



1. Introduction

Our vision is to invigorate the Fitzroy Street precinct to a place where locals and visitors meet to enjoy the real character of St Kilda, a city that is creative, always welcoming and never dull. Fitzroy Street has a raffish charm that captures the unique eccentricities of St Kilda. It is a melting pot of the elegant and scruffy, a meeting place of culture and history, a promenade of fun and folly that leads to the sea.

It began as a simple thoroughfare for the local indigenous people the Yalukut Willam Clan of the Boon Wurrung, to make their way from their hunting grounds in Albert Park to the foreshore.

Now, this boulevard is a rich slice of life, a place with an unde rbelly, where difference and expression are highly prized, where music, art and film, design and ideas have created a place that is rough and refined, loud, arty and noisy like no other.

Recently there has been some concern regarding the social amenity of Fitzroy Street and so a Group was formed within Council to address issues such as homelessness, policing, local laws, cleanliness, graffiti, rubbish, footpath conditions and placemaking.

Council is committed to maintaining the amenity of the municipality and this priority is reflected in the Council Plan, which outlines the range of programs and services delivered and funded by Council each year.

Programs and services that directly contribute to the amenity of the municipality include street and beach cleaning; rubbish removal; enforcement of local laws; graffiti management; planning and land use management as well as support for programs to assist those who are homeless.

In addition to the above programs and services, in response to specific community concerns about the vibrancy of Fitzroy Street, in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 Council budgets, the Council prioritised Fitzroy Street as part of its Placemaking Program.

The purpose of the Placemaking Program is to work closely with the local community, and over time work together to test and trial different approaches to address the systemic and complex issues currently impacting the vibrancy of Fitzroy Street.

Through the Placemaking Program's significant engagement with the community has, and continues to occur, and a dedicated Place Reference Group has been formed which has broad representation from the community, including a representative with a lived experience of homelessness, community service providers and Victoria Police. The Place Reference Group have developed a positive and inclusive vision for the future of Fitzroy Street, which has recently been captured in the Fitzroy Street Place Plan. This briefing provides some background and outlines actions taken to date to improve social amenity in hot spots in the municipality, including Fitzroy Street. An update on the Vacant Shops Project is included.

2. Homelessness

2.1 Background

Homelessness is a complex issue which is experienced in many inner-city locations in Victoria, Australia and internationally. Primarily, homelessness occurs due to a lack of appropriately located, affordable housing, associated support services and education and employment options. Over the past three years, one of the most commonly received customer enquiries for Fitzroy Street has been a request for Council to respond to visible homelessness. On any given night, there are approximately 107 people sleeping rough across the City, and of these, there can be between three and eight people sleeping rough on Fitzroy Street.

2.2 Actions Taken to Date

- Council allocated \$129,000 through the 2019/20 Council Plan and Budget to support a Port Phillip Zero response to rough sleeping throughout the City. This involves the development and implementation of a live 'by name list', which is reviewed fortnightly by a multi-agency meeting, with the aim of coordinating services available to best support each person into appropriate housing and attempt to identify that housing. It also involves a fortnightly hot spots meeting, focussing on the amenity, which has multi-agency and police representation. As part of this project, Council has seconded a rough sleeping outreach worker from Launch Housing who engages in regular (weekly or twice a week) patrols with Council's Local Laws Officers, involving an Indigenous broker as appropriate. All levers available to the multi-agency project are used to try and secure improved outcomes for people who are homeless and sleeping rough, including those who require and are engaging in, relevant treatment with Alfred or Star Health.
- Officers have worked with local service providers to engage with Indigenous people who are sleeping rough or at risk to provide them with a connection to local services through the Wominjeka BBQ and other activities.
- Officers have facilitated several sessions with service providers to understand the root cause and issues associated with the current lived experience in and around Fitzroy Street and to explore how we could work differently within existing resources.
- Council has, and continues to, advocate for the establishment of a 'Common Ground' property in a suitable location in the municipality. The Common Ground model involves bringing together a mix of people in a properly managed building that offers 24-hour staffing, includes spaces for community development, living skills and training activities, office areas for support staff and health professionals and services. The programs administered through the Common Ground model strive to create opportunities for tenants to improve their lives via links to the arts, education, health and social services and sport and fitness and, where possible, employment or volunteering.
- Launch will deliver a Connect/Respect session for Fitzroy Street Traders at the end of February. The objective of this session is to raise awareness of the causes of homelessness and share strategies for addressing some of the issues that have social impact in Port Phillip with our Trader community.



3. Police

3.1 Background

The City of Port Phillip has a good relationship with the St Kilda Police Station and works collaboratively to address issues of concern across the municipality.

3.2 Actions Taken to Date

- Council has key contact officers who liaise regularly with Police on a range of matters to ensure that services are co-ordinated and address local needs.
- The Police continue to work in partnership with Council's Local Law Officers on the joint patrols initiative of key hot spots, which has received good feedback from the community.
- The Police have a representative on the Fitzroy Street Place Reference Group.
- The Police have agreed to monitor bottle shops in St Kilda regarding Responsible Service and Selling of Alcohol to vulnerable people and these stores contributing to anti-social issues.
- Crime statistics of offences recorded in Fitzroy Street in 2018 are included as Attachment A.

4. City Amenity Local Laws Management

4.1 Background

The management and enforcement of city amenity local laws is an important service for the Municipality. Officers work diligently, professionally and sensitively to administer these laws.

4.2 Actions Taken to Date

- Daily proactive patrol of known streets with the Rapid Response Crew to ensure streets are free from waste and obstructions for the majority of users.
- Weekly proactive patrol of known areas and persons with Council's outreach partner, Launch Housing, offering assistance and access to essential services.
- Weekly proactive patrol of Acland and Fitzroy Streets with Victoria Police Officers to address outstanding matters.
- Attendance at trader and resident group, and 'hotspot' meetings to share local intelligence and discuss coordinated response action plans for matters as they arise.
- Enforcing Council's glass ban on the foreshore throughout summer.
- Responding to community complaints.

5. Placemaking

5.1 Background

In response to specific community concerns about the vibrancy of Fitzroy Street, in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 Council budgets, Council prioritised Fitzroy Street as part of the current placemaking program.

5.2 Actions Taken to Date

- Council spent \$142K in 2018/19 and has allocated \$198K in 2019/20 to fund placemaking activities in Fitzroy Street, this includes an allocation in 2019/20 of \$75K to fund an initiative to encourage vacant shop activation.
- Council has employed a dedicated Officer to support placemaking activities for Fitzroy Street.
- A range of actions have been undertaken since the establishment of a placemaking project in Fitzroy Street including detailed engagement with stakeholders, regular communication and resolution of a range of issues, place audits, trial of temporary markets, an art installation, a scoping study around vacant properties and opportunities to address these as well as a caretaker seating initiative.
- Over the last year, Officers have continued to work closely with all members of the Fitzroy Street Place Reference Group (27 community representatives) to confirm key actions and deliverables, which have been documented within a Place Plan for Fitzroy Street.
- The Fitzroy Street Place Plan was endorsed by the Reference Group on 26 November 2019. The Place Reference Group aspiration is to ‘breathe new life to create a Fitzroy Street that is safe, active, expresses our creativity, and that is engaging’.
- In 2019/20 the Place Reference Group and Placemaking Team have and will focus on several key actions:
 - Love My Place Grants Program with a total of \$55,000 available to encourage activations, events, initiatives or projects;
 - Running a program to activate vacant shops and commercial frontages with creators and makers and potentially bushfire affected businesses from regional Victoria. While awaiting news of matched funding from Creative Victoria Officers investigated other alternatives to State Government funding through Small Business Victoria and pitching grant ideas for funding as well as looking at crowd-funding a project to fill vacant stores utilising deductible gift recipient programs;
 - The ongoing promotion of the Luminous Public Art exhibition;
 - Publicly accessible seating trial;
 - Working together with the local business association on their Special Rate program;
 - Repeating the Fitzroy Street Place Audits, 12 months on; undertaking further pedestrian counts and Net Promoter Score (NPS) measurements.
 - The Vacant Shops Activation Project was intended to receive \$75K of matched funding from Creative Victoria however despite multiple tailored, amended, approaches since May 2019, Council’s funding request has not been responded to. To address this continuing need and action this item for the betterment of the Street, a plan is underway to fill some of the vacant stores without matched funding. The proposal is to offer willing landlords, a bushfire affected business/es to trade from their premises on weekends for two months in this financial year. The concept has in-principle support from Committee for Gippsland, Destination Gippsland, Visit Victoria, Tourism Australia, Victoria Tourism Industry Council and Accommodation Australia.



6. Rubbish

6.1 Background

Over the past three years, a common customer service request across Fitzroy, Acland and Carlisle Streets has been concerns around rubbish left in these areas and requests for Council to remove it. These customer service requests range from concerns around general litter, to unattended items, cardboard, furniture and blankets.

Concerns around rubbish and the impact this has on the amenity of the area has also been identified through Council's placemaking engagement. For example, in a place audit of Fitzroy Street conducted in November 2018, the area of Culture and Pride (Grey to Acland Street) was rated lowest of all areas on Fitzroy Street in terms of rubbish and general cleanliness.

The 2019 Audit just completed shows that this area is still the lowest in terms of rubbish and general cleanliness, the percentage of people who Agree or Strongly Agree that it is 'good' has risen, from a low 42.9% in 2018 to a rather high 75% 12 months later.

6.2 Actions Taken to Date

- Council allocated \$246K through the 2019/20 Council Plan and Budget to establish a Rapid Response Crew who can quickly attend areas in the municipality that require a cleaning response. Now, each day, the Rapid Response Crew attend Fitzroy Street with Council's local laws staff to remove rubbish. The Rapid Response Crew are removing approximately one truck load of material from across the Municipality per day, this equates to two hundred kilograms of loose material. A new truck has been purchased for the Rapid Response Crew, which has been fitted with pressure washing equipment.
- A night shift street sweeper cleans the road way and footpath each night as well as undertaking pressure washing. The latter is sometimes not able to occur if people are sleeping rough in the area.
- Additional unfixed bins have been placed next to fixed bins along Fitzroy Street as part of Council's Summer Management program. Officers have arranged the additional bins to be temporarily attached to the fixed bins in late January, and decorated as part of the Summer Management Campaign, as while the additional bins are well serviced (emptied twice daily over summer). The fixed bins have also been wrapped to provide colour and are themed for the beach, park and culture-pride sections of the Street.
- Additional education and patrols of the local area for hard rubbish dumping

7. Graffiti management

7.1 Background

Graffiti has a significant impact on the amenity of a place.

7.2 Actions Taken to Date

- Council's current graffiti removal contract offers a free removal service to the community for graffiti to occupied property where the graffiti is accessible within three meters of ground level. Council currently commits to responding to Community requests for graffiti removal within 10 days.
- Council have endorsed an increase of service levels in graffiti removal as part of a new graffiti removal contract scheduled to commence in March 2020. This will see graffiti removal patrols



along Fitzroy Street, with contractors attending every week day to remove graffiti to Council assets and private property within the remit of approved policy.

- Investigation underway to address Junction Gateway signage and power generator.

8. Footpath

8.1 Background

As part of the Council's placemaking engagement the community raised concerns about the state of the footpath on parts of Fitzroy Street.

8.2 Actions Taken to Date

- Council allocated \$470K through the 2018/19 and 2019/20 Council Plan and Budget to fund the repair and maintenance of the footpath on Fitzroy Street. The footpath repairs on the south side have been mostly completed, including all tree square renewals. There are only a couple of small defects on this side to repair and reset pavers and some locations requiring saw cutting of newly placed concrete to match the pattern of the existing pavement. There are also a few minor sections of the footpath to be replaced on the north side, alongside Woolworths and the Bowling Club. Council's contractors are currently programming the remaining sections and are aiming for the completion in February. As the works are mostly at the non-trading end, there is no disruption to business anticipated. Challenges do arise when utility companies are undertaking works along the footpath and their reinstatement works are slow and often substandard. Currently NBN Co are undertaking works between Grey Street and St Kilda junction leaving areas of the footpath uneven. Council Officers regularly liaise with the utility companies and their contractors to remedy these issues in a timely manner.



ATTACHMENT A

Offences recorded in Fitzroy Street		
		2018
	Assault and related offences	23
	Other crimes against person	11
	Arson	1
	Property damage	7
	Burglary / Break and enter	6
	Theft	26
	Deception	15
	Drug dealing and trafficking	0
	Cultivate or manufacture drugs	0
	Drug use and possession	9
	Other drug offences	0
	Weapons and explosive offences	4
	Disorderly and offensive conduct	15
	Public nuisance offences	0
	Public security offences	0
	Justice procedures	4
	Breaches of orders	6
	Regulatory driving offences	0
	Transport regulation offences	0
	Other gov't regulatory offences	0
	Miscellaneous	0
	TOTAL	127

Note – 2019 data has not yet been released

