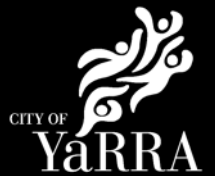


# Road Management Plan Review Report

22 March 2021



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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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# Introduction

## Requirement for the Review

An internal review of Yarra City Council's *Road Management Plan (RMP) 2017* has been undertaken in accordance with section 54(5) of the *Road Management Act 2004* and section 8(3) of the *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016*.

Council is required to undertake a review of the RMP in consideration of section 9 of the *Road Management (General) Regulations 2016* after each general election and during the same period as it is preparing its Council Plan.

The regulations require that the review be completed, and that a report (being this document) is published summarising the finding and outcomes of the review, including any proposed amendments.

Based on the outcomes of this review, amendments to Council's RMP are proposed.

## Purpose of the Review

The purpose of this review is for Council, as a road authority, to ensure that the standards in relation to, and the priorities to be given to, the inspection, maintenance and repair of the roads and classes of road to which the plan applies are appropriate.

# RMP Review Process

The RMP focus is on the operational activities in road management and is based on the Code of Practice for Road Management Plans published by the Victorian State Government.

A review was undertaken of Council's current RMP and road maintenance practices and processes to ensure they met the requirements of the Road Management Act 2004. This included standards, levels of service, approach to asset lifecycle management, systems, knowledge of assets, works programs, monitoring of road infrastructure condition, reporting and monitoring mechanisms for maintenance, and maintenance intervention levels, and inspection programs.

## Internal Consultation

Two major RMP Review Workshops were held with participation from Council's Traffic, Civil Engineering, Road Services, Asset Management, Open Space Services, Strategic Transport, and Risk and Safety teams.

A preliminary draft RMP 2021 incorporating issues and discussions was circulated for review and agreement by the relevant Council officers before the draft RMP 2021 was produced.

## External Consultation

Benchmarking has been carried out to determine how the inspection frequencies and defect response times set out in the RMP compare with other neighbouring councils. The benchmarking indicated that there is a range of inspection frequencies and defect response times, however the analysis of the data showed that Yarra's inspection frequencies and response times are generally within the range adopted by most councils.

Sources of external consultations include:

- (a) Benchmarking with other council practices;
- (b) Advice from MAV Insurance; and
- (c) Organised discussions with neighbouring Councils (Moreland, Banyule and Boroondara).

# RMP Review Findings and Outcomes

The review considered the following areas:

- (a) the document title;
- (b) Yarra's *Register of Public Roads* (and relationship to *Management Policy for Laneways, Passageways and Rights of Way in Yarra 2019*);
- (c) the assets;
- (d) asset hierarchy;
- (e) inspection frequencies;
- (f) defect modes, intervention levels and response times;
- (g) management system;
- (h) management issues;
- (i) meanings of terms; and
- (j) editorial changes.

The following are the review items, discussions and the findings/recommendations.

Review Item	Issue / Discussion	Findings / Recommendations	Change in proposed RMP 2021
Document title – year(s)	Council is obliged only to review its RMP each four years, and may choose (but is not required) to adopt an amended RMP	Don't include an ending year with the RMP title, to avoid the inference that a new RMP must be adopted by Council in 2025.	New title is RMP 2021 with no end year in the title.
Register of Public Roads (RoPR)	There is a need to clearly identify whether laneways such as narrow easements, 'gated' or 'built-over' laneways are considered necessary for public access.	Council has adopted a <i>Management Policy for Laneways, Passageways and Rights of Way in Yarra</i> outlining the principles and guidelines for determining which laneways are public roads and should be listed in the RoPR.  RoPR to be updated and available on Council Website.	New sub-section added (s1.11)
Asset – street lighting	Street lightings are 'non-road' assets maintained by CitiPower.	Non-functioning street lightings may be reported by the general public directly to CitiPower or through Council.	Street lighting excluded (s2.2)
Asset – traffic and pedestrian operated signals	Traffic and pedestrian operated signals are 'non-road' assets.	Council has a separate inspection regime on these assets. Non-functioning traffic and pedestrian signals may be reported by the general public as and when noted.	Traffic and pedestrian operated signals excluded (s2.2)

Review Item	Issue / Discussion	Findings / Recommendations	Change in proposed RMP 2021
Asset – shared roads	Lygon St (Alexandra Pde to McPherson St) is a shared road with Melbourne City Council. This was not included in RMP 2017.	Lygon St (Alexandra Pde to McPherson St) is added to the list. Also move the shared roads list to an Appendix consistent with the other road lists.	This road added (and list moved to new Appendix 2 referenced from s2.4.4)
Asset - footbridges in open space	Footbridges in open space reserves (river crossings) are listed in the RMP 2017 but are not assets within the road reserve.	Only assets within road reserves are considered to be required within the scope of the RMP. Footbridges within open space reserves should be included in and managed according to the Open Space Asset Management Plan. This is in line with advice from MAV Insurance and also practices of neighbouring councils.	Footbridges excluded (removed from s2.4.5)
Asset - major on-road bicycle routes	There have been new major on-road bicycle routes created in Yarra.	New list as per advice from Yarra's Sustainable Transport Officer.	Updated list (now Appendix 4)
Asset – roads with shared zones	There have been new roads with shared zones.	New list as per advice from Yarra's Traffic Engineering Unit.	Updated list (now Appendix 5)
Asset hierarchy - road	Consider Council's road hierarchical structure that takes into account their specific functions and vehicular traffic volumes.	Council recognises the significance of bicycle usage as an important mode of transport and will continue to identify roads with bicycle routes as the primary driver to set the inspection and maintenance standards.	No change (s3.2)
Inspection frequencies – nominal versus maximum	The inspection frequencies have been recorded as the nominal frequency of inspection for the various asset classes, however, the actual frequency can vary due to differences in whether the relevant next due date is a working day, and planned or unplanned staff leave.	Revise the inspection frequencies from nominal to maximum cycle times as below (providing a tolerance of 1/12 of the nominal cycle time or 1 month, whichever is greater):  <u>Nominal</u> => <u>Maximum</u> 6 months => 7 months 1 year => 13 months 2 years => 26 months 3 years => 39 months	Updated Table 3 (s4.3.1)

Review Item	Issue / Discussion	Findings / Recommendations	Change in proposed RMP 2021
Inspection frequency - high pedestrian traffic footpaths (HPTFs)	<p>Currently HPTFs were inspected every 4 months. Records show that there are not many defects picked up during each inspection cycle.</p> <p>Time saved from a reduced inspection frequency may be allocated to other more critical activities.</p>	The inspection frequency was benchmarked against some neighbouring councils and a 6-monthly (nominal) inspection cycle for HPTFs is considered adequate without adversely impacting on service delivery.	Adopt 7-monthly (maximum) inspection frequency for HPTFs (s4.3.1), refer item above.
Defect mode - property drain at kerb face	Private property drain protrusion >30mm is considered a hazard to pedestrian crossing the kerb and to passenger alighting from cars.	Include as a defect item to be assessed and notify Compliance Unit for follow-up action	Defect mode included in Table 4 (s4.4)
Intervention levels - specifications	Intervention levels had been specified as a mixture of "greater-than or equal to" ("=>") and "greater-than" ">".	For consistency, intervention levels are to be specified as "greater than" (>) only.	Updated specifications in Table 4 (s4.4)
Intervention level – overhanging tree branches	Open Space Services officers consider the existing minimum 5 metre clearance (above road pavement) to be too high because this service level is not achievable within resource constraints and will affect the aesthetic streetscape view and tree amenity value without providing a significant risk reduction as compared to a lower height clearance.	<p>In line with practices of other councils, separate minimum height clearances proposed for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>arterial roads – 4.5m</li> <li>Council roads – 3.5m</li> </ul>	Changed intervention level in Table 4 (s4.4)
Intervention actions - "make safe"	The term "make safe" by itself implies that the asset is not safe whereas the asset defect is only above the defined intervention level and not unsafe by definition.	As per advice from MAV Insurance, remove 'make safe' as a description to remedy or repair	Updated intervention actions in table 4 (s4.4)
Intervention actions – limits on remediation	Some intervention actions specified an upper size limit which was associated with the described remediation method as an internal maintenance and operational control issue and was not intended to imply that no remediation action would be taken above this limit, but could be interpreted that way.	It is considered unnecessary to provide operational details on remediation practices. Remove limits on remediation and generalise the descriptions of the remediation method.	Updated intervention actions in Table 4 (s4.4)

Review Item	Issue / Discussion	Findings / Recommendations	Change in proposed RMP 2021
Response time – tree root damage	To ensure health of street trees it is always necessary to obtain professional advice on root barriers or root pruning works from Arborist and hence interim measures may be necessary.	Where necessary, interim action to barricade and cordon off risk area within 3 working days is considered to be appropriate.	Updated intervention actions in Table 4 (s4.4)
Response time – crack sealing	Crack sealing response time was “as per Crack Sealing Program” which was ambiguous.	Specific response time to be added as per MAV Insurance advice. It is considered that the normal turnaround time for crack sealing is about 45 working days.	Specific response time added in Table 4 (s4.4)
Response time - tree pruning overhanging vegetation	Street tree pruning response time was “as per Tree Pruning Program” which was ambiguous.	Specific response time added as per MAV Insurance advice. It is considered that the normal turnaround time for street tree pruning is about 45 working days.	Specific response time added in Table 4 (s4.4)
Management System	New asset management information system (TechnologyOne Enterprise Suite) implemented.	Revised flow charts for inspection and repairs work management are required.	New flowcharts added to RMP (s5.2 and s5.3)
Management issues - resourcing	Issue on resourcing, both financial and staff availability was canvassed.	Responsible staff confirmed that based on previous performance, with the existing level of funding and staff availability there will be no adverse impact on service delivery with the proposed changes.	No impact
Management issues – plan performance review	Compliance with existing review /audit requirements.	Existing arrangement to conduct plan performance review is considered to be appropriate.	No impact
Meaning of terms – tolerances	There may be ambiguities on the tolerance statements on inspection frequencies, intervention levels and response times.	The ‘tolerance’ statements should be removed (as per the practices of most other councils), also noting that inspection frequencies are now recommended as maximum rather than nominal cycle times.	Meaning of Terms updated (s1.2)
Editorial – general	Some aspects of the document could benefit from minor editorial changes to improve clarity.	General editorial changes for clarity not otherwise changing the meaning or intent of the document	Minor editorial changes throughout document

# Recommendations

Based on the outcome and findings of this review, it is proposed that Council's RMP is amended as described in the table in the RMP Review Findings and Outcomes section.

The outline of the process for amendment of the RMP is as follows:

- (1) Council consideration of this report and decision on whether to proceed with RMP amendment
- (2) Public notice of proposed Draft RMP 2021 in The Age newspaper and Victoria Government Gazette
- (3) Minimum 28-day period for public submissions
- (4) Council consideration of public submissions and decision on adoption of proposed RMP 2021
- (5) Subject to Council approval, public notice of RMP 2021 in Victoria Government Gazette