign to support health promotion and the work of deliverers in a meaningful way.
- Utilise first-hand experience of Yarra City Council workplace physical activity plan/staff engagement program to support other workplaces (deliverers) in Yarra.

Deliverers are the most vital person to participants' experience and retention.<sup>3</sup>

VicHealth insight

> 1.8 million Australians volunteer in the sport sector.<sup>1</sup>

SportAus insight

Sport volunteers contribute \$50 billion dollars a year to Australia's economy.<sup>1</sup>

SportAus insight

## Conclusion

Yarra City Council is committed to a healthy and inclusive Yarra and physical activity is a known contributor to a number of positive health and wellbeing outcomes.

Yarra City Council is committed to a healthy and inclusive Yarra and physical activity is a known contributor to a number of positive health and wellbeing outcomes.

At the time of developing Yarra Moves, half the adult population, and five out of six young teens in Yarra do not meet the recommended guidelines for physical activity. The risks associated with inactivity are heightened in Yarra where levels of sedentary behaviour are of specific concern. Two in five adults spend more than seven hours sedentary each weekday and half of the year eight students in Yarra do not meet the recommendation for avoiding sedentary behaviour.

The overarching vision of Yarra Moves is for Yarra to become synonymous with active living; a place where all people can enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle. In order to influence the shift in social behaviours and norms so that active living will become straightforward and embraced in the community, the key **objectives** of the strategic framework include:

- Increase proportion of population that is physically active;
- Reduce sedentary behaviour; and
- Support lifelong healthy habits for optimal health.

All initiatives are to be guided by strategic **principles**, planning **priorities** and local government **focus areas** to ensure that meaningful change can be achieved in creating an active Yarra.

The **principles** provide a foundation for decision making, setting core guidelines to achieve the plan's objectives through:

- Inclusion will drive the allocation of resources to ensure all people can participate in physical activity, regardless of individual circumstance;
- Behaviour change will drive the cultural shift towards active living;
- Convenience will ensure that active choices are a simple and enjoyable option for all; and
- Continuous improvement will be sought in all aspects of the provision, ongoing development and participation of physical activity in Yarra.

The **priorities** identify the most important areas where Council can integrate the strategy's principles to positively impact active living by developing actions that:

- Focus on establishing a culture of active living throughout Yarra.
- Proactively address positive health and wellbeing outcomes through physical activity.
- Are supported by appropriate communication to ensure the community is informed and engaged.
- Positively impact behaviour that supports active living; and
- Contribute to active neighbourhoods that are safe, accessible and well-connected optimising and encouraging active transport.

The **focus areas** reflect the key roles of local government where the strategy's priorities can best influence physical activity:

- Opportunities will exist for all people to access and participate in physical activity. Council's influence on services and policy will ensure there is always the opportunity to be active.
- Environments will enable people to be active in all the spaces and places they interact with every day. Council's influence on the infrastructure and domains throughout Yarra will ensure the environment always encourages physical activity; and

- People of Yarra will contribute to active living at all stages of life. Council's influence on formal and informal relationships and the deliverers of physical activity services will ensure that the community is always valued as a key contributor to an active Yarra.

Through collaborative and flexible action planning, Yarra Moves will guide a cultural change towards active living that results in an increase in physical activity levels and less sedentary behaviour throughout Yarra.



## Glossary

**Active design:** Designing the built environment and surrounding landscape in a manner that encourages physical activity.

**Active living:** Incorporating physical activity into daily routines.

**Active neighbourhoods:** Safe, accessible and well-connected neighbourhoods that optimise and encourage active transport.

**Active recreation:** Leisure time physical activity undertaken outside of structured competition sport (e.g. walking, jogging, gym, dance, nature-based outdoor activity, social sport and active play).

**Active transport:** Travel modes that involve physical activity, such as walking, cycling, scooting and skating and includes any incidental activity associated with using public transport.

**Australian Public Service Commission:** A small policy agency within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet that is dedicated to making genuine advancements in the way the Australian Public Service workforce operates. See [apsc.gov.au](http://apsc.gov.au).

**Barriers:** The influences in people's lives that hinder involvement or progress.

**Behaviour change:** In the context of public health, is the process of influencing a person's attitudes and habits to prevent disease. For inactive populations, this change involves a series of lifestyle adjustments for physical activity to become a normal part of daily routines.

**Change Our Game:** A Victorian Government initiative working to level the playing field for women and girls in sport and active recreation. See [changeourgame.vic.gov.au](http://changeourgame.vic.gov.au).

**Chronic disease:** Refer to non-communicable disease.

**Cognitive function:** Processes of the brain including memory, learning, attention, problem solving and decision making amongst others.

**Communication:** The exchange of information between all members of Yarra's community and the wider physical activity and health systems that impact active living.

**Communities of practice:** Collaborative networks of experts, professionals, service providers, volunteers and community representatives striving for a shared outcome. They enable the ongoing sharing of knowledge, ideas and experience that generate continuous improvement.

**Continuous improvement:** The ongoing improvement of products, services or processes in response to environmental, individual and organisational changes.

**Convenience:** Requires physically active choices to be both simple and enjoyable.

**COVID-19:** Novel coronavirus declared a global pandemic in 2020 that caused a number of government mandated restrictions throughout Australia and Victoria.

**Culture:** The shared values of Yarra City Council and the Yarra community that influence social norms.

**Deliverers:** The people and organisations that directly facilitate and influence physical activity opportunities within the community.

**Domains:** The different aspects of life where physical activity occurs.

**Equity of access:** Ensuring all people have full and equal access to information and services regardless of their personal circumstances. Refer also substantive equality.

**Health:** A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

**Impact:** The level of influence, or strength of effect that initiatives have on people's behaviour.

**Inclusion:** The fundamental right of all people to partake in physical activity regardless of individual circumstances.

**Influencers:** Those who are able to change the behaviour or thinking of someone.

**Infrastructure:** The combined built and natural environments.

**Liveability:** Combination of all aspects of a community that contribute to the quality of life experienced by those living there.

**Motivations:** The influences in people's lives that cause them to act a certain way.

**Non-communicable disease:** Non-transferrable, long lasting conditions with persistent effects.

**Physical activity:** Any activity that gets your body moving and expends energy – that is, makes your breathing become quicker and your heart beat faster.

**Physical literacy:** Physical literacy is the integration of physical, psychological, cognitive and social capabilities that help us live active, healthy and fulfilling lifestyles. Put simply, physical literacy is the skills, confidence and motivation to move for life.

**Policy:** A set of formal principles formulated and/or adopted by Council to communicate and deliver on strategic intent, guiding community life in Yarra.

**Premature mortality:** Deaths that occur at an age earlier than a selected cut-off (for this analysis, deaths among people aged under 75 years in Australia are considered premature).

**Preventative health:** Encouraging people to lead a healthier lifestyle to prevent disease.

**Proactive:** The conscious efforts to actively make a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of people in Yarra, instead of responding to problems after they have occurred.

**Relationships:** How people or organisations are connected.

**Sedentary (behaviour):** Any behaviour outside of sleep that involves no physical activity causing little energy expenditure and posing health risks.

**Services:** The supply and promotion of a public need (e.g. amenities) and/or actions (e.g. health screening) that assist people to engage in physical activity.

**Social isolation:** The state of having minimal contact with others.

**Social norms:** The informal rules that govern behaviour in society.

**Sport Australia (formally the Australian Sports Commission):** Australian Government agency responsible for supporting and investing in sport. See [sportaus.gov.au](http://sportaus.gov.au).



**Sport England:** An arms-length body of government responsible for growing and developing grassroots sport and getting more people active across England. See [sportengland.org](http://sportengland.org).

**Sport and Recreation Victoria:** A Victorian Government agency dedicated to supporting Victoria's sport and recreation sector and inspiring Victorians to get active. See [sport.vic.gov.au](http://sport.vic.gov.au).

**Substantive equality:** Acknowledging that policy may indirectly contribute to unequal access for disadvantaged and marginalised community groups by addressing specific needs to support those who would otherwise have difficulty accessing services. Refer also equity of access.

**Systemic change:** All components of a wider (health/physical activity) system are interconnected and change is required within each to make a meaningful impact.

**This Girl Can:** A Sport England initiative that celebrates active women who are doing their thing no matter how they do it, how they look or even how sweaty they get. VicHealth have licensed the campaign and are delivering it in Victoria. See [www.thisgirlcan.co.uk](http://www.thisgirlcan.co.uk) or [thisgirlcan.com.au](http://thisgirlcan.com.au).

**UNESCO:** The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; it seeks to build peace through international cooperation in education, the sciences and culture. See [en.unesco.org](http://en.unesco.org).

**Universal design:** The process of designing products and environments to be used by everyone, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design.

**VicHealth (the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation):** A world-first health promotion foundation, focused on promoting good health and preventing chronic disease in Victoria. See [vichealth.vic.gov.au](http://vichealth.vic.gov.au).

**VicSport:** The peak body for sport and active recreation in Victoria, who work closely with the Victorian Government to promote the many benefits organised sport has to offer. See [vicsport.com.au](http://vicsport.com.au).

**Walkability:** How friendly and conducive an area is to walking. Factors influencing walkability include presence or absence and quality of footpaths, traffic and road conditions, land use patterns, accessibility for prams, wheelchairs and scooters, and safety, among others.

**Wellbeing:** A combination of health factors that determines a person's perception of themselves and their life, often associated to happiness and life satisfaction.

**Women in Sport (UK):** A UK charity with the goal of giving every woman and girl in the United Kingdom the opportunity to experience the transformational rewards of sport. See [womeninsport.org](http://womeninsport.org).

**Working groups:** Coordination of various stakeholders that can contribute to specific initiatives addressing identified challenges or gaps in service provision.

**World Health Organisation:** The directing and coordinating authority in global public health within the United Nations system. See [who.int](http://who.int).

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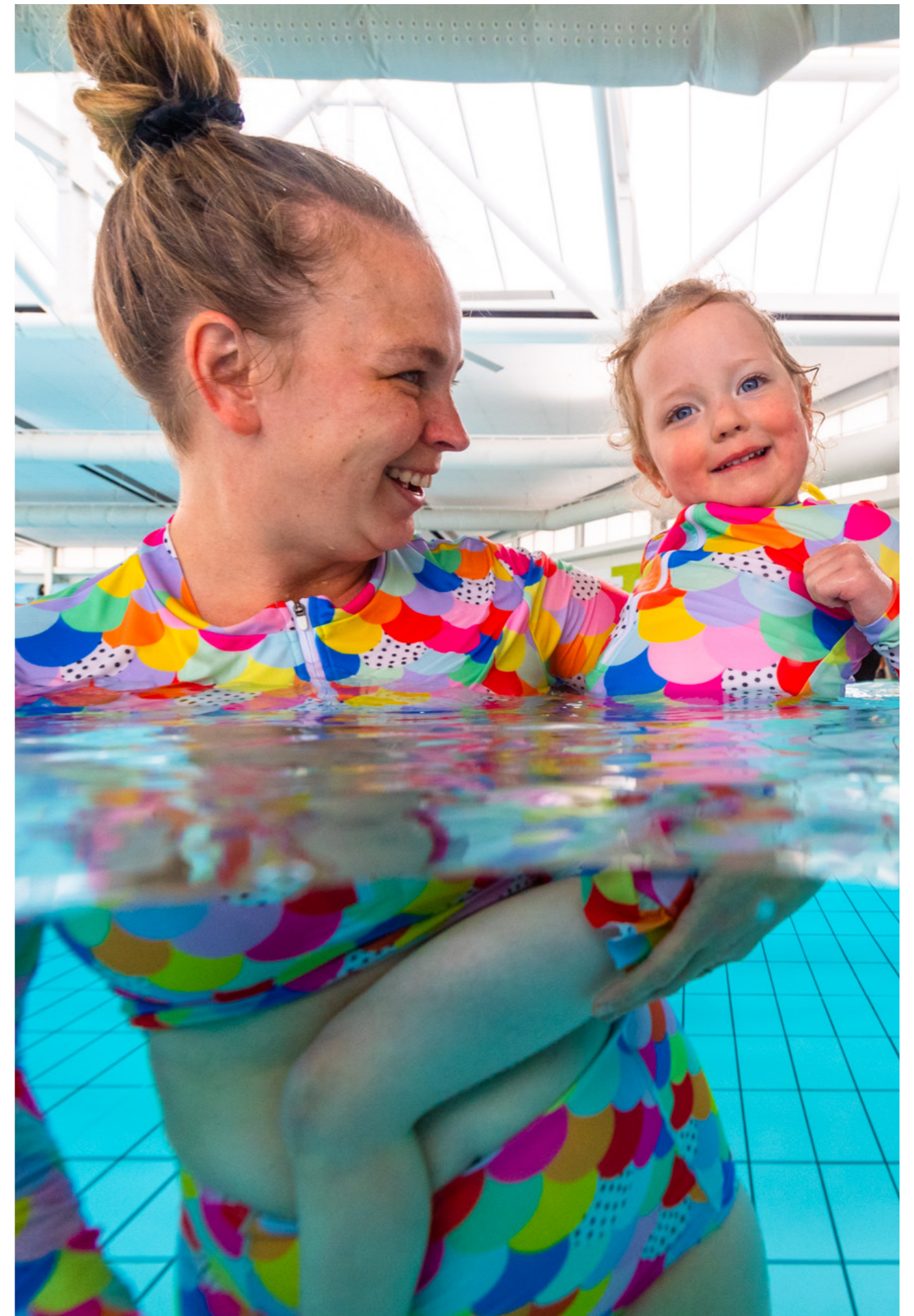
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Collingwood Town Hall

140 Hoddle Street, Abbotsford