



IMAGINE
THE YARRA

DRAFT YARRA STRATEGIC PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION

SUBMISSION COVER SHEET

Submission Number:	YSP27
Name (Individual/Organisation):	Individual
Attachments:	Attachment 1 – Written submission

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Yarra Strategic Plan](#)
Subject: DRAFT Yarra Strategic Plan
Date: Sunday, 29 March 2020 8:57:34 PM

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Please find my feedback to the Draft Yarra Strategic Plan

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My Submission:

1. I endorse the Yarra Riverkeeper Association/Environmental Justice Australia submission as it is critical to the river's enhancement and protection to have clearly delineated goals and mechanisms.

For too long I have seen the mismatch between good intentions for the Yarra River's riverine corridor whilst simultaneously

- (a) development has encroached on its banks and riverine area,
- (b) increased storm water from extreme weather events rushes off larger areas of sealed surface,
- (c) more human activity is occurring on and adjacent to the river.

I was a founding member of the Yarra Riverkeeper Association in 2005 and in the years since then I have observed greater awareness of (i) the value the Yarra brings to biodiversity of fauna and flora along its length and (ii) the importance of its water flow not only to agriculture and various commercial enterprises but also to the natural environment and passive and active recreation.

BUT I have not seen sufficient substantive will by state and local governments to (i) counter development plans that impinge on and utilise the river's banks, (ii) help control stormwater surges through utilisation of street and roof catchment/amelioration mechanisms and insistence on sufficient permeable surface areas, and (3) to recognise the importance of water flow and water quality in the Yarra's tributaries and their protection and enhancement.

Action has not matched rhetoric!

The lesson from the past is that clear, measurable, attainable goals need to be specified and the way to their achievement clearly defined.

2. The 10 year Strategy Plan needs to include expansion of public open space along the river's length, particularly in the metropolitan area not just improvements of parklands and protection of its landscapes and views.

This requires:

(a) An acquisition strategy to purchase, initially within 500m of the Yarra's banks, land from private vendors and returned to indigenous vegetation, public open space or community gardens. A \$ figure or a land area objective needs to be set. Funding could, primarily, be sourced from the developer contribution due on new developments within 1km of the river's banks.

As it is, developers maximise profit through proximity to the Yarra; and through reducing the permeable land area are also contributing to stormwater problems hence developers ought to be significant sources of income for the Yarra River's improvement and expansion of its riverine corridor .

Every increase in public open space within the Yarra's proximity benefits ground water flows and levels.

(b) Where a development occurs adjacent to the river then the public open space contribution should be in like-kind, that is land given to the government for public purposes instead of a financial contribution that goes into government coffers.

In conclusion, I commend the work towards enhancing and protecting the Yarra River, and the recognition of its important contribution to environmental, cultural and recreational elements along the length of its course. **I also exhort you to bravely prioritise the Yarra's needs** over that of its surrounding human population as the Yarra's health will be its inhabitants' health as well.

With the projected huge population increase for Melbourne and surrounds, the Yarra is well placed to play an increasingly vital role in reducing the 'heat island' effect which will become more severe with growing urbanisation; and, further, more natural landscape will be required to contribute to inhabitants' need for recreation and sense of well-being.

The Yarra River is the major 'set of lungs' for Melbourne and these lungs will need to expand as the population increases and expands its urban footprint.

The strategy put into effect now needs to be strong and imaginative to balance both the demands of the Yarra Corridor and an increasing human population.

Yours faithfully

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