

Studley Street and Yarra Street

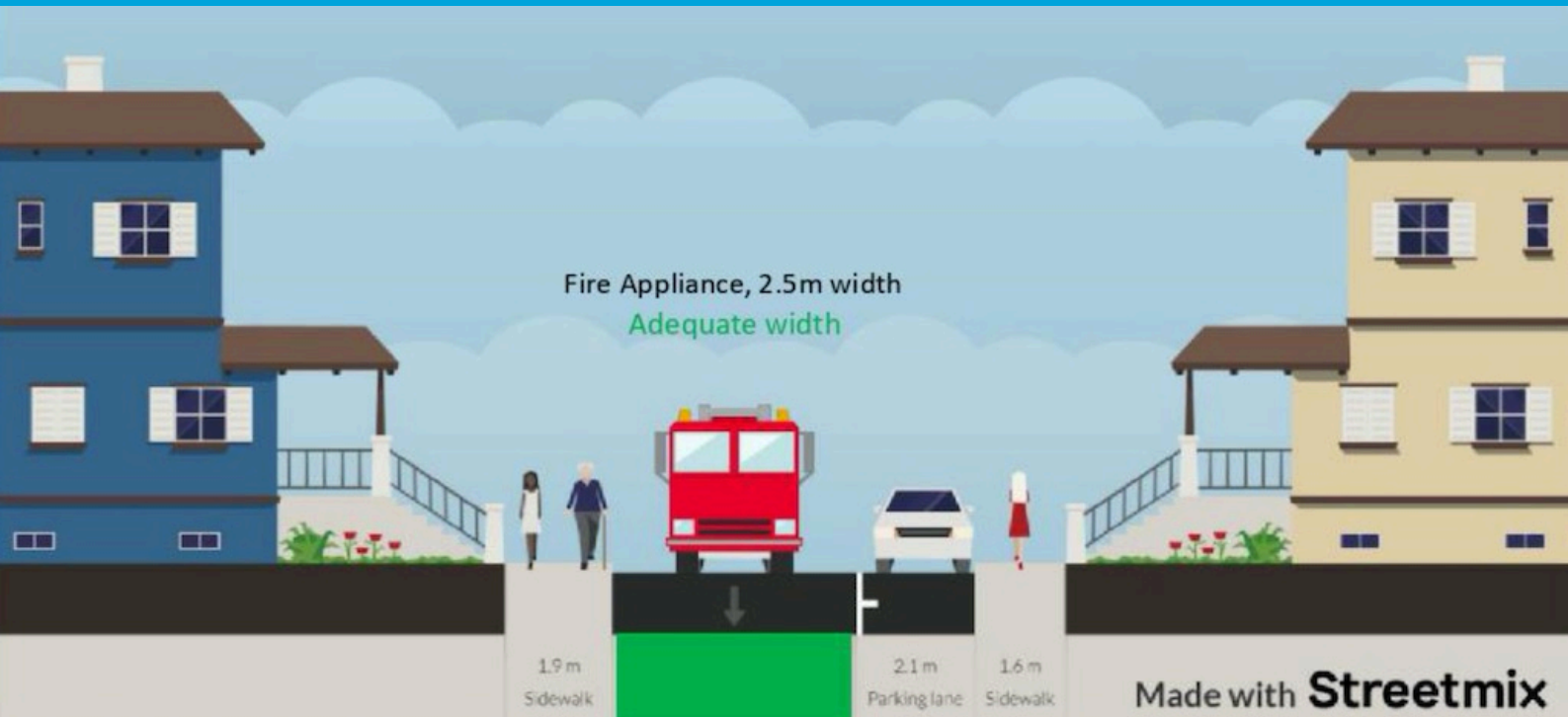


Image credit: Council Agenda



Prepared by: Streets Alive Yarra

www.streets-alive-yarra.org

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Foreword

Streets Alive Yarra is a non-profit, volunteer, resident and ratepayer action group with a [vision](#) for more trees, wider footpaths and vibrant businesses in thriving [neighbourhoods](#). We see our streets being used by people from [8 to 80 years old](#), irrespective of whether they choose to walk, cycle, use public transport or drive. Residents and shoppers are able to move safely, comfortably, and conveniently around Yarra; and can easily find a park near shops.



Image credit: OCULUS Landscape Architecture and Urban Design

Streets Alive Yarra was founded in 2017 and now has over 2,300 likes on Facebook, increasing by 10-20 per week. A network of local champions develops concepts and proposals for how to improve their local street or precinct. Streets Alive Yarra is also Yarra's Walkability Action Group (WAG) representative for Victoria Walks.

Further information is available at www.streets-alive-yarra.org.

Overview

Streets Alive Yarra welcomes the opportunity to make a submission regarding the allocation of space on Studley Street and Yarra Street. It was great to see Council arrange a community consultation session on 20th February 2020, where new information could be presented and residents could ask questions. We were pleased to see that Officers invited further feedback by email.

Our feedback is summarised below, and detailed in later sections:

- Context
- Summary of the facts
- Initial assessment
- Compliance with adopted policies
- Compliance with best practice design guides
- Guidance from other Councils
- Demand for on-street parking
- Assessment
- Concluding remarks

Context

The 2019 Addendum to Plan Melbourne confirmed that greater Melbourne is growing to over 8 million people by 2051.

Update on Melbourne's growth

Between 2016 and 2031 metropolitan Melbourne is projected to grow by around 1.6 million people – from a population of 4.7 million to a population of around 6.3 million people. By 2051 the metro Melbourne area is projected to grow to around 8.4 million people. A population increase of this magnitude would require another 1.6 million dwellings.

Projections have been reviewed following consideration of the 2016 census and the most recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Trends have been running ahead of previous projections and long-term population and dwelling expectations may arrive sooner than anticipated but the overall story of strong growth remains.

By 2051, the percentage of Melbourne's population aged 65 and over is projected to increase from 13.7 per cent to 18.5 percent. This demographic change will present significant challenges for community services and infrastructure.

There will also be a greater proportion of lone-person and couple only households, although families with children are expected to continue to be the most common household type. The city will also need to keep up with the needs of the young, with Melbourne's school-age population projected to grow by almost 500,000 by 2051.

Source: Plan Melbourne Addendum 2019

The City of Yarra is projected to grow by 60% by 2041.



Source: forecast.id

With this population growth, access to our limited public land (street space) will become more contested. Every street is a precedent for other streets. How we approach on-street parking on Studley Street and Yarra Street will affect our approach to other narrow streets in Yarra, and other residential streets in general, so we must get the design right.

Summary of the facts

Based on the Agenda from 17th December 2019, and new information presented by the Council Officers on 20th February 2020, the relevant facts are:

Fire trucks require a clear width of 3.5 m

On the community consultation on 20th February 2020, Council Officers clarified, via the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, that 2.5 m of space is required for the truck itself, and 0.5 m of space on either side to open doors and access equipment, resulting in a total requirement of 3.5 m.

Parking on both sides restricts the space to less than 2.8 m

Both Council Officers and residents confirm (from independent measurements) that if parking occurs on both sides of the streets, the clear width is less than 2.8 m.

Footpaths are already not wide enough

Council Officers confirmed that VicRoads and Austroads guidelines recommend an unobstructed footpath width of 1.5 m, which allows a person on a wheelchair to pass a person pushing a pram.

Initial assessment

Based on the key facts listed above, it's clear that parking of both sides of the street cannot be supported. Options include:

- Supporting the Council Officer recommendation as presented on 17th December 2019.
- Supporting a variant of the recommendation, with parking bays located on alternating sides of the street, creating a chicane that prevents a clear line of sight down the street and thus dissuading speeding.



Example of alternating the location of parking bays to prevent a clear line of sight. Source: <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-stormwater-guide/stormwater-streets/residential-street/>

Compliance with adopted policies

Consideration of how to allocate our limited street space needs to consider adopted policies and strategies. This section presents relevant excerpts, with our interpretation shown in italics. Yarra's Council Plan, Planning Scheme and policies are available for viewing at:

- <https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/about-us/council-information/council-plan>
- https://planning-schemes.delwp.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/464000/Yarra_PS_Ordinance.pdf
- <https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/about-us/strategies>

In summary, all of the plans and policies listed below suggest that:

- Safe access is more important than the provision of on-street parking;
- On-street parking should be constrained and priced rather than expanded; and
- Parking should not be allowed on the footpath.

Yarra Council Plan

Objective 6: Council is committed to creating a city that is accessible to all irrespective of levels of personal mobility, to support a fulfilling life without the need for a car.

Access includes access for fire trucks, as well as 1.5 m wide footpaths (without cars on the footpath)

Objective 6: To encourage using public transport, walking or cycling as the first choice of transport for all ages for short to medium trips (less than five kilometres), Council is working to provide an effective, interconnected and well maintained pedestrian and bicycle network that both inexperienced and experienced users feel safe and comfortable using.

Effective and interconnected pedestrian and cycling networks require calmed streets with fewer vehicle-kilometres travelled, as well as 1.5 m wide footpaths (without cars on the footpath). On-street parking creates dooring hazards as well as encouraging vehicle-kilometres travelled, so should be constrained.

Yarra Planning Scheme

Clause 21.06 (Transport) of the Yarra Planning Scheme sets out a local transport policy. It states that: "Parking availability is important for many people, however in Yarra unrestricted car use and parking is neither practical nor achievable. Car parking will be managed to optimise its use and to encourage sustainable transport options,"

Objectives and strategies therein which are relevant to this development include the following:

- To provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle environments.
- To facilitate public transport usage.
- To reduce the reliance on the private motor car.
- To reduce the impact of traffic.

Clause 21.10 (Future Work) of the Yarra Planning Scheme identifies future transport related work items. The clause identifies the following in relation to car parking: "investigate parking provision rates to encourage a more critical appraisal of choice in transport modes."

Clause 22.17 (Environmentally Sustainable Development) of the Yarra Planning Scheme contains the following transport objectives to assist in achieving environmentally sustainable development.

- "To ensure that the built environment is designed to promote the use of walking, cycling and public transport, in that order.
- To minimise car dependency.
- To promote the use of low emission vehicle technologies and supporting infrastructure."

The Yarra Planning Scheme clearly favours sustainable transport over on-street parking, which means that wider, unobstructed footpaths and calmed streets should be prioritised over the provision of on-street parking on both sides of the street.

0-25 Years Plan 2018-2022

Strategic Priority 7.2 Advocate for pedestrian and cycling friendly environments for children, young people and their families (i.e. unobstructed footpaths at least 1.5 m wide).

Pedestrian and cycling friendly environments require calmed streets with fewer vehicle-kilometres travelled, as well as 1.5 m wide footpaths (without cars on the footpath). On-street parking creates dooring hazards as well as encouraging vehicle-kilometres travelled, so should be constrained.

Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2024

GOAL 1: Improve Accessibility to Infrastructure, Facilities and Amenities;

Accessibility requires calmed streets with fewer vehicle-kilometres travelled, as well as 1.5 m wide footpaths (without cars on the footpath).

Strategy 1.1 Promote and encourage the application of Universal Design and Universal Access within, and external to Council

Universal Design and Universal Access requires calmed streets with fewer vehicle-kilometres travelled, as well as 1.5 m wide footpaths (without cars on the footpath).

Strategy 1.4 Increase safer access and mobility through public realm improvement.

Safe access and mobility requires calmed streets with fewer vehicle-kilometres travelled, as well as 1.5 m wide footpaths (without cars on the footpath).

Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy

GOAL 2: Transport: People 50+ can get out and about

Enabling people 50+ to get out and about requires calmed streets with fewer vehicle-kilometres travelled, as well as 1.5 m wide footpaths (without cars on the footpath).

Bike Strategy Refresh 2016

The City of Yarra Strategic Transport Statement 2012-2016 committed Yarra to providing the community with attractive alternatives to car use. A key component of this commitment is to deliver infrastructure projects and support behaviour change measures that encourage a broad cross section of the community to travel through, to, from and within Yarra by bicycle.

Infrastructure projects and behaviour change measures include calming streets to reduce vehicle violence and reduce vehicle-kilometres travelled. On-street parking creates dooring hazards as well as encouraging vehicle-kilometres travelled, so should be constrained.

Encouraging Walking Strategy

Action Area 1 - continue improvement of internal cooperation within Council, so that the interests of pedestrians are supported across all Council departments

Action Area 2 - new hardware infrastructure, recommendation 5.3.1a Point 8 - where possible widen the footpath

Priority 6 Policy Focus, Pedestrian emphasis - ensure people are prioritised over private vehicles especially where competition for funding or space may arise

Clear support for wider footpaths over the provision of on-street parking.

Parking Management Strategy

Vision: Parking is managed by the City of Yarra to promote sustainable transport solutions and to optimise residents' access to homes – Council will also seek to accommodate the parking needs of visitors, businesses and community facilities in a manner that is open and clear.

Sustainable transport solutions are the focus, and parking will only be accommodated where possible. Parking should not obstruct access to homes by fire trucks. Parking should not obstruct access to homes by walking, cycling or having enough space to open doors to exit a taxi.

Goal 2 - enable reduction in the road pavement space used for parking where a community benefit can be achieved, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists

A reduction in road pavement space for parking can clearly demonstrate a community benefit of wider, less obstructed footpaths, and a calmed (with a chicane) street suitable for cyclists.

Goal 3 - minimise the need for people to have cars

A calmed (with a chicane) street is more attractive for cyclists, thus minimising the need for people to have cars.

Principle 4 - ensure a safe and accessible street environment for pedestrians and cyclists

A calmed (with a chicane) street is more attractive for cyclists, thus minimising the need for people to have cars. Wider, unobstructed footpaths are safer for pedestrians.

Principle 9 - encourage walking, cycling ... usage

A calmed (with a chicane) street is more attractive for people to walk and cycle.

Safe Travel Strategy

Action 4.1.1 incorporate safe travel principles through council wide approach

Action 4.3.2 enforce compliance with other road rules

Action 4.4.1 improve infrastructure to make walking safer and more convenient

Action 4.5.1 promote and encourage cycling

Safe travel, and committing to Safe System, means eliminating the risk of vehicles colliding with people on the footpath as they bump over a kerb to attempt to park on the footpath. It also means committing to increasing the width of footpaths to 1.5 m, whenever the design of a street is considered.

Yarra Environment Strategy 2013-2017

Council's leadership role - Continued sustainable outcomes require new ways of working within Council and with the community. more integrated approaches to the design and delivery of programs and services, and long term business cases that integrate lifecycle assessment, design and management of its assets and services from a strategic risk perspective, particularly incorporating climate change projections. It requires on-going incorporation of sustainability into every action and decision by all staff. Council can lead and inspire – to invest in demonstration projects and show what is possible and to help break through barriers and resistance to change where needed. Council is also in a strong position to provide leadership and support to other municipalities, and reinforce regional approaches to solving shared problems.

Council commits to a leadership role, new ways of working, to break through barriers and resistance to change. Allowing parking on both sides of the street, or on the footpath, would be the antithesis of that.

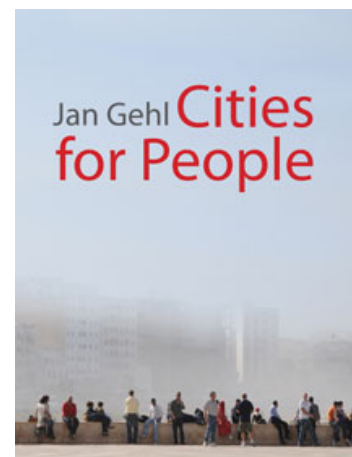
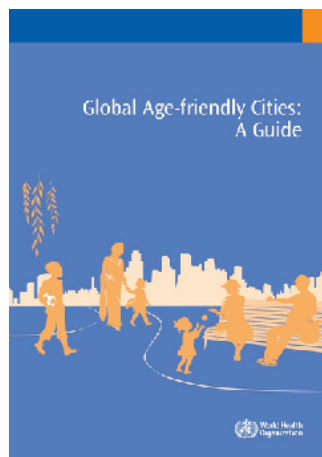
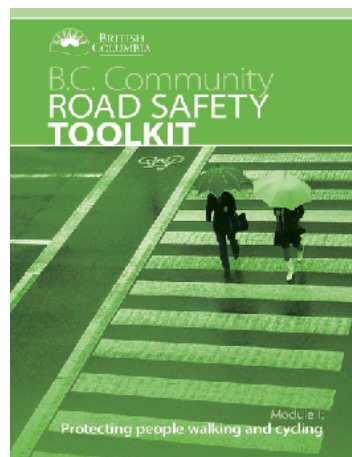
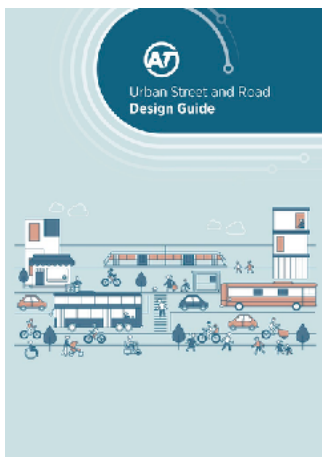
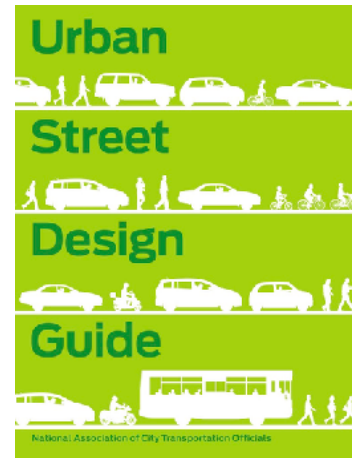
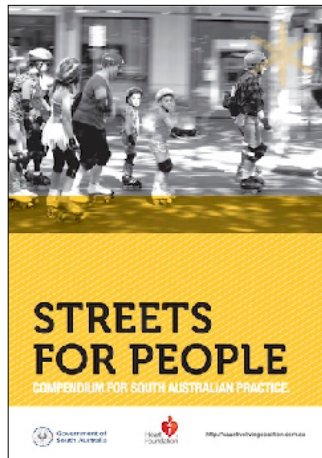
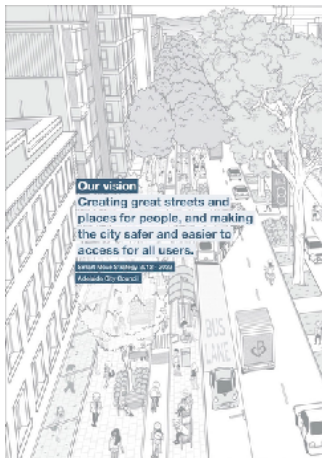
Urban Forest Strategy

Streetscape redesign, car parking reconfigurations and possible road, footpath or drainage infrastructure works may be required to accommodate more and larger canopy trees.

An increased urban forest should take priority over the provision of on-street parking, by allocating street space to bump-outs to accommodate trees.

Compliance with best practice design guides

A multitude of [design guides](#) recommend improving residential streets by prioritising wider footpaths and trees; and by reducing on-street parking.




Guidance from other Councils


The City of Moonee Valley has developed a strategy to manage on-street parking in narrow streets. This provides clear guidance to how Council makes decisions. Yarra should do this to, and ideally align with other inner city Councils to have a consistent strategy for managing parking in narrow streets.

Parking

9243 8888

mvcc.vic.gov.au





Managing parking in narrow streets

Municipal Parking Strategy

In a snapshot

- Parking on nature strips or footpaths is not permitted under the Victorian Road Rules.
- Council is gradually consulting residents who live in narrow streets on various parking and engineering options to help them follow this rule.
- Some options are easily implemented with limited costs and others involve large works and are expensive, with financial contribution required from the residents.
- Once a street has been consulted and changes made, Council will start enforcing the no stopping or parking on nature strip and footpath rule.

After extensive community consultation, Council adopted a new Municipal Parking Strategy (MPS). This strategy provides effective tools to manage parking around the city now and in the future. It takes into consideration the needs of various users and ensures a fair and consistent process.

The parking strategy includes the adopted position that parking on nature strips or footpaths is not allowed, since it is against the Victorian Road Rules.

This information is a summary of the framework in the parking strategy to manage parking in narrow streets.

A full version of the MPS, other fact sheets and information are available on Council's website, at the Civic Centre or at local libraries.

Source: <https://www.mvcc.vic.gov.au/-/media/Files/Parking-and-transport/12-107187--Municipal-Parking-Strategy--Narrow-Streets--Managing-parking-in-narrow-streets-factsheet-CMV18682.ashx?la=en>

Demand for on-street parking

At the community consultation session on 20th February 2020, Council Officers stated that they measured parking occupancy as 55-65% at 11pm on Wednesday and Saturday nights. This suggests that halving the supply of on-street parking can be accommodated by residents.

In addition, the present occupancy levels represent demand for free, or almost free, on-street parking, considering that a residential parking permit only costs 11 cents per day. Demand is a function of price. It costs ratepayers a lot more than 11 cents per day to maintain local roads, and the opportunity costs are much higher again. Yarra's adopted Pricing Policy indicates that on-street parking should be priced at market rates, which would be \$10 per day. Even if residential permits were only increased to \$1 per day, demand for on-street parking would still be reduced.

Furthermore, Infrastructure Victoria has stated that managing the pricing of parking is one way to manage traffic congestion, particularly in the inner city.

Parking costs provide a disincentive to use private vehicles and are therefore a key lever for government in managing demand. Analysis by the Grattan Institute found that Melbourne's car parking costs were significantly lower than comparable cities such as Sydney, and so using parking costs to better manage transport demand likely represents a particular opportunity for Melbourne. Source: Infrastructure Victoria Five-year focus - Immediate actions to tackle congestion - April 2018

Further information is available at: <https://streets-alive-yarra.org/better-for-parking/>

Assessment

Based on the relevant facts, adopted Council policies, and best practice design guides, our assessment is that Council should adopt the Officer Recommendation from the 17th December 2019 that parking should not be permitted on both sides of Studley Street or Yarra Street.

From this baseline, further improvements can be identified, including:

- Moving trees from the footpath to bump-outs in the road reserve, to increase the useable footpath width.
- Moving all poles to a consistent location near the kerb, to increase the useable footpath width.
- Increasing the number of trees in the street, to increase shade and decrease the urban heat island effect.
- Locating sets of parking bays on alternating sides of the street, creating a chicane on the street. This would reduce the line of sight for drivers, encouraging them to slow down. In turn, this improves safety for people walking and cycling.

Additional improvements can also apply to the whole of Yarra, including:

- Designating all on-street parking in residential streets as permit only.
- Increasing the price for permits to \$1 per day.
- Making short term visitor parking permits available online, on demand, linked to a vehicles registration.
- Developing a Council Policy that footpaths narrower than 1.5 m should not be narrowed further.
- Developing a Council Policy for parking in narrow streets, similar to that from the City of Moonee Valley.
- Designate one parking bay on every residential street for a car sharing vehicle, to make it easier for residents to downsize the number of private cars and decrease the demand for on-street parking of private cars.
- Designate one parking bay on every residential street as a weather protected location to park up to twenty bicycles, to make it easier for residents to downsize the number of private cars and decrease the demand for on-street parking of private cars.

Concluding remarks

Streets Alive Yarra applauds Yarra's efforts to engage with residents and address the issue of parking in narrow streets. We would be delighted to provide further detail or explanation of the themes raised in this document.

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