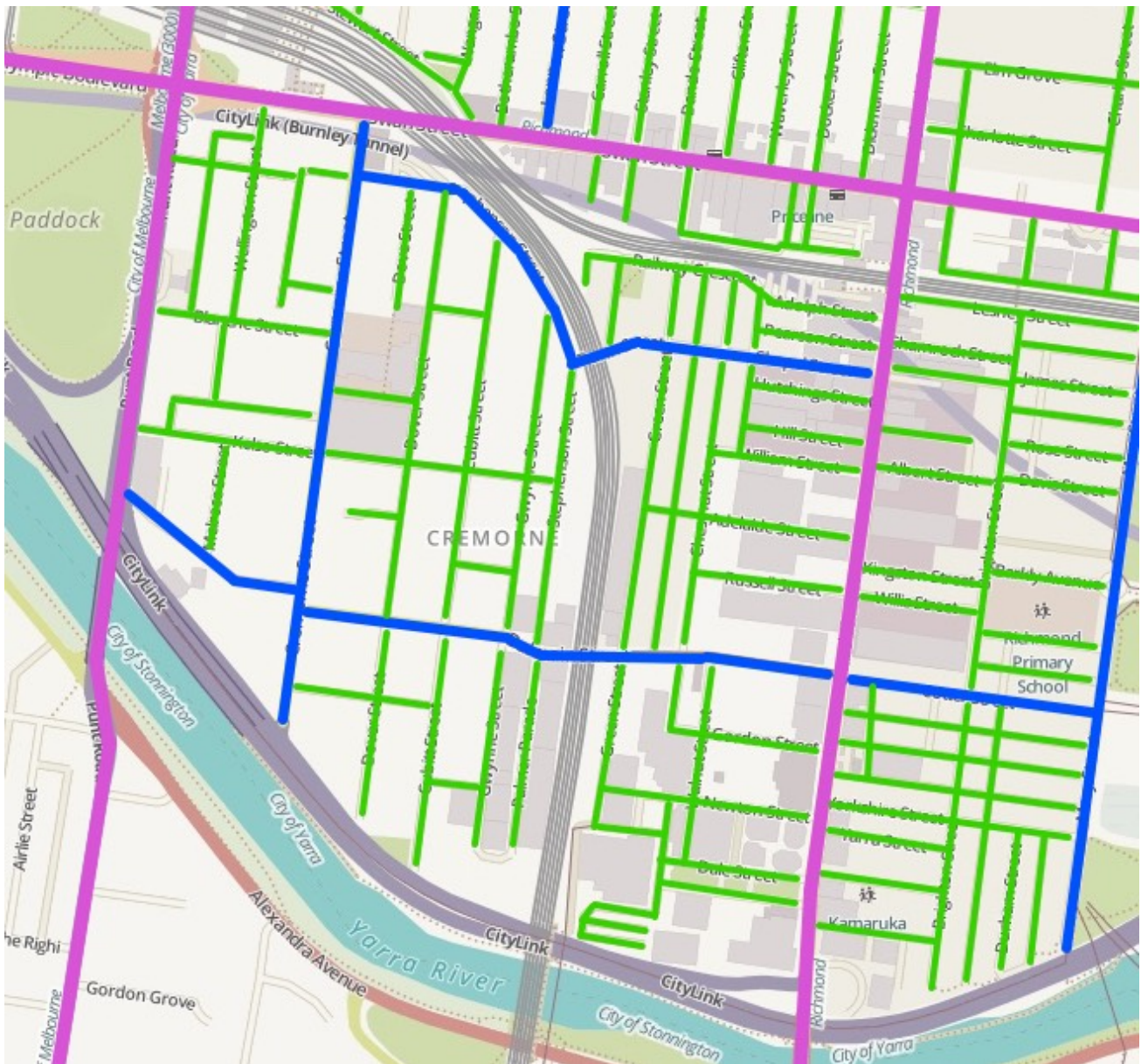


Yarra Open Space Strategy



Prepared by: Streets Alive Yarra

www.streets-alive-yarra.org

facebook.com/streetsaliveyarra/

Introduction

Streets Alive Yarra is a community group who advocate for:

- shopping streets that build wealth for traders by attracting regular business from local residents, and
- a network of safe streets that enable those who wish to use active transport to do so, thus freeing up space on the streets for those who prefer to drive.

Streets Alive Yarra was founded in 2017 and so far has over 400 likes on Facebook, increasing by ~ 20 per week. A network of local “champions” develop 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.

More information is available at:

- www.streets-alive-yarra.org
- facebook.com/streetsaliveyarra/

Summary

Streets Alive Yarra is grateful for the opportunity to contribute feedback to the City of Yarra review of their Open Space Strategy. We expect that many people will offer suggestions on how to improve our existing parks and reserves. We’d like to offer suggestions on how the Open Space Strategy can be even more effective by broadening the scope to include unrealised potential public open space. The City of Yarra has taken some creative and clever steps forward to convert existing street space to urban park space. Perhaps most famously was Richmond Terrace, featured on URB-I:

- <http://www.urb-i.com/melbourne?lightbox=datattem-ipdff2yn>

which created public space for residents, while simultaneously making the local streets safer and more appealing. Other examples include the Oxford Street parklet and the Peel Street parklet.

The largest amount of public open space available in Yarra are our local streets. Children used to play on the street. Children could play on the street again, if streets were converted to “public open space”, specifically shared zones. Streets Alive Yarra supports the right of children (and adults) to play in public open space such as quiet residential streets.



<https://turfmate.com.au/street-cricket-at-sundown-on-australia-day/>

To enable street play, cultural change may also be required, to nudge peoples perception from “streets are for cars, accomodating people”; to “streets are for people, accomodating cars”. This may take time, perhaps a generation, so it is important to start now.

Recommendation #1: Yarra should make a focus of the “Yarra Open Space Strategy” to convert all quiet residential streets to 20-30 km/h shared zones, where pedestrians and cyclists have priority over cars.

This change can align with Yarra’s integrated transport strategy, utilising a hierarchy of streets:

- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/street-hierarchy>

Gleadell Street

Streets that are surrounded by public resources such as schools, pools, parks, community clubs and churches; are ideal for conversion to shared zones that prioritise people. This is one of the simplest, lowest-cost and most effective ways of increasing public open space in Yarra.

Recommendation #2: Yarra should convert Gleadell Street to a shared zone with reduced on-street parking.



Some people do need to drive to Gleadell Street. The Gleadell Street precinct (including neighbouring streets) does not suffer from a lack of adequate parking, it suffers from a lack of adequate pricing. Correctly pricing on-street parking throughout Yarra, using the principles of Shoup, would bring supply and demand for parking back into balance, enabling parking to be removed from Gleadell Street.

- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/time-of-use-parking-charges>

Getting There

The value of public open space, i.e. how much people enjoy them; is dependent upon the entire “door to door” experience. Specifically, Yarra should measure their effectiveness in delivering “enjoyment value” with regard to the complete experience; i.e. from a person leaving their front door to visit the park, until they get back to their front door.

An important part of this assessment is the experience of getting from home to the park and then back again. Parks and reserves do not optimally deliver recreational opportunities if there is no safe and pleasant way for all community members to access these spaces from their homes and workplaces.

A indicator of failure of Yarra’s present “system design” is the number of people choosing to drive to parks. Driving (within the closed space of the vehicle) detracts from the experience of open space. Yarra can maximise the value of open space by enabling people to experience open space as they walk or cycle to parks.

Recommendation #3: Rather than ensuring that the public open space designated as parks have adequate car parking, Yarra should ensure that the public open space designated as streets have adequate safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

This can be done by:

- converting all quiet residential streets to 20-30 km/h shared zones,
- installing protected bicycle lanes and protected intersections on key access streets, and
- installing more park benches and street trees to create linear parks which lead to the larger recreational areas.

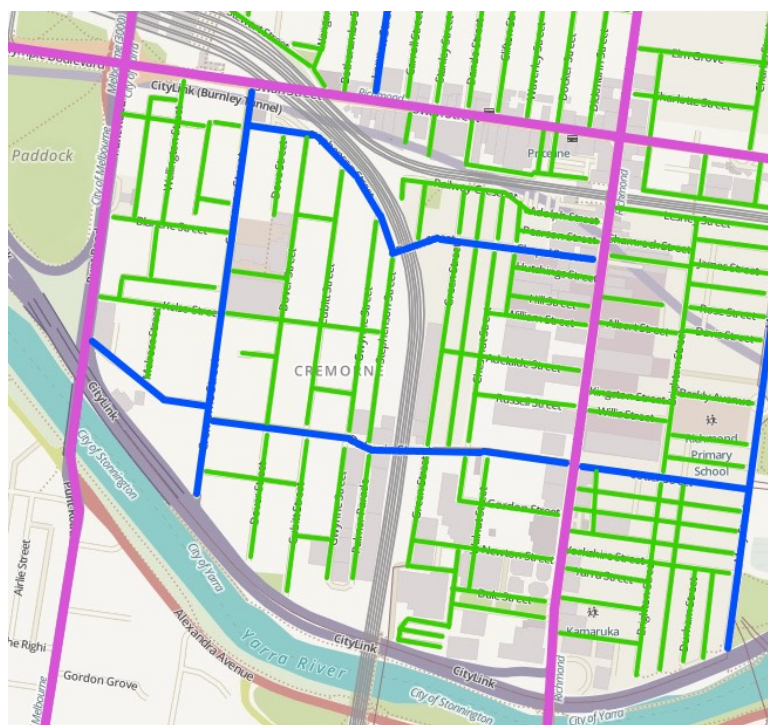


Image shows the opportunity for creating large amounts of public open space by converting quiet residential streets (shown in green) into 20-30 km/h shared zones.

20-minute neighbourhoods

20-minute neighbourhoods is a principle of Plan Melbourne 2017-2050, managed by the Victoria State Government. Plan Melbourne will guide the growth of Melbourne for the next 35 years.

- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/20-minute-neighbourhoods>

In a 20-minute neighbourhood people have the choice to live locally, with the ability to meet most of their everyday needs including access to shops, childcare and schools, parks, doctors and public transport, within a 20-minute walk, or alternatively cycle or local public transport trip from their homes.

The 20-minute neighbourhood concept is all about creating walkable, healthy, cohesive, sustainable communities with strong local economies, while reducing the need to travel and cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

Plan Melbourne states that a 20-minute neighbourhood must:

- be safe, accessible and well connected for pedestrians and cyclists to optimise active transport;
- offer high-quality public realm and open space;
- provide services and destinations that support local living;
- facilitate access to quality public transport that connects people to jobs and higher-order services;
- deliver housing/population at densities that make local services and transport viable; and
- facilitate thriving local economies.

Recommendation #4: Yarra should support Plan Melbourne and the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods by ensuring every resident can walk to a park within 20 minutes.

Recommendation #5: Yarra should publish a map showing the time required for each resident to walk to a Yarra park, to demonstrate compliance with Plan Melbourne.

Further information

Further information, context and suggestions are available at:

- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/>
- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/street-hierarchy>
- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/8-to-80-cities>
- <https://www.streets-alive-yarra.org/walkability>

4th March 2018