



IMAGINE  
THE YARRA

# DRAFT YARRA STRATEGIC PLAN

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

### SUBMISSION COVER SHEET

<b>Submission Number:</b>	215076
<b>Name (Individual/Organisation):</b>	Individual
<b>Attachments:</b>	Attachment 1 – Survey submission



## **New Form submission on Help us shape the final 10-year strategic plan for the Yarra River**

Hi [YarraStrategicPlan@melbournewater.com.au](mailto:YarraStrategicPlan@melbournewater.com.au)

There has been a submission on [Help us shape the final 10-year strategic plan for the Yarra River](#) through Engage Victoria

A copy of the submission is provided as below:

### **Part 1: Working toward the Community Vision**

#### **1a. Do the four, 10-Year Performance Objectives adequately reflect the 50 Year Community Vision?**

Somewhat

#### **1b. Please outline your reasoning for this opinion (optional)**

A healthy river and lands Not surprisingly, the first relates to a healthy river and surrounding lands that are essential to improving water quality. Preserving the natural vegetation, billabongs and habitats is critical. The problems caused by rapid stormwater run-off in urban areas where hard surfaces cover much of the area will require increasing attention. A culturally diverse river corridor The second objective is concerned with the heritage of the Yarra river, the Birrarung, and this is where the draft strategic plan sets a remarkable precedent: it recognises the role played by the traditional custodians of the lands surrounding the waterway over many thousands of years, and the significance of the river in their culture. It would be a

mistake to think that the discovery of a quality water supply by early European settlers was simply a fortuitous historical accident. Continuing engagement of the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung people is a very positive direction. Quality parklands for a growing population The third objective recognises the great value of the river's parklands in supporting the wellbeing of a large population, through recreational and community activities. It is important that parklands along the river are accessible to all, and that pathways are interlinked with one another and with other parklands to provide a continuous network. Protecting the natural beauty of the Yarra River corridor The fourth objective is concerned with protecting and celebrating the natural beauty and landscapes along the river.

**2a. Are the actions identified to deliver the 10-Year Performance Objectives achievable, realistic and measurable?**

No

**2b. Please outline your reasoning for this opinion (optional)**

The 10-year performance objectives are purely descriptive, with no numerical targets. Words such as "improving" are open to interpretation. Without using measurable attributes, such as the number of species, terms such as "greater biodiversity" are difficult if not impossible to substantiate.

**3a. Which specific actions do you think will be easiest or most challenging to deliver?**

The short-term (1 - 3 years) actions are going to be challenging as they lack any sense of measurable targets or outcomes. That does not bode well for medium to long term actions

**3b. Why do you think this?**

It will be important for any of the actions (short, medium or long term) that the strategic plan defines targets and outcomes that can be measured against the objectives. Even more important will be defining the way the targets will be measured. For example: - "number of hectares of vegetation and habitat corridor that connect to the Yarra River land" The strategic

plan doesn't clearly define what is in or what is out. There are many significant areas on each tributaries of the Yarra River that could be argued as being suitable for inclusion. If the strategic plan doesn't consider these areas worthy of inclusion it should be clear as to why.

**4. What do you/ your organisation think is the greatest opportunity the Yarra Strategic Plan presents? Please rank the following statements in order of importance from 1 -4**

Improving water quality of the Yarra River and protecting land, floodplains and billabongs - 1

Acknowledging, protecting and commemorating the rich heritage of the Birrarung - 1

Improving the river's parklands to support community wellbeing - 1

Protecting the significance of the Yarra River's landscapes and views - 1

**5. Do you feel the draft Yarra Strategic Plan has put appropriate actions in place to ensure delivery on the aspirations of Traditional Owners?**

Unsure

**6a. Are there key priority areas of land you think should be added to the parkland network along the Yarra River?**

Yes

**6b. If you answered Yes, where are these key priority areas of land and why do you think they should be added?**

The geographical scope of the Yarra Strategic Plan be expanded to include the tributary creeks and rivers that contribute to the flows and to recreational and cultural values of the Yarra River.

**Part 2: Land Use framework**

**7. The Land Use framework aims to put the Yarra River at the heart of future planning and development decisions. What is your / your organisation's view about the Land Use**

**framework?**

The Land Use Framework covers many elements of the draft strategic plan's areas of interest. However, there are some significant gaps that need to be addressed before the strategic plan is finalised.

**8a. Do you believe the Land Use directions will support the 50 Year Community Vision?**

No

**8b. Why do you think this?**

The Land Use Framework relies on the current state land use analysis undertaken for the Yarra Strategic Plan Map Book 2018 . However, there are inconsistencies between the Strategic Plan Map Book and the draft strategic plan. Most creeks are not labelled on the maps for each reach. Some are only considered in terms of the draft strategic plan's areas of interest (i.e. 500 metres and 1 km on either side of the Yarra River). However, several have attributes valued by the community in their own corridors which enhance links to and from the Yarra River. "Catchment links" appear in some maps, but there is no discussion of the attributes of these links and the mapping is not consistently applied across all reaches. Indeed, there is no real discussion of these in terms of wider catchment opportunities/threats to or by the Yarra River strategy plan area. It is recommended that the Yarra Strategic Plan Map Book 2018 be reviewed and revised in light of the matters in this and following sections before the Yarra Strategic Plan is finalised.

**9a. Do you agree with the Land Use directions for the Yarra River?**

Somewhat

**9b. Please outline your reasoning for this opinion (optional)**

It appears that the land use directions are to be applied only in respect of development proposals in the vicinity of the Yarra River corridors. The strategic plan will need to clarify as to whether public agencies or local government would be required to adhere to those directions in

undertaking their own developments along the corridors.

**10a. Do you believe that the 13 significant places identified for the river corridor reflect the most regionally significant locations?**

Somewhat

**10b. Why do you think this?**

As noted above there are gaps in the land use analysis of the corridors and new areas that should be included. Until these gaps are addressed, the best that can be said is that the 13 sites already identified would be a minimum number.

**11. Do you agree with the opportunities identified for the significant places that you connect with?**

Somewhat

**12. Do you have any further ideas about how the Plan may provide for the cultural/spiritual/environmental care and protection of the Yarra River over the next ten years, whilst also working toward achieving the 50 Year Community Vision?**

SPECIFIC AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT Upper Rural Reach: Coranderrk Creek is an example where the draft strategic plan only considers issues within the strategy plan area, but not in terms of its own corridor's attributes that are enhanced by its links to the Yarra River.

Lower Rural Reach: Watsons Creek is shown as an area for protection and apparently part of the strategy plan area, with statements of significance and opportunities for its roles in the draft strategic plan's areas of interest. Watsons Creek is significant in the Yarra River catchment.

However, statements of significance and opportunities should be adopted for all tributaries: •

Brushy Creek confluence is recognised for its sites of particular ecological and cultural significance to the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung people within the strategy plan area. However, there is no mention of Brushy Creek corridor beyond the draft strategic plan's areas of interest.

• Steels Creek, Stringybark Creek and Watts River area mapped, but with no accompanying

text or the significance of each as catchment links. Suburban Reach: The main tributaries include Diamond Creek, Plenty River, Darebin Creek and Merri Creek, all of which have recreational trails connecting to the Yarra River. The tributaries provide vital biodiversity links into the catchment. However, the draft strategic plan needs to recognise other attractors along those tributaries which make their links to the Yarra River important. • Mullum Mullum Creek is mapped, but there is no text or reference to it being a catchment link • Other (5) “catchment links” are mapped, but not labelled on maps nor discussed in the text. Existing projects, including the North East Link and Fitzsimons Lane projects, are mentioned and mapped. However, while the Suburban Rail Loop is mapped, there is no reference to it being a significant project. Inner City Reach: Gardiners Creek Confluence: the statement of significance and opportunities again is an example of the approach that needs to be adopted for all tributaries of the Yarra River. However, there is no reference to Gardiners Creek being a “catchment link” despite its own catchment covering a significant area of the inner eastern metropolitan Melbourne. The “former Williams Creek in central Melbourne” is given scant regard on the basis that “it is now the Elizabeth Street drain”. Nevertheless, the creek drainage line still exists, and it still re-emerges in Elizabeth Street from time to time after periods of heavy volumes of rain. The impacts of these flooding events affect the draft strategic plan’s areas of interest. Lessons learned from these events need to be addressed in provisions of the draft strategic plan. The Yarra Strategic Plan Map Book 2018 did not consider the reaches of the Yarra River downstream of the Charles Grimes Bridge. The land use framework for the area between the Charles Grimes Bridge and West Gate Bridge is given only the barest superficial analysis. This is a significant problem. - The Moonee Ponds Creek environs were not considered. Moonee Ponds Creek is mapped, but is incorrectly described as being “outside the study area”. In fact, the creek is the boundary of the study area and the Port of Melbourne. An assessment should be included of its significance and opportunities on its eastern side. There appears to be no analysis of issues of significance to the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung. While the area has been significantly modified over the last 150 years, it would be surprising if there were no historical elements for the traditional owners that could and should be acknowledged. Existing urban development and key transport projects in this reach need further assessment. •

Proposed Fishermans Bend tram routes are mapped, but their opportunities are not analysed • Reinstatement of Webb Dock Rail Link, a Port of Melbourne project, and the Metro Tunnel 2 projects will both impact on the Westgate Park, but it is surprising that these are not analysed or mapped. • Even though the West Gate Tunnel Project skims the outer edge of the draft strategic plan's areas of interest at the confluence of the Yarra and Maribyrnong rivers, it is surprising that there is no mention of the project.

### **13. Finally, what are your overarching thoughts and feelings about the Yarra Strategic Plan?**

The draft strategic plan presents a detailed land use framework for every reach of the river (upper rural / lower rural / suburban / inner city) from the Upper Yarra Reservoir to Westgate Bridge. It also includes photographs and maps that bring the waterway to life, and is written in a way that invites the readers' attention and ongoing interest. However, without the matters raised above being addressed, the strategic plan will not meet its potential. The Yarra Strategic Plan should serve not just as an important reference, but as an inspiration to local governments, community groups, water authorities, planning agencies and others involved in its implementation, as well as to anyone interested in the planning, management and use of Melbourne's waterways and parklands. I have read and support the submission of the Town and Country Planning Association Inc.

### **Contact Details**

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**Upload your submission here**

No file specified

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*The Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murron) Act (the Act) requires:*

- *all submissions to be made available for inspection by the public (s24(1)(b))*
- *the lead agency must make a copy of all public submissions on a draft Yarra Strategic Plan, made to the lead agency, available for public inspection - s24(2)*

All submissions will therefore be made available to the public in accordance with the Act.

Melbourne Water, as lead agency, and or DELWP will publish a copy of your submission, in its entirety, on the Imagine the Yarra website or other Victorian Government website/s as required.

In providing your feedback by written submission you agree that the lead agency may provide a copy of your submission, to affected Local Councils, Government Agencies, Panel (if required) and other submitters.

Your submission may also remain on external servers, even after the period of consultation closes and DELWP has removed the relevant pages from the Engage Victoria website.

**Text will be redacted in submissions to remove personally identifying details, and to comply with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*.**

Should you need to correct the information you provided or gain access to your submission, please contact us via email at: [YarraStrategicPlan@melbournewater.com.au](mailto:YarraStrategicPlan@melbournewater.com.au)

**I agree to the Collection Notice**

Yes

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Regards,

The Engage Victoria Team

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