

Public space



The value we provide

- High quality and unique parks, open spaces and foreshore for the enjoyment of our community and visitors.

What we do

- Oversee all public space within the municipality including, including parks, gardens, reserves, foreshore, streetscapes, playgrounds and urban spaces.
- Plan for future uses of public space; developing new, enhancing current and designing spaces which can be used by the whole of the community.
- Deliver greening outcomes across our City, increasing canopy cover, biodiversity, trees and vegetation.
- Maintain our public space, barbecues and furniture, keeping it green, safe, fit for purpose and attractive.
- Deliver the Visitor Summer Management Program.

Why we do it

- To support our community to be healthy and active and promote social connectedness.
- To provide social, economic and environmental benefits to our community through well-designed and maintained public spaces.
- To enhance the liveability and character of our City and define our unique sense of identity and place.
- To provide equitable access for the community to high quality public open spaces across the municipality.
- To provide environmental outcomes, minimise the impact of the heat island effect, enhance wildlife habitat, strengthen biodiversity within our City's highly urbanised environment.
- To minimise harm and negative impacts created by large crowds during the summer period (Visitor Summer Management Program). To support our community to be healthy and active and promote social connectedness.

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Activities that support this service

- Parks maintenance (incl. signs and furniture)
- Public space and foreshore planning
- Summer management program
- Urban forest planning
- Public lighting

Our service at a glance

Service statistics	2018/19	2019/20
• Ovals mowed (hectares per week)	14	14
• Reserves and gardens maintained (hectares per week)	177.6	177.6
• Playground inspections conducted	2,008	2,629
• Additional trees planted	1,325	1,337
• Street Tree Canopy Cover	19%	19.2%
• Percentage of municipality within a safe walking distance of open space	85%	85%

Service risk profile	Medium/High
Strategic risks	Residual risk rating
• Failure to effectively manage population growth	Medium

Policies documents that support this service

[Elwood Foreshore and Recreation Reserves Management Plan 2005](#)

[Foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan 2015](#)

[Foreshore Management Plan 2012](#)

[Nature Strip Guidelines 2013](#)

[Open Space Strategy 2009](#)

[Playspace Strategy 2011](#)

[Open Space Water Management Plan 2011](#)

[Public Lighting Policy 2004](#)

[St Kilda Botanical Gardens Directions Plan 2009](#)

[Sustainable Public Lighting Guidelines 2011](#)

Sustainable Public Lighting Strategy for Streets and Open Space 2011-16

[Tree Protection Guidelines](#)

How much it costs to provide the service

Operating costs	Budget 2020/21		How the service is funded	\$000
	\$000			
Employee costs	2,093	Rates		\$000
				14,698

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How much it costs to provide the service

Contracts	10,461	Parking revenue	3,250
Materials and other expenses	2,768	Reserves	2,611
Operating projects	1,430	Fees and charges (incl. statutory)	0
Total operating expenses	16,752	Grants	717
Capital projects	7,497	Other income	2,972
Total expenses	24,249	Total funding	24,249

(expenses include management overhead allocation, exclude depreciation and project expenditure)

FTE=17.1

Revenue from parking fees and fines is allocated on a proportionate basis across all service categories.

\$9.65 is spent on this service out of every \$100 of rates we receive

15% of costs are funded from fees and charges, grants or other income

Further revenue and expense information on the service

Activity	Expenses \$000	Revenue \$000
Parks maintenance (incl. signs and furniture)	12,288	540
Public lighting	1,196	0
Public space and foreshore planning	921	
• Open space contributions		2,500
Summer management program	550	0
Operating projects	1,430	0
Management expenses	367	0
Total	16,752	3,040

Expenses exclude depreciation. Management expenses consist of apportioned costs for the Executive Leadership Team (CEO and general managers) and all department managers.

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How much it costs to provide the service

Major contracts (annualised expense)	\$000
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- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| • Parks and open space maintenance | 5,200 |
| • Tree maintenance | 3,500 |
| • Street furniture | 686 |

Major property leases (\$000)	Market rental estimate	Rent per year (\$ excl GST)
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- None

Major financial contributions	\$000
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- None 0

Major assets

Council assets (June 2020)	Written Down Value \$000
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- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Park structures | 649 |
| • Water irrigation | 4,715 |
| • Reserves and gardens (176 ha) | Not separately valued |
| • Playgrounds and sportsfields (75) | Not separately valued |

Our Council Plan 2017-27 priorities

Completed

- Deliver open space and streetscape works in Fishermans Bend – Kirrip Park and streetscape upgrade.
- Effectively manage the St Kilda Marina project - new long term lease.

In progress

- Develop a new public space strategy.
- Work with the Victorian Government to effectively manage site (soil and ground water) contamination and management of open space sites.
- Invest in improving parks, playgrounds, and public space lighting.
- Continue to improve community safety by evaluating CCTV, undertaking safety audits and implement crime prevention measures.
- Effectively manage the St Kilda Marina project.
- Upgrade the foreshore including vegetation projects and maritime infrastructure renewals.

Our projects (* means 100% and ** means partial grant and contribution funding)

Capital projects \$000	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Foreshore Assets Renewal and Upgrade Program	150	500	500
Gasworks Arts Park Reinstatement	300	2,335	1,700
JL Murphy Playspace Upgrade	890	0	0
Kings Place Plaza Pocket Park	180	1,620	0
Kirrip Park Development	0	0	0
Maritime Infrastructure Renewal Program	100	650	650
New Dog Park	25	250	0
Palais Theatre and Luna Park Precinct Revitalisation **	3,020	0	0
Parks and Playground Renewal and Upgrade Program	650	990	990
Parks Furniture and Pathway Renewal Program	150	350	350
Public Space Lighting Expansion Program	0	25	150
Public Space Lighting Renewal and Upgrade Program	1,300	975	600
Public Space Security Improvements	40	680	200
Rotary Park Play Space Development	335	280	0
St Kilda Foreshore Infrastructure Upgrades (Missing Links)	100	0	0
St Kilda Pier Foreshore	130	0	0
Street Signage and Furniture Renewal Program	100	360	360
Tram Infrastructure Partnership Delivery	0	200	250
Total capital projects (excluding Fleet Renewal allocation)	7,470	9,215	5,750
Operating projects \$000	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Foreshore Vegetation Upgrade Program	0	150	150
Landscaping at Reserve next to Astor Theatre	20	0	0
Middle Park Beach Renourishment	880	0	0
Public Spaces Strategy Development	45	0	0
Site Contamination Management Program	310	0	0
St Kilda Marina	175	0	0
Total operating projects	1,230	150	150

How we are performing
Recent highlights

- During 2019/20 Council engaged with the community and specialist consultants to develop a draft Public Space Strategy. The draft strategy was released for public feedback in August 2020.
- The project to secure a new lease arrangement for St Kilda Marina following expiry of the current 50-year lease in April 2019 progressed significantly. Following a year-long procurement process and a public feedback period, a tenant was chosen and new long-term lease terms were approved for submission to the State Government approval process.

How we are performing

- Ongoing and significant process on Council's open space projects such as Elwood Foreshore, JL Murphy Playspace, Public Space Lighting upgrades and Council's Parks, Furniture and Pathway Renewal Program.
- Adoption of Site Contamination Management Policy 2020-24.
- Under the Victorian Government's Working for Victoria initiative, Citywide's Cleansing and Sanitisation Services recruited, trained and supervised 80 participants working in Port Phillip. A range of hard surfaces in public spaces - from streets and shopping strips to parks and beaches – were disinfected and cleansed on top of Council's standard cleaning regime.
- Results from the annual satisfaction survey of residents conducted in February 2020 indicated 93 per cent of residents are satisfied with parks and open space in 2019/20.

Recent challenges

- The COVID-19 pandemic called for us to be agile and flexible and to support the community where most needed. During the pandemic, Council adapted to innovate new ways of keeping safe and connected while maintaining our high standard of service delivery. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic:
 - Beaches closed on 27 March until 13 May.
 - St Kilda Botanical Gardens closed temporarily between 27 March and 6 April.
 - Working for Victoria's Citywide Cleansing and Sanitisation Services crews began sanitising public space contact points in the municipality in May.
 - Outdoor playgrounds, drinking fountains and public BBQs were closed and reopen to align to the current restrictions.
 - Introduction of new signage, social distancing circles and social media messaging.
 - Redesigned the Visitor Summer Management Program to align with new COVID requirements.
 - Increase in summer rangers, local laws officers and a dedicated incident controller.
 - New partnership response from local police.
- Council officers continue to work with the Victorian Government and nominated environmental consultants to progress the Contamination Management Action Plan (CMAP) at Gasworks Arts Park Reinstatement after delays during the year.
- Open space projects continued during the COVID-19 period however while the bulk of these projects rely on local suppliers and contractors, there has been delays in the supply chain for some specialised outdoor products that can only be source overseas.
- While construction is still an essential service, physical distancing procedures were strictly followed on Council construction sites with changes made to items including vehicle occupancy, the availability of wash-up facilities on-site and the design of lunchrooms. With exercise representing one of the four activities permitted under COVID-19 restrictions, the importance of open space increased during the period of social isolation. When restrictions are eased and facilities such playgrounds, fitness equipment and the foreshore are again available for use, these open spaces will be an important part of the recovery.
- A high proportion of public space community requests continue to be resolved on time, an improvement on last year. However, just under the target of 85 per cent.

Measure	2017/18 result	2018/19 result	2019/20 result	2020/21 target	Metro councils 2019/20

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Resident satisfaction with parks and open space	94%	95%	93%	>90%	No comparison available
Contract delivered to standard for parks and open space	99%	99%	96%	>95%	
Public space community requests resolved on time	87%	78%	80%	>90%	