

CBR-101

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** No Parking Permit Policy

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I wish to write to you as a new resident to your City about the Council's 'No Parking Permit' Policy.

As someone who has recently moved to [REDACTED] (I recognise that this is not your ward) onto a property that was subdivided after 1997, it was an incredibly difficult task and took multiple trips in order to successfully comply with the parking guidelines without the ability to obtain a visitor pass. This was an incredibly frustrating and costly experience.

I now also have nowhere to park a vehicle, and have been told that I can obtain a foreshore permit – which would be a 10 minute walk to my residence. For obvious reasons, this is not a suitable solution, nor is it a long-term sustainable solution due to the policy change that will take effect on 1 July 2021.

I think this policy only disadvantages younger and new residents to the City of Port Philip as well as new residents who require a vehicle for their work, and does nothing to “ensure new developments are ‘self-sufficient’ in car parking provision” – a stated policy objective.

Though the developer of my building clearly has not provided sufficient car spaces on site, the developer suffers no consequences under this policy. The new residents are the ones who have to bear the impact of the developer's decision to not provide sufficient parking, and the Council's subsequent decision to deny these new residents a permit. This is objectively unfair and incongruous with the policy objective.

The policy objective of “optimis(ing) the availability of kerb side space for existing resident and visitor parking permit holders” has a largely unfair consequence of favouring existing residents who are likely to be older than newer residents. The largest age group of people migrating to the City of Port Philip was younger people in 2016. Almost all age brackets over age 35 experienced a negative net migration. It is the people leaving the area who are favoured by this policy decision.

## CBR-101

Migration by age group 2016				export	reset
City of Port Phillip					
Age group	In migration	Out migration	Net migration		
5 to 11 years	+805	-1,592	-787		
12 to 17 years	+480	-505	-25		
18 to 24 years	+3,263	-850	+2,413		
25 to 34 years	+10,935	-9,115	+1,820		
35 to 44 years	+4,934	-8,828	-3,894		
45 to 54 years	+2,616	-2,941	-325		
55 to 64 years	+1,823	-1,515	+308		
65 years and over	+1,166	-1,304	-138		
Total population	+26,540	-27,080	-540		

The policy objective of “encourage(ing) greater consideration of sustainable transport modes” unfortunately does nothing to address the needs of new residents who require a vehicle in order to work – like tradespeople.

I hope that you would represent me in my request to come to an alternative policy on parking arrangements in the City of Port Phillip that does not disadvantage younger, new residents as well as residents that require a vehicle for their work.

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CBR-102

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rippon Lea Estate Gardens

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

As an owner and resident of Canal Ward, I would like to express my wish for the PPCC to continue the relationship with the National Trust to allow residents to access the gardens at no cost to the resident.

The gardens are beautiful and family friendly - my children love exploring here - forgetting that just outside the gates is the inner city area we love. We love jumping on our bikes with a blanket and heading to the Rippon Lea Estate Gardens to meet friends.

As I understand it, the consultation period on the Council's budget finishes this week and thus, felt it important to express my view that this relationship between Council and the National Trust should continue.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

CBR-103

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rippon Lea Estate gardens - resident access

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED],

I am writing after receiving communication from the National Trust regarding the free access for Port Phillip residents to Rippon Lea Estate's gardens. I was unaware that this was apparently a "trial program" only, due to end on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June.

While I appreciate that there are no doubt costs involved in continuing the program, and if it is over-used it might cause "stress" to the Rippon Lea gardens themselves, I and I am sure many other residents would very much like to see this program continued.

To quote, apparently, you:

"Port Phillip is one of the smallest and most densely populated municipalities, and while the benefits of nature to our health and well-being are well-known, this year has driven home the importance of getting outdoors, be it for exercise or a catch-up with family and friends. Rippon Lea Estate is perfect for a picnic or a wander through the gardens marvelling at the flora."

(<https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/about-the-council/news-and-media/no-cost-for-port-phillip-residents-to-explore-rippon-lea-estate-gardens> )

Regards,

[REDACTED]

CBR-104

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Fwd: Your feedback on Rippon Lea Estate

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

Hi all,

Further to the email below just wanted to voice my support for the Council's efforts in coordinating the Port Phillip Resident Access to RipponLea Estate program. My family has taken advantage of this program and would love to see it continue!

Thanks for all the work you do.

[REDACTED]

CBR-105

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Ripponlea Estate residents garden program

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

As a user of the Ripponlea Estate's residents garden access program I have found it excellent, and much favour its continuation beyond the end of June 2021.

I am directing this e-mail to you directly because I have been unable to find anything on the Port Phillip Council website which enables me to express my view to the council otherwise.

Sincerely,

CBR-106

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Eco Centre Garden Group Funding

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED],  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I just wanted to say that I was disappointed to hear that the council intends to discontinue funding for the garden program at the Eco Centre. I have only taken part a handful of times but it was such a wonderful experience. I learnt about my area, sustainability and it also introduced me to a group of terrific and diverse people. It was clear to me that for some of the volunteers this was a very important lifeline that connected them to community. The program seems to tick so many boxes. Personally, it helped me connect to my area and led me to join a climate action group. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

This is the first time I've ever contacted my local council so I feel very strongly about what might be lost. I hope that it is still possible to turn this decision around.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

[REDACTED]

CBR-107

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Eco-centre volunteer program

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]  
My wife and I are writing to you over our concerns about the ending of funding for the Eco-centre volunteer program. Whilst, we understand there are financial pressures, we think there are hidden cost savings and many benefits that the program provides so that it is actually value for money.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our views.  
Kind Regards,

[REDACTED]



CBR-108

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Draft Budget

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

On behalf of the Community Reference Committee, we write to express our shock and disappointment at the sudden decision revealed in the CoPP Draft Budget papers, to cease funding Friends of Suai Covalima (FoSC) and its programs of support to the people of Covalima in Timor Leste.

In February 2021 Council received the FoSC Annual Report and in September 2020 endorsed our new 5 year Strategic Plan, which is based on strengthening the Council's partner, the Covalima Community Centre (CCC), to enable it to become increasingly independent. This demonstrated that we are committed to a planned, managed transition of reduced support. Councillors, particularly new ones, may not be aware of certain key aspects, including that a transition period has been under consideration for some time, but there has never been any suggestion of an immediate cessation of funding. We would therefore appreciate the opportunity to discuss arrangements to scale down the funding provided to the CCC over a phased transition period.

The 20 year Friendship Agreement with Covalima was renewed only last year by Council and there has been no indication that the current funding would not be renewed.

It is clear that this decision has not been given sufficient consideration, as it takes no account of the consequences of an abrupt and immediate cessation of all funding and the dire impact it will have for many people in Timor Leste. It will also reflect very poorly on the Council as a whole and damage its reputation both in Melbourne and in Timor Leste. It comes at a time when the community in Timor Leste is extremely vulnerable as it copes with increasing cases of COVID-19 and the loss of homes and livelihoods due to the worst floods in over 40 years. We are sure Councillors will have seen graphic images of these floods which hit the country less than two weeks ago and caused widespread destruction, including throughout Covalima District.

An abrupt end to funding means job losses for staff and the inability of our partner to implement ongoing programs, such as scholarships for further education, the With One Seed community forestry/carbon credit trading scheme, COVID response and the flood relief programs. We have commitments to these programs and it is unconscionable to immediately cease this support.

Our Council has enjoyed a proud history of community support and protecting the most vulnerable as well as engaging in this valuable Friendship with Covalima, based on relationships at various levels: people to people, community to community and Municipality to Municipality. From a governance standpoint, making sudden, unplanned decisions without due consideration for the consequences, can only be described as poor practice and will reduce public trust in Council's ability to make good decisions.

We ask Council to re-consider its decision, request the funding be re-instated, and provide us with the opportunity to present a more detailed transition plan to you.

Kind regards,

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██████████

██████████

██████████

CBR-109

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Council Budget

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I am writing to support funding for the Friends of Suai in the Port Phillip Council Budget.

Port Phillip has been home for over twenty years since being drawn to this area partly because of the community that was politically involved in a range of issues. Many of the Port Phillip residents care about more than their own self-interest, there is great tolerance, diversity and inclusion. The Friends of Suai Group is an outstanding example of these values, residents working for the good of others. The work of this group is something to celebrate; the difference it has made to the lives of people in Suai is ongoing and significant.

I have only been involved in the fringe of this group; many have devoted vast amounts of their time, energy and finances over the decades. Members of this group have made multiple trips to East Timor, at their own expense and have personal friendships with Suai residents. The cumulative expertise and experience of members of Friends of Suai is impressive to say the least. This group would possibly be one of the most professionally qualified, and successful in operation worldwide. Please maintain funding so their work can proceed and the trust built strengthened, rather than broken. Changes to a Friendship Agreement and funding need to be done in the most 'friendly' manner, with plenty of notice and implemented gradually.

A planned, reduction of support gives the best opportunity to get the full economic benefit from programs in progress. The priorities can shift to extra training, equipment purchase for present and future needs, and provision for completion of courses for scholarship recipients.

To repeat, as a ratepayer I ask that you please maintain the funding for Friends of Suai in the Budget.

Thanking you,

[REDACTED]

CBR-110

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Documentary: The Art of Friendship about Friends of Suai/Covalima

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED],

[REDACTED] recently completed a short film titled *The Art of Friendship* (26 dur.) about the amazingly successful 20 years work of the Council of Port Phillip in their friendship with Suai/Covalima, assisting in the rebuilding of that community after devastating violence in 1999.

We are proud to tell you that [REDACTED] has been accepted into the St Kilda Film Festival online program of Australia's Top 100 Program - International Perspectives films and will be submitted to many more festivals before it has a release on Australian television.

I was disappointed to hear that after voting to continue to support the friendship for another 10 years in September 2020 the new Council is reviewing the friendship funding.

So many of you know little about the friendship we are pleased to make the film available to you to view online so that you are well-placed to make your decision about the future of the friendship in the coming weeks.

[REDACTED]

Private Password: [REDACTED]

Please don't share the password. The film is currently being publicised for the Festival and the online program doesn't begin until May 21st-29<sup>th</sup>. We are committed to the Festival maximizing their audience registrations.

The password will expire on May 20th when the film can be viewed on the St Kilda Film Festival website.

<https://www.stkildafilmfestival.com.au/screenings-special-events/australia-s-top-100-international-perspectives-online>

I hope you enjoy the film and I look forward to a positive outcome for the friendship that allows the Friends of Suai and the Community Centre in Suai, time to organize a self-sustaining future that allows the friendship to finish with the grace and dignity that has been its defining characteristic for 20 years.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

CBR-111

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Friends of Suia Covalima in the CoPP 2021/22 budget

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I write in support of the inclusion of the budget for Friends of Suia Covalima program in the 2021/2022 CoPP budget. It is a crucial program for the people (particularly the youth) of Suia in the Covalima Province of East Timor, and the program is also a crucial source of cohesion and commitment for a significant subgroup of the CoPP community.

I was a resident of CoPP for over 20 years, up until quite recently, and my interest and involvement in East Timor extends over much the same period. In my previous role as Chair of [REDACTED] I saw many development programs in action and, in my experience, the Friends of Suia Covalima (FoSC) friendship program is one of the strongest and most effective community-to-community development programs I have ever seen. It is a great credit to CoPP, and it is of immeasurable benefit to the people of Covalima.

Personally, I derive considerable satisfaction from being a sponsor of scholarships under the FoSC program, and part of that satisfaction is in knowing that CoPP provides the core framework which supports the scholarships. As [REDACTED] of FoSC, I am well aware of the importance of CoPP support for FoSC - particularly when we are fundraising and raising awareness within CoPP and the broader community. Without CoPP support the FoSC program would not survive.

Please don't hesitate to request further information on any aspect of the above at any time.

I urge you to retain the support for FoSC within the CoPP budget.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CBR-112

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** FUNDING FOR FRIENDS OF SUAI

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

As you know the City of Port Phillip has had a long ongoing commitment and close relationship with the Community Centre in Suai, Timor Leste, through the Friends of Suai program. ( It has also been personally rewarding for me to be part of such a significant and meaningful engagement as a volunteer in Timor Leste supporting the program.) The contribution of the City of Port Phillip has been of significant benefit to Covalima.

Council is to be congratulated for its support.

Close cultural ties, trust and friendships have also developed. The Community Centre in Suai has been able to deliver a range of services to the community (eg community programs in education, domestic violence, environmental preservation, financial management, IT and health are some examples). It is providing scholarships to help train students with the skills needed to "give back" to their community.

Timor Leste is grappling with containing Covid and recent devastating floods. To be "deserted" and cut loose by the City of Port Phillip at this critical time would be a cruel blow and would effect the livelihood and well being of many. Please urge the City of Port Phillip to continue its support and celebrate and promote its commitment to Friends of Suai. The exemplary ongoing program has been a significant humanitarian and educational achievement. Failing to continue to support the fragile community and contemplating terminating existing ongoing commitments seems incomprehensible.

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[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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CBR-113

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Friends of Suai Covalima program

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]  
I am emailing you regarding funding for the Friends of Suai Covalima program. I am so thankful to hear that funding has been retained in the 2021-22 draft budget which is currently undergoing community consultation. I am not a resident of Port Phillip but I was fortunate enough to be a volunteer supported by the Port Phillip Council at the Covalima Community Centre in Suai for 3 months in 2013.

It was a remarkable experience for me to witness first hand the poverty of the community and at the same time to see the impact of the Friends of Suai Covalima program. It is a beacon of hope in bringing vitally needed development which has transformed and strengthened that community.

The Vocational Educational and Training program that supports young people training in Dilli to become teachers, midwives, community development workers and tradespeople and to return to the local community brings about profound change at the personal and community level. The programs at the CCC that teach English, empower women, develop IT skills and much more are so impressive. It brought me to tears so many times when I was there to see the impact that support, opportunity and hope can bring.

The City of Port Phillip has a friendship agreement which has lasted 21 years, but there is still much to be done in Suai Covalima, particularly with the impacts of Covid-19 and recent devastating floods. Please do not withdraw support. Surely it is the role of community leaders such as local councillors to encourage people to look beyond themselves, to build a fairer and more just world when we have the vision and the resources to do so.

The City of Port Phillip is doing a wonderful thing and I thank you for all that has been done. The impacts of the program will endure beyond us all if support continues. I ask that the Port Phillip Council keep supporting the Friends of Suai Covalima program.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

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CBR-114

SUAI COVALIMA AND THE CITY OF PORT PHILLIP

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I am writing to you to let you know that the pending consideration of the City of Port Phillip to cease funding the successful Friends of Suai Covalima program would be detrimental to both the people of Suai Covalima and the amazing volunteers of Port Phillip.

The Port Phillip Council , for 21 years, has provided support . Many thanks to Councillors for their commitment to this worthwhile cause. Just because the Friendship is celebrating its 21 years' anniversary this year doesn't mean that it's "job is done". Words without actions to back them mean little and we can be concerned with and for our neighbours and able to look beyond ourselves to our region .It is not unusual for all levels of government including Local Government, to have relations with other places around the world. This Friendship is a warm and trusted relationship, not "aid", and it is in Australia's national interest to retain and nourish it. It is important to honour the investment already made by many people . Australia is a rich country, the City of Port Phillip is **relatively** affluent and can afford to provide this support. Now is not a good time to walk away from supporting the Friendship when COVID-19 cases are increasing and Timor Leste has the worst floods in 40 years. It would be unfair and unconscionable to cease all funding. There are ongoing projects to which commitments have been made.

Thank you for your consideration of the City Port Phillip continuing support to Suai Covalima

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].  
[REDACTED]



18 May 2021

[REDACTED]

I am writing to thank you for your support and hard work in supporting the Friends of Suai Covalima over the past 21 years. I am writing because I have heard that the Council is considering terminating the funding for the Friendship, and I want to urge you to keep the funding for the future, as you are doing in this year's Budget. I also want to acknowledge the challenges facing the Council during this challenging time.

In 1999 I worked with the United Nations on contract, having worked in the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] here in Melbourne. Sadly I met the priests in Suai, who were murdered at the time of the vote for Independence for Timor Leste, with [REDACTED] a psychologist and priest. I have always had the most utmost respect for the City of Port Phillip Council and the incredible initiative taken by so many to support Friends of Suai Covalima. I continued to work in Timor Leste until 2001, to support Timor Leste community workers and health workers specialising in mental health.

I really want to encourage the City of Port Phillip to continue to support the Friendship into the future as it is such a beneficial community project, honouring the relationship with Timor Leste over many decades. This Friendship is a trusted relationship, not aid, and it is in Australia's national interest to retain and support it. It is important to honour the investment already made by many people, particularly as it affects young people. The Friendship is celebrating its 21 years' anniversary this year and I believe is critical that we demonstrate our ongoing concern with and for our neighbours and our region.

I am a local, resident, and have been a resident since the 1980s. I have continued to work with refugees and asylum seekers and lived overseas based in [REDACTED] UK for many years. Having returned to St Kilda, I now work in a University and continue to promote social work and community development strategies for refugees, and those affected by trauma in relation to forced migration.

Discontinuing our support for the Friendship when COVID-19 cases are increasing, and Timor Leste has experienced the worst floods in 40 years would be unfair and have a long term impact. There are ongoing projects to which commitments have been made and if any reductions and changes must occur, they must be phased in gradually.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss this further, or to assist in any way with your deliberations.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

CBR-116

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Covalima Community Centre, Suai, Timor Leste

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I have been a member of Friends of Suai since 2009 when I participated in a program in Suai improving the English language skills of teachers of English. In that time I have been impressed by the range of Projects which the Covalima Community Centre has undertaken with the support of the Port Phillip Council. These have included the Scholarship program for school-leavers; the tree-planting program; the lighting program and the sanitation program at the local high school. Most recently the Covalima Community Centre has supported people during the Covid pandemic.

I think it would be a retrograde step if the funding to support these programs in Covalima and the Co-ordinator employed by Port Phillip Council was to be stopped without seeking alternative avenues to continue the funding of these projects. I currently support financially the Scholarship program which enables school-leavers to continue their schooling and obtain qualifications to enable them to get a job/career.

I understand the Council will continue to support the Program this year. However more time is needed to find substantive donors who will ensure the program continues. I ask you to consider granting funds for five years to enable suitable donors to be found. The mentoring and support provided by the Co-ordinator will also need to be replicated.

As a close neighbour I think it is appropriate that Local Government continues to support programs such as the Covalima Community Centre particularly while such areas recover from the effects of the Covid pandemic.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

CBR-117



Subject: Port Phillip and Covalima Friendship



I write to present my compliments to you and your fellow councilors, your CEO and all your Officers, to acknowledge with profound sentiment, the solidarity of the people and the City of Port Phillip in Victoria Australia, with the people and the Municipality of Covalima Timor-Leste that began in the year 2000.

At that time as you all may remember, Timor-Leste went through major upheaval post United Nations supervised referendum on 30 August 1999, where our people voted overwhelmingly for freedom and independence. This was followed by wanton destructions of 80% of its infrastructures, public buildings such as schools and hospitals burnt to the ground, and above all, a people deeply traumatized.

In early 2000, our leader Xanana Gusmão during one of his visits to Australia, he made a special visit to the City of Port Phillip. He was warmly welcomed by the Mayor, the Councilors, the CEO, the Council officers, including members of the community.

Subsequent to that visit the leaders and the community of the City of Port Phillip extended their hand of friendship across the Timor Sea to the community of Suai Covalima.

This hand of friendship, reflect and rekindling of the friendship established during the Second World War between Timor-Leste and Australia, when the Diggers of the 2/2 Commandos numbering less than 500 men, forged their friendship with local villagers who in turn help to protect them and feed them to ensure their survival against the numerical Japanese imperial forces. This is a testament of true human empathy, trust and friendship in the midst of war and misery, that no amount of money could buy.

As we have experienced in the last twenty years, this friendship also builds and strengthen the local community at home in the City of Port Phillip, where individuals, total strangers to each other, come together forging their own sense of togetherness, solidarity and common purpose.

As one of the persons responsible for the establishment of this friendship which has spanned two decades, I want to acknowledge and I am very proud of all individuals involved past and

## CBR-117

present, Mayors, Councilors, Council Officers and community members, who have consistently and persistently played an important nurturing role in making this friendship a long lasting, sharing achievements thus far between the two communities.

Australia is a very successful continues democracy spanned 200 years with rule of law, security and peace, underpinned by a prosperous economy, and there is, an abundant goodwill in Australia particularly in the City of Port Phillip to share these experiences with Timor-Leste.

One of the principle objectives of this friendship is for Timor-Leste's municipalities to learn from experiences of the Australian Local Governments, democracy at grassroots level, Municipal services, community interactions and engagement.

In Timor-Leste's constitution article 72, determined that the Central Government must devolve power to the local government municipalities as part of two-tier government in the country.

People in Covalima Municipality is very fortunate and they are very grateful for the friendship of the City of Port Phillip. They have learnt a lot but need to learn more as the rollout of Local Government Municipalities takes place post Covid19 pandemic.

The Covalima Community Center supported by the City of Port Phillip has been playing a prominent role in development programs for the community at large and particularly in recent times with proactive Covid19 mitigation and prevention campaign. I was quite impressed with their community engagement. They organized representatives from 16 women's organization in Covalima area to meet with the Covid19 Crisis Management Center team from Dili including myself, where we directly engaged with the community on issues of Covid19 mitigation and prevention and its socio-economic impacts on the people in Covalima during the lockdown.

I urge you to continue the course in support of this friendship path between the City of Port Phillip and the Municipality of Covalima, for at least another 10 years as provisioned by Council's resolution and commitment. Your role and efforts in directly sharing your local government knowledge and experiences with the municipality of Covalima has much better value and appropriate sustainable outcome in the long run, and I am sure the ratepayers of the City of Port Phillip in true sense of friendship will rejoice with you in that success.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CBR-118

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Friends of Susie Covalima

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

Please use your vote to continue supporting the Suai Covalima Community Centre.

It is a bad time to be withdrawing the funding. Timor Leste is experiencing COVID 19 in the community not to mention the difficulties of recovering from recent floods.

We are a relatively affluent society and have an obligation to help our less privileged neighbours - not to mention which world powers will fill the vacuum left by our withdrawal of funding.

I hope you will use your influence and vote to continue this support.

Regards

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CBR-119

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Suai Covalima

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]  
I write to you as a fellow member of the Labor Party to urge your Council not to cease support for the community in Suai Covalima.

I would firstly like to thank your Council for continuing support for Friends of Suai Covalima. I have travelled to Timor-Leste on three occasions and I have seen first hand how much of a positive influence these friendship networks have on their respective sister communities.

Australia has a long and complicated history with Timor-Leste - one that in many regards brings me great shame. At the same time through the friendship networks we have been able to demonstrate how kind and supportive Australian people are. I think this is something we should be proud of.

It would be devastating for the support for the Suai Covalima community to be abruptly withdrawn. Especially during this difficult time when COVID-19 cases are increasing and Timor-Leste has experienced the worst floods in 40 years. I cannot imagine how this would affect the community.

Additionally, it is pertinent to consider the relative wealth of Timor-Leste and Australia. Australia is a rich country. The City of Port Phillip is relatively affluent and can afford to provide this support. Not to mention that the cost averages about \$2 per annum per residential household.

It would be unfair and unconscionable to cease all funding. The trust that has been built over years would be destroyed if commitments which have been made are not fulfilled. Consequently, any change to the support for the community must be phased in gradually.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
\*\*I acknowledge that I live and work, on the unceded land of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin nation, I pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. Always Was Always Will Be.\*\*

CBR-120

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Friends of Suai Covalima program funding

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED],

We are members of the Port Melbourne congregation of South Port Uniting Church which has long been a supporter of the Friends of Suai Covalima program. We have been Port residents for just over 12 years.

We have appreciated very much the Council's long term financial support for the program and are proud of what the program has achieved in that time. We are grateful that the draft 2021-22 Council Budget currently continues to financially support the program. However, if such support is not to be provided in the future, we would expect that the funding would not be ceased without a transition process over several years. Having said that, we hope that will not be needed and the Council will continue to support the program long into the future.

We understand the financial pressures on Council and the inability to meet all requests for financial assistance. However, this is a program resulting in a true Friendship links which has continued for 21 years and with a country which lacks the financial resources and infrastructure that a wealthy country like Australia has. As you would be aware, Timor Leste is also facing increasing COVID-19 cases and has experienced the worst floods in 40 years.

At a time when our Federal Government is decreasing foreign aid (shameful in our view), we urge our Council to continue to support for the Covalima Community Centre in Suai with its strong track record in education, sustainability, gender equality and health. It is a program which makes a difference!

Thank you for taking the time to read this email.

Cheers and best wishes,

[REDACTED]

CBR-121

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rate freeze

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED], I don't believe I am getting value for money for my rates. I have a friend who lives in Brighton who pays far less rates than I pay in Port Phillip. He receives a free parking permit. I am sick to death of having to buy a parking permit to park in my own suburb where I pay exorbitant rates! I am further concerned by the council spending my rates on non essential items like [in past years]concerts which attract NON VOTING - NON rate payers who create huge clean up bills and increase violence on our streets. Again, I don't believe I am getting value for money for my rates!

[REDACTED]



CBR-122

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Re: Council Rates Matters

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I see from Council Agenda papers that a rate rise is recommended.  
I again alert you to the fact that I and so many others have been adversely impacted by COVID and will continue to be impacted.  
I urge you not to support this rate increase

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

On 12 Mar 2021, at 9:53 am, [REDACTED] wrote:

[REDACTED]

Thank you Councillors, and Council staff for bringing Port Phillip through COVID-19, through innovative new ways of service delivery during lockdown. These innovations in service delivery offer the opportunity for further productivity improvements.

Ongoing service delivery does not require more staff, rather staff working more productively. Good start – keep it going.

I make the further point that none of the Federal, State or local Government staff experienced any COVID job losses unlike so many of our Port Phillip residents who either lost a job or had work hours significantly reduced

For this reason I want a rate freeze because rates have become a major expense in my household budget and have reached levels where it is difficult to sustain.

I am a self-funded retiree who has a rental unit as part of my property and I have had to accept a 35% cut in rental income with no prospect of that increasing in the next year as my tenants have ongoing reduced hours, and St Kilda vacancy rates are extremely high.

A colleague who lives in Brighton pays around half the rates that I pay in Port Phillip and receives a free parking permit and has green waste bins etc even though they are paying less rates.

I believe my rates were excessive before the COVID pandemic having had a 28.5% increase between 2018 and 2020 (noting a tiny decrease in 2021)

I believe Council can use its COVID productivity experience to deliver on the Council plan without any need to increase rates

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

CBR-123

[REDACTED]

Subject: CM: I support the rate increase, even though I pay rates!

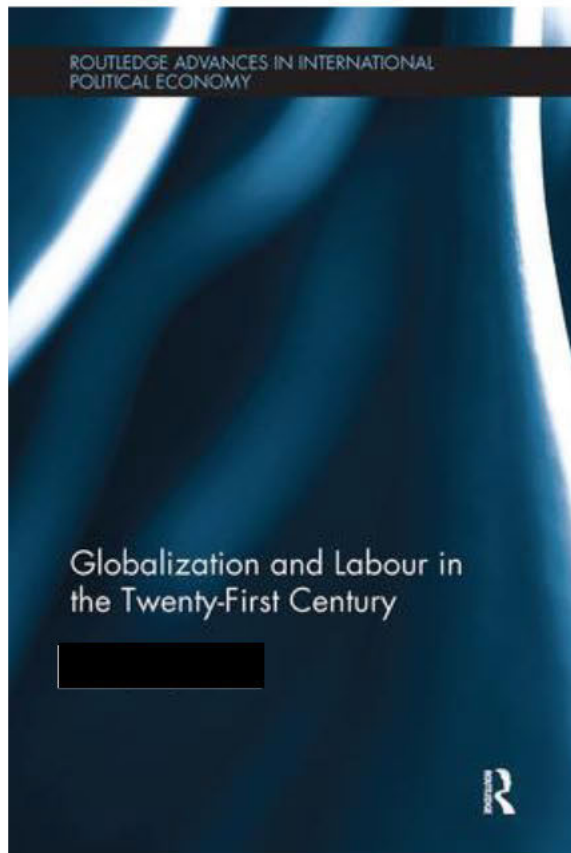
[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

<https://www.routledge.com/Globalization-and-Labour-in-the-Twenty-First-Century/Burgmann/p/book/9781138594159>



[REDACTED]

CBR-124

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** FW: Compare your rates – How does Port Phillip compare with other Councils?

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

If you can't refute the comments below please vote for a rate freeze and a review of operating expenses.

Thank you,  
Regards,

[REDACTED]

CBR-125

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Need your help.

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I wish you are well. I am writing to inform you out of my concern for another council rate hikes due to be voted soon in our community.

I hope you can look into other saving and efficiency improvement in our council operations instead of raising the rates yearly. I am finding it very hard to budget and pay my rates arlready. I sincerely hope you understand the situation and hope you will not support any rates rise for the next review.

Thank you

[REDACTED]

CBR-126

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Our Rates

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

Whilst the community has suffered through COVID and most of us have struggled to keep our households together during this difficult period we, the ratepayers find it incomprehensible that Council continues to increase its head count and award its employees pay rises each year. Most of us don't bother to speak up because we are either too hard at work – expecting our representatives to do the right thing by us or we just don't believe that we'll get a hearing. As the table below demonstrates, our rates are exorbitant and we know that the Council headcount far exceeds that of comparable Councils.

We would expect that Council challenge each ratepayer dollar spent maintaining the community assets and services and control it's cost budget. We demand that you – our paid representatives, control expenditure and maintain a freeze on rates.

A concerned ratepayer.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

# Property rates calculator

## 2020-21 Residential rates comparison

Property value

\$ 1800000

	Port Phillip	Stonnington	Glen Eira	Bayside
Rates	\$3,355	\$1,832	\$2,492	\$2,112
Charges:	\$0	\$268	\$254	\$480
Total:	\$3,355	\$2,100	\$2,746	\$2,592
Percentage difference between Port Phillip and other councils		59.8%	22.2%	29.4%

CBR-127

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** OBJECTION TO PROPOSED RATE RISES as per City of Port Phillip Draft 2021-22 Budget

[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.

[REDACTED], I write to you to express my **strongest objection to the proposed increase in property rates as noted in the Draft 2021-22 Budget** that Council has recently published for community consultation. Quite simply, and completely unjustifiably, residents of the City of Port Phillip are already paying excessive rates and receiving poor value for money.

I note that my rates are +31% higher than for a property of comparable value in Stonnington, +49% higher vs same value property in Bayside and *a whopping +76% above the rates I would pay if I lived in a property of similar value in Glen Eira!* This is outrageous and I would add that residents in each of these three councils not only pay lower rates, but also receive benefits like green and food waste bins - and free parking permits - which we do not have access to.

Is Council simply unable to budget effectively? And why does it stubbornly refuse to control its spending or stand accountable/effectively benchmark itself against other councils? On this point, I think the increasing concern across the community is that Council is an unwieldy – and unaccountable - bureaucracy employing 30-100% more staff than other councils. The \$93m pa wage bill – which represents a massive 41% of the amount collected through resident rates paid – in consideration with my earlier points around poor service, abruptly suggests that Council prioritises paying salaries over providing basic services to the community. A position that is clearly unacceptable and untenable – particularly as we continue to work through the COVID pandemic which has had a financially devastating impact on residents.

I propose that rates are frozen at current levels through, at least, the next budget period. This does not mean that services provided to the community are cut or reduced – it rather simply, and quite rightly, proposes that the CEO and his team must identify efficiencies in order to justify their existence. Rates cannot go up just to pay an increase in council staff wages.

I would be very keen to engage with you personally on this matter – should you be minded, my

[REDACTED]

With kind regards,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

CBR-128

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Fwd: Compare your rates – How does Port Phillip compare with other Councils?

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

I know we don't get the right bins which have always been a bugbear of mine. Parking is a disgrace with the excessive development, there is actually nowhere to park. It is impossible to have friends visit without them getting fined. Copp the city of ripoffs, don't put up my rates

BTW ive bcc'd all my neighbours

cheers

[REDACTED]



CBR-129

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rate Increases

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

I STRONGLY object to the raising of rates in the City of Port Phillip. I am already penalised by the state governments rates calculation, so I am forced to make up for the property purchases by buyers/investors. Rate increases magnify the penalty I am already paying. It is simply UNFAIR!!!!

Please explain to me WHY I am punished by this Council.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

CBR-130

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** City of Port Phillip - Vote for Rate Freeze

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

Councillors!

I understand that you are yet to publicly support a rate freeze when it is put to Council in June.

I am of the very strong opinion that Council must become more efficient in delivering services to our community. Council says that a rate freeze means services must be cut but I say Council does not need to prepare reports that nobody wants or reads. Writing a report that is 200 or 300 pages long that nobody reads is not a service.

If you vote in favour of a rate freeze then the CEO and his team will need to identify efficiencies rather than cut services.

Please advise if you support a rate freeze and will vote accordingly.

[REDACTED]

CBR-131

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rates increase?

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED],

News that rates will rise again soon, rather than remain static, is worrisome. Continued rate increases versus increasing debate about Council's general spending, and service return to rate-payers, is at a tipping point.

If rates are not kept static in the short term I'll not be voting for you the next time around.

[REDACTED]

--

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**CBR-132**

[REDACTED]

**Subject: No to Rate Rises.**

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I write to you as a long-term resident of Port Melbourne - 41 years.

**I am imploring you not to vote for a rate rise.**

It is the most major expense in my annual budget. If rates increase I am not sure where I will find the money. I know that it will be a financial struggle. I am a self funded retiree, and full time carer for a pensioner mother with a terminal condition.

2020 was very very tough on everyone. We all struggled. 2021 is also incredibly challenging. Everything has increased exponentially - house and contents insurance - \$550 increase, health insurance - \$240 increase, ongoing medical costs, and general cost of living costs have increased. Interestingly the money I live on has not increased. I have no CPI increase to rely on as there was none.

This is not the first-time rate rises have affected me.

On one occasion a very well-known councillor told me to defer my rates, sell my house and then pay the outstanding rates. I was furious and will never forget that conversation or the councillor! A formal objection and review had no effect on the rate increase.

Last year, I raised concerns about the rate increases and I was given a full-page response that was full of indecipherable bureaucratic waffle. I pay my rates over 10 months. Last year that was reduced to 9 months due to Council delays. These impacts and responses make you feel powerless and much less inclined to be engaged with the Port Phillip Council.

Melbourne City Council did not put up there rates last year but Port Phillip did. We are paying the most rates of all our neighbouring councils. Port Phillip for all the huge rates they receive we get very little value in return. We have no proper recycling program. I get my rubbish collected and my pavement/gutters swept every two months if I'm lucky. No tree pruning takes place. Our gutters are always full of leaves.

So I implore you to please think very carefully before voting to increase the rates.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Long Term Port Melbourne Residents

CBR-133

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rates Freeze

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

On the 23rd June you will consider a motion to approve the Budget for 2021-2022. This will, if any previous budgets are anything to go by, include a rates rise. I implore you to support a freeze to rate rises for this Budget. Businesses and communities have suffered during COVID and especially in Victoria with the harshest lockdowns in the country. Recover is painful and uncertain with lockdowns and border closures still a day to day proposition. Coming out of this pandemic has meant businesses having to improve margin with productivity and I urge you to support these undertakings by showing similar financial discipline and prudence to assist your constituents in times of need. Challenge the CEO to do more with less!

[REDACTED]

CBR-134

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** RATE INCREASES

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

As councillors, your job as our elected officials is to see that we receive the services that councils are meant to supply at the most reasonable cost possible.

Comparing our rates to others shows only too well that our rates are far above what they should be when compared to these others.

Is our council bloated? Has it undertaken more than it's basic charter in servicing the residents? Is this becoming an impost to those long term house and flat owners living on fixed incomes and pensions?

**MOST CERTAINLY AND IT MUST STOP.**

Please reign yourselves in. Have an honest look around at other councils and then look at ours. It's not looking good. Look for savings as the rest of us must do. Have some consideration for us.

[REDACTED]

--

[REDACTED]

CBR-135

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rates

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to each of you in relation to the proposed increase in residential Rates in the City of Port Phillip.

Could I ask each of you to support a Rate freeze and simultaneously establish a process to review the financial and management efficiencies, or lack of, across the range of Council mandated responsibilities including those activities that are superfluous or carried out by choice.

Sadly, Council has moved into the category where it has become known for poor financial management and a high handed view that ratepayers are a bottomless source of dollars.

A competent in-depth review of fiscal and management processes would undoubtedly lead to budget savings and therefore make a Rate freeze possible.

‘Waste not - want not’

‘Money doesn’t grow on trees’

regards,

[REDACTED]

**CBR-136**

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, 4 May 2021 2:04 PM

**To:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rate income

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

Dear Councillors

I am unable to attend Council, in person or virtually, on Wednesday evening. I have not asked to speak as cannot be online and it appear officers are unavailable for this opportunity.

My question relates to the past financial periods and the forthcoming budget rate revenue, actual and forgone.

Whilst we can calculate how much the rates are paid for a same value property in Port Phillip or other Council areas and compare the perceived or actual value residents receive from the rates paid, what is not known is how many properties in Port Phillip receive either exemption from rates, have their rates waived, receive rate concessions and the amount of rate bad debts.

For council tenants, on a lease, are the rates included in the lease amount or are the properties exempted, waived from paying rates or are rates paid separately and hence included as rate income?

**Using historical data, can Council provide residents with the following analysis of rates revenue, actual and forgone in the 2019-2020 financial period.**

- Total net rate revenue from Houses,
- Total net rate revenue from Apartments
- Total net rate revenue from Commercial properties
- The nature and number of properties that were **exempted** from rates and the amount of rate income foregone
- The nature and number of properties that received rate **waivers** and the amount of rate income forgone.
- The nature and number of properties that received rate **concession** and the amount of rate income forgone.
- The nature and number of properties that received **rate reductions** and the amount of rate income forgone.



- The number of properties that received rate **pension concessions** and the amount of rate income forgone.
- The number of other **non rateable properties** in Port Phillip and the amount of rate income forgone.
- The amount of rate income that had to be written off as a **bad debt** during the period.

**Can the information also be supplied for the budget periods 2020-2021 and 2021-22.**

When budgets are tight for many residents, businesses and for Council, understanding the actual and foregone rate income amounts helps with the understanding and gives the potential for policy review of revenue collection .

Residents and businesses are unaware of the various policies relating to the collection, exemption, waiver, concessions etc of rate policies and practises.

Thank you

██████████

██████████████████

██████████████████ St Kilda 3182

CBR-137

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rates levied on home owners

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I am writing to ask you to reconsider rates levied on home owners and either halt rates or even better, reduce them in the forthcoming budget sessions.

I have lived in this area for 40 years, 32 years of which have been in the family home where my children have been raised and I am greatly concerned about the rates I am required to pay. As a self funded retiree, it gets more difficult every year to meet this major expense. You may say that I ought to move on then, however I don't want to. My roots are here, my friends live nearby and I feel part of this community.

I have friends in Bayside and Stonnington whose residential rates are substantially less than mine - 30% and 58% - and they live in comparable sized homes with larger gardens. They get better value for their money - green bins, food bins, free residential parking permits in addition to the essential services provided by all councils.

Please hold off increasing rates in new forthcoming budget plans.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

**CBR-138**

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Thursday, 20 May 2021 5:21 PM

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Excessive Rates

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

Hello Councillors:

My rates on my Principal Place Residence are \$15,648.

Comparatively:

Stonnington 8,511

Glen Eira 11,469

Bayside 9,983

According to the comparative Table supplied I should be paying \$15,099 on a Capital Improved Value of \$8,100,000 but I am paying \$15,648?

No doubt the rates are excessive.

Regards:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Middle Park

CBR-139

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rate rise

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED],

We are asking you to please vote against another rate rise from Council.

There are so many high rise buildings being erected around us which must bring in more rates for Council. Every year our rates go up but we receive no other services from Council. Street and pavements are full of rubbish, street bins never cleaned although I request it etc..

We are self funded retirees whom has had no handouts from governments since COVID-19, no interest on our small savings from the bank, if rates continue to rise it will mean we will have to move out of the City. Cannot understand why Port Phillip Council are charging far more rates than other Councils.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

CBR-140

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Pleading for rate freeze

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I am a resident of Port Phillip and writing to you to ask for rate freeze for next year.

It's getting harder and harder for me to meeting daily expenditure needs, I understand other near by suburbs are paying much less rates compared to us.

I hope you can study ways to make our coucil run more smoothly and make some efficiency gain and put rates on freeze.

Thanking you

[REDACTED]

## CBR-142

### **I am opposed to a rate freeze.**

The city has provided a comfortable and advantageous context for many of us to live in. We must do what we can to ensure that it is enhanced as a result of our time here. Indeed that it can continue to become a better place

Rates are the prime way to ensure that we do so

CoPP an attractive destination because of many decades of civic investment. It is our obligation to leave it no worse than we have inherited it.

The CoPP faces considerable challenges over the next decades in terms of the development and maintenance of open spaces, dealing with the challenges of climate change, supporting a rich cultural life and binding together a society in which there is an ever-expanding gap between rich and poor. The CoPP has always been a city that addresses these issues. This gives the city its special character, morally, socially and economically. It is vital that we continue that process and will only be able to do so if we have a strong rate base.

### **I am opposed to the following proposed cuts in services**

I am surprised at and deeply regret many of the proposed cuts but particularly the following

- to community managed child care centres
- to Sports Phillip and Community sports programs – especially those which encourage female participation and support sporting activities in community housing estates
- to programs which encourage the use of bikes
- to the policy providing free access to Ripponlea

All of these (and other cuts that Council is proposing) will extend the barriers that divide us - in particular between the more and less affluent members of our community.

This is no simple matter of prudent financial management but will change the nature of the community in which we live.

In addition to this I am surprised and saddened to see the proposed cuts to the arts program which combine relatively modest savings for council with potentially devastating impacts on the arts companies and facilities involved.

Councillors will be aware of the impact of Covid on those companies and recent sweeping and unconsidered cuts in Federal arts subsidy. These have left smaller community based companies such as those now targeted by Council only just clinging on.

## CBR-142

If council proceeds with its proposed cuts there is a strong chance that some of these companies will not survive and that will leave not only artists but the community impoverished - a streetscape without diversion, enrichment and entertainment – and a business environment further depleted of expenditure from those visiting the arts from outside our area.

Australia ranks 26<sup>th</sup> out of 33 countries on the OECD measure of spending on recreation and culture. And while we cannot as a city remediate that figure, we can try to make ourselves just a little bit different - as we are and as many of us would wish to be.

I wish you well in the difficult task that lies ahead of you and in your ongoing deliberations on these important issues

Thankyou

████████████████████

CBR-143

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** No to rates rise

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I think you need to re consider the services and get them working smoothly before considering a rate rise across City of Port Phillip.

Our streets are still not well maintained and there is a rise in street wall art? invading our Canal ward.

Please clean up the streets.

-Some guy comes and sprays the weeds in the gutters but no one follows up to pull them out so the problem remains.

See pics in Leslie Street.

-The small building in Hewitson reserve has recently been spray painted with a rather aggressive style of "Art" ? And now this same style has spread to the opposite corner of Inkerman Street and Malakoff Street on a building for lease. What next?

Was a permit given by council for this painting? of either building?

It leaves us locals scratching our heads as to who decides on the style and colours and the Ok to paint these buildings.

I believe I would need a permit to do either of these painting jobs.

Does the council own both buildings ?

There are no signatures on the painting so it is presumed they are random painting by unauthorised taggers.

With the painting of the tatty old building on Inkerman Street it has certainly not masked the crumbling condition of the building nor enhanced it in any way for prospective tenants.

I would appreciate a response as 'Snap Send Solve' being touted by the council as the correct method to approach you is just not working.

kind regards,

[REDACTED]





CBR-144

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Subject: Re Rates

[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.

[REDACTED]

*We have lived through the most extraordinary and impactful year of our lives. At no time in our lives have we seen as many businesses closed and jobs lost. At no other time have we been locked in our homes for extended periods and been forbidden to exit outside after curfew. At no time in our history have we been forbidden from leaving our homes for more than 2 hours of exercise per day.*

*We have seen our savings eroded, our nest eggs depleted, and our income reduced or cut. We have also seen the costs of living increase through the rate rise imposed by the City of Port Phillip last year.*

*It is hard to make ends meet at this time, and to regain our financial foot hold; and now the council is planning to increase our rates again with complete disregard to the hardship we have encountered, and absolute disdain to the effects of this additional cost on us in the community.*

*I would like to see you as a councillor show some heart felt compassion for your community at this time and seek savings in the council budget rather than a rates increase.*

*The rates for equivalent value properties in neighbouring councils are significantly lower. This points to a high spending inefficient Port Phillip Council. These neighbouring properties also receive free parking. They receive green waste bins also and are paying lower rates.*

*We are being TAXED indiscriminately for the purpose of a council whose officers and management are intent on building a bigger council machine, and bigger budget, rather than one seeking efficiency. My same house, on same block, at same value as mine, in Brighton would pay 40% less in rates.*

*It is simply remarkable that the council receives \$231 million in revenue and cannot find savings, but rather seeks to increase rates, while concurrently managing to pay wage increases, grant money to favoured projects such as artists, and a village in East Timor and state education projects. I find it very difficult to digest that I received an increase in rates to simply allow 'do gooders' in council to spend money on pet projects and*

## CBR-144

*ideological beliefs, most of which are so far devoid of local issues and expectations that it is extraordinary.*

*I understand that some Councillors deny there is a rate problem in Port Phillip and the same Councillors are trivialising the planned rate rise by saying it is only \$27 for the average residential property. But ratepayers are only painfully aware they are paying up to twice, the rates paid for properties of similar value in other Councils.*

*Port Phillip uses the average rate as a comparison to other Councils, but average rates are misleading and deceptive because we have a much higher ratio of units / apartments to houses and that skews to average towards a lower number. Refer: <https://ropp.org.au/fact-check-how-high-are-port-phillip-rates-compared-to-neighbouring-councils/>*

*Last year the rate rise coincided with a wage rise for council staff. The amounts were virtually identical. This year will be no different. Please see this for what it is, a local council intent on serving its own interest and the interests of its staff and the interests of the special interest groups, rather than the needs and expectations of the broader community.*

*Do you really feel that we the residents can accept more costs in our daily lives after what we have been through? Do you really feel that we think we are getting good service for the cost we pay already?*

*A rates rise will be largely levied on people with a house on land and premium properties, those in smaller apartments will get off with little or no rise and in some cases a decrease. Frankly this stinks of social manipulation. Tax the people who have worked hard to live in a nice home. The 1.5% rise proposed will do nothing but tax the top 20% of properties in the community to pay a wage rise for staff.*

*To be fair to the community there should be a wage freeze and a rates freeze to coincide.*

*A Rate rise now is a real stinker and the odour will be with you for as long as you will be able to remember.*

*Please vote for a rates freeze and show your compassion to the community you represent.*

Thank you for listening.



CBR-145

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** City of Port Philip - proposed rates increase

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I write to you with regard to the proposed rate increase for the The City of Port Philip.

I have extensively compared and reviewed the profile and financials the of surrounding councils (Glen Eira, Bayside and Stonnington) all with simliar population and area to manage of The City of Port Philip.

Below are my findings, with the data sourced from council annual reports and located at the end of this email.

- We have the **average** number of residents
- We occupy **less than two thirds** the area or our neighbour peer councils
- Our revenue is **one third higher** than our peers
- Our rates income is **\$20m or 20% higher** than the average
- Our expenses are **1.5 times higher** the average
- Our employee cost are **1.5 times higher** the average
- Council **surplus one third** that of our peers
- Income per resident **1.5 times higher** the average
- Rates per resident **one third higher** than the average
- Expenses per resident **two thirds higher** than our peers
- Employee costs per resident **two thirds higher** than our peers
- Average staff salary costs over **one third higher** than our peers

Please explain these statistics in comparison to councils with similar residents, geography, services, population, infrastructure and social responsibility.

The City of Port Philip wastes money on excessive staff salaries 40% higher than our peers, we've got a lower footprint 61% to manage from a roads and infrastructure perspective, we over pay people and do not spend our ratepayers money effectively or efficiently.

Find savings and efficiencies, not rate increases. We have had enough.

If you approve a rate increase based on this level of incompetence from the CEO and senior council management you are complicit in their incompetence and will be held accountable for their mismanagement our financial affairs.

CBR-145

Data

Council	Population	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population per Hectare	Revenue	Rates Income	Total Expenses	Employee costs	Council P&L
Port Philip	116,476	20.7	56.59	\$ 236,873,000	\$ 129,017,000	\$ 229,966,000	\$ 94,675,000	\$ 6,907,000
Port Philip Percentage Average Comparable Councils	91%	61%	146%	136%	119%	152%	151%	32%
Glen Eira	158,216	38.4	40.91	\$ 189,926,000	\$ 109,565,000	\$ 164,506,000	\$ 74,251,000	\$ 25,420,000
Bayside	107,541	37.0	28.92	\$ 139,928,000	\$ 97,954,000	\$ 125,873,000	\$ 45,566,000	\$ 14,055,000
Stonnington	118,614	25.6	46.27	\$ 190,971,000	\$ 117,736,000	\$ 164,994,000	\$ 68,812,000	\$ 25,977,000
Average (Glen Eira, Bayside & Stonnington)	128,124	34	39	173,608,333	108,418,333	151,791,000	62,876,333	21,817,333
Council	Revenue per Capita	Rates Income per Capita	Expenses per Capita	Employee Cost per Capita	Council Staff (FTE) <sup>1</sup>	Average Staff Cost		My Rate Comparison
Port Philip	\$ 2,034	\$ 1,108	\$ 1,974	\$ 813	678	\$ 139,579		\$ 12,117
Port Philip Percentage Average Comparable Councils	148%	128%	164%	166%	107%	138%		156%
Glen Eira	\$ 1,200	\$ 693	\$ 1,040	\$ 469	803	\$ 92,429		\$ 9,000
Bayside	\$ 1,301	\$ 911	\$ 1,170	\$ 424	422	\$ 108,040		\$ 7,626
Stonnington	\$ 1,610	\$ 993	\$ 1,391	\$ 580	668	\$ 102,966		\$ 6,615
Average (Glen Eira, Bayside & Stonnington)	1,371	865	1,200	491	631	101,145		7,747

Source Documents

<https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/councils/stonnington>

<https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/councils/bayside>

<https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/councils/port-phillip>

<https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/councils/glen-eira>

<https://www.heraldsun.com.au/leader/news/more-than-50-council-officers-in-victoria-earning-more-than-daniel-andrews/news-story/098e4895f61a0147f961e0165bd1ce75>

<https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/media/5425/glen-eira-city-council-2018-2019-annual-report.pdf>

[https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/council/item\\_3.1\\_-\\_attachment\\_1\\_-\\_annual\\_report\\_2019-20\\_0.pdf](https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/council/item_3.1_-_attachment_1_-_annual_report_2019-20_0.pdf)

<https://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/About/Corporate-documents/Annual-Report-and-Budget>

[https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/f5horzpx/copp\\_annualreport\\_201920.pdf](https://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/media/f5horzpx/copp_annualreport_201920.pdf)

Regards

██████████  
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CBR-146

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Port Phillip funding for Friends of Suai

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED],

Port Phillip has funded Friends of Suai for 21 years and it is heartening to see that this funding will continue next year.

I understand that some councillors are considering abandoning our commitment to Suai and this troubles me greatly. Our funding to Suai has achieved so much for relatively little outlay. We have supported schools and teachers in the region, funded the installation of running water and toilets at the high school which has meant that girls can attend school throughout a month instead of staying home one week in four. We have funded the community centre which has been a focal point of community organisation. It has been invaluable to locals during COVID 19 and following devastating floods.

These achievements and many more are something of which our own community should be proud. And it has been at relatively small cost to the people of Port Phillip. Many local governments support overseas communities who are less fortunate. We should be proud to be amongst these communities reaching out to others in our region.

I think it would be mean and inappropriate to abandon the people of Suai at this very testing time of COVID and floods when they are benefitting greatly from a very small contribution from each household in Port Phillip.

I ask you to seriously consider continuing our valuable contribution to the Friends of Suai.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

CBR-147

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Feedback on proposed draft council plan

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I hope you all have had a wonderful week. I am writing to provide my feedback on the proposed draft council plan.

As a resident of Port Phillip and someone who works in community-building, human rights and the arts, I believe right now we need to be reaffirming our commitment to underrepresented groups, demonstrating our support of creative organisations and causes and helping to build a greater sense of community in the aftermath of COVID-19.

I believe the following programs should be maintained for these reasons:

1. **Sport Phillip & Community programs** - by providing these resources and subsidies, the council shows support not only for the physical wellbeing of its community, but also recognises that this community includes diverse peoples from underrepresented backgrounds. It shows that we don't only care about the commercial and wealthy interests, and supports an inclusive and diverse community.
2. **Rippon Lea Estate's residents garden access program** - this provides access to a heritage site that represents our community and our past, as well as providing access to a beautiful green space that improves mental health and active living through local outdoor activities/exploration. This is especially necessary after a year of COVID, where people have become more aware of their local areas and the hidden gems within them.
3. **Community Transport service** - is crucial for those that are low income or elderly (a group that is expected to grow significantly in the coming years according to your own research). A booking system will make it less accessible to its target groups, and reducing the routes and frequency of service will limit their freedoms and ability to participate and contribute in our community.
4. **Changes to arts programs** - I haven't been able to find enough specific information on what initiatives or partnerships are proposed to be cut, but arts programs in Port Phillip are crucial to having and inspiring a creative and vibrant community. These programs help people become more active and invested and gain social connections.
5. **Ride2School Day, Healthy Tracks, Ride2Work, Festival of Everyday Riding programs** - these programs are important to show our commitment to an active and healthy community, both for adults and for children.

The Draft Council Plan states that it is committed to supporting the health of its people, including those who are most at risk. However, I don't see this reflected in some of the measures proposed, which seem to reduce access to programs that support the mental, physical, social and emotional health/wellbeing of our community. They also directly contradict many of the indicators that you self-

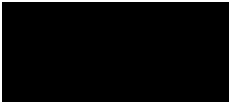
## CBR-147

identify as part of Council's Core Strategies. The programs I've listed above directly contribute to making Port Phillip inclusive, liveable, sustainable and vibrant, as well as a safe and active community that has positive social connections.

All of these programs together have a proposed saving of \$378,000 - less than the proposed increase in pressure cleaning for main streets which I feel is less necessary than these other initiatives. I do think the rent relief and additional summer management infrastructure is necessary (specifically toilets, signage and more bins on the beach in summer), but we can save \$378,000 on street cleaning and preserve many of these community programs that make Port Phillip such a special place to live.

Thank you for your attention and consideration, and I look forward to seeing this council plan develop.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, and have a great week ahead.





CBR-148

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Port Phillip Plan and Budget submission

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

As a Port Phillip resident and business owner of many years I would very much like to see more resources spent on greening our streets and making Port Phillip more sustainable at a grass roots level.

I implore you to take the Community Proposals by BEST and PECAN very seriously as they are both wonderful groups proposing highly worthwhile projects.

- Balaclava Environment Street and Trees BEST
- Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network PECAN

I would also like you to ask you for the following:

- Maintenance of \$50,000 for access to Ripponlea Estate for Port Phillip residents, and possible extension to other National Trust properties
- Maintenance of the community engagement and in-person events programs including the Enviro Leaders program, community gardening program at the EcoCentre, rooftop solar and Sustainable Business Networks.
- Allocation of \$50,000 for scoping and budgeting of the Green Line public open space initiative.
- Long term commitment to equitable access to public open space for all Port Phillip residents, especially those in suburbs east of Brighton Rd, initiated through the Public Space Strategy to be completed this year.
- Long term commitment to allocation of council resources to tackle the climate emergency, especially community emissions produced by industrial and commercial sectors, and effective measures to assist renters and apartment dwellers to reduce their emissions.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CBR-149

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Port Phillip Budget 2021-2022

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

Thank-you for the opportunity to comment on this year's proposed budget.

I support the submission made by Progressive Port Phillip, and would like to focus on the following main areas.

#### **Rates and money**

Congratulations on maintaining rate relief for those in financial stress and resisting the false campaign against maintaining rate revenue to support our community assets and services. Local government can make such a big difference to their communities' quality of life, and CoPP can borrow cheaply at this time to renew and enhance infrastructure for the long term and achieve great value for the community by spending wisely. Neither minimising the rates take nor cutting services would deliver the quality outcomes in the short or longer term that our city expects.

#### **Community Childcare Quality Subsidy should continue.**

It is a shame to cut this funding as it has been so well argued over the years. The evidence is clear, that investment in quality early years' care and education leads to multifold benefits for children's health, brain development, learning and socialisation and to significant budgetary savings down the track, forestalling potential costs for society at large and indeed our own community. Significant research locally and internationally has identified this and I am sure that the Childrens' Services team can point you to this evidence and how the CoPP Quality subsidy and Child and Family Services are directed to these objectives.

#### **Friends of Suai Covalima support**

Our support of communities in East Timor is as important at this time as it has ever been. East Timor is an emerging and under-resourced nation, vulnerable to health and economic impacts of Covid 19, and CoPP's participation in the sister city relationship along with similar arrangements between other Australian LGAs and locations scattered across East Timor has made a huge difference to date. Please maintain CoPP support.

#### **Local Arts Organisations**

While it is great to see Council's continued commitment to Linden and Gasworks, the proposed cuts to funding for 6 fantastic local Arts organisations is not consistent with the proposed Council Plan pages 48-50 which identifies the broad objectives of fostering creative, diverse and inclusive

## CBR-149

participation in our arts and cultural sectors, economic development and tourism . We cannot turn away from established local arts organisations, a number of which have statewide and national significance, and expect to achieve the cultural vibrancy and social engagement for which our city has been deservedly well known.

This presents a significant reputational risk, and may discourage arts practitioners from seeing CoPP as their home. There may well be consequent hits to tourism and hospitality, which have shared the pain and future pandemic risks.

I have uploaded my submission through the link on Council's Have Your Say site.

Many thanks for your attention, good luck with the daunting tasks of aligning plan and budget.

Kind regards

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██████████  
██████████

CBR-150

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Consultation Budget

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]  
In reading the council extensive consultation budget I would like to present the following:

**The Financial Plan Repayment:**

With the RBA announcing the extremely low interest rate for loans I am somewhat confused as to why you are paying off the debt currently held by the COPP.

I can only assume that it has a greater interest rate then current, so therefore I agree with the item.

I do implore you however to take out a loan at the current low interest rate from the banking system to cover the items that you are removing from the 10 year plan.

**The Arts and Performing Arts Scene:**

I am deeply troubled with the proposed removal of The Arts Scene budget.

The Arts, Performing and Music scene in St Kilda has been a long term successful feature of the makeup of St Kilda (COPP).

The number of performers that have started in COPP and have gone onto flourish in the states and on varying forms of media are a credit to COPP.

To lose such support would be a heart break to an already co-vid ravaged sector of our community.

We need this sector to flourish for:

the tales they bring,

the art works they produce,

the stories they tell,

the songs they sing,

the humour they bring,

the creative minds they impart and

the sanity they bring to us all.

The by-product of these artists and crews have brought audiences that have contributed to the income of many businesses with the COPP.

As someone who has been part of this scene for just on 49 years I ask you to please continue to support this incredibly important sector.

**Climate Emergency**

Back in 2019 The Port Phillip Council declared a Climate Emergency.

I support the sustainability measures that council is implementing.

However I do not see monies taking us further towards the ending, rather you seem to have lessened the tough decisions to next to nothing.

If we don't continue with the halting of pollution and recycling then I pity the children of the future.

Science has stated that we have only a few years to act to stop this climate emergency.

## CBR-150

Council has to continue to do everything in its power to stop our world from completely changing.

I suggest the following:

Support the Eco Centre especially in regards to community Education

Working with all businesses to developing greening and local solar networks

Currently we have uneven distribution across the COPP in regards to canopy trees and open spaces,

Balaclava has a 5% rating where as other areas in the municipality have between 15 and 25 %

I note there is a council vehicles item, what I am not seeing is:

the word electrical vehicles,

nor am I seeing charging stations located throughout the municipality.

Council needs to make a substantial investment in:

water permeable paving and

storm water harvesting where it can be collected and used to water the trees and parks

cleaning of roads and foot paths, due to out sourcing, are blocked and are a waste of an important resource called 'water'. I don't see why we cannot have a system of the water that goes down the drain go into a filtering system that removes the leaves and rubbish and is then used by the residences to water their gardens and the leaves sent to compost.

Rubbish bins are currently only 2 where I live.

Council needs to roll out across the whole municipality the 4 bin principal and the trial run was deemed a success.

I am lucky enough to have a compost bin on my property but I know if I had the 4 bins I would be able to assist more with saving the climate.

By taking these items into our Council budget the rubbish dump fees would be reduced immensely.

### **The Community Bus**

I note the reduction of the community bus usage, bus stops and method of requesting one.

I would like to point out that you have taken the usage of the bus as being very low over the past year. Perhaps that had a lot to do with the pandemic, our lock down status and the fact that many shops, libraries and medical and health support areas were not open.

Many people rely on the community bus to engage with others, to go to the libraries, to access health care, to shop for fresh food at the South Melbourne market on days when specials are being run. To stop these runs would cause financial stress and hardship if they have to pay higher prices for their goods and in particular deprived of choice for affordable fresh food.

I regards to booking there are a lot of people that do not have access to computers and smart phones that use that service.

## CBR-150

### Ripponlea Gardens

I thank Council for negotiating the free access to the gardens.

The result has been more than evident during the co-vid pandemic.

Where family and friends could have access to a green healthy environment, while being co-vid safe.

I implore you to continue with free access for the immediate and long term benefits to people's financial and mental health.

### Footpaths

I note that within the budget you are cutting the repair / maintenance of footpaths.

The current footpaths within my area are not Vic Roads compliant.

The paths are blocked with trees planted by Council, street signs and parking signs.

Parents with prams, Children, Those using walking frames and Those using wheelchairs and motorised wheel chairs are forced to use the roads.

It is dangerous when I go to the shops in Carlisle Street. Beside the fact that we are playing 'chicken' with the vehicle traffic.

I ask that if you are not fixing the footpaths that you make the streets fine free for those that use the road, because they have no option.

I would be very happy to have all councillors come with me around my area for a practical demonstration.

### Other points of concern:

There was no mention for the First Nations people and support for their support centres.

No mention of the Pride Centre.

No mention of Pride March.

I wonder where these support areas have gone and why?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CBR-151

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Our Council Plan

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

Hello

I am writing this submission to you because I am a proud resident of CoPP. I have lived here for over 20 years , and also spent time in this area as a child.

The biggest issue impacting individuals and our community is climate change. This is SUCH a big issue for us all. Action is needed at all levels of government. But it's especially needed at a local level as it affects the way we live & our day to day lives.

While the CoPP has a Climate Emergency Action Plan, what we need is something solid. It should consolidate a whole of Council response, that promotes better community understanding of the climate emergency, and reframes Council staff and programs away from the business-as-usual stance. There should be an identifiable long term commitment to allocation of council resources to tackle the climate emergency, especially community emissions produced by industrial and commercial sectors. We need effective measures to assist renters and apartment dwellers to reduce their emissions. We need goals to measure our achievements. A power purchase agreement like the City of Yarra is a good start.

I acknowledge and commend your support of the EcoCentre, including the building upgrade. This is an organisation that is worth every cent invested as it gives back multi fold for both the environment and the community

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**CBR-152**

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Love your program Love SPCC -Thank your Council 2021

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

Dear Port Phillip Council,

Thank you for your continued support of our **Applied Reception and Customer Service/Art Connect and Make Your Mark programs and SouthPort Community Centre**. It has made a hugely positive impact in my life.

Programs I have attended are a few of **12 SPCC council funded programs that serve more than 300 participants each week**.

These programs and many more are key to facilitating Councils new strategic goals of an inclusive vibrant community, Research indicates an active healthy, resilient, well-informed, connected community will recover more quickly from disruptions like COVID-19 and your support makes that possible.

Thank you,

Thankyou and Kind Regards

[REDACTED]



CBR-153

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Your draft budget planning

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I am not usually vocal to Port Phillip Council but a gathering of PECAN, the Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network, a few weeks ago, attracted my attention. The strong possibility of the Green Line, the linear park that follows the route of the rail corridor from Alma Park to Elsternwick Nature Reserve, excited my hopes for more public space and walking paths, particularly the improvement of public access through St Kilda East and Ripponlea, with an increase in biodiversity and tree canopy cover in my area.

I am a resident and ratepayer of Ripponlea and, through the last 32 years of my residency here, have seen very little change in open space, street lighting and public accessibility.

The Green Line begins in Alma Park which could be improved with many more indigenous trees but, compared with the rest of the Line, is attractive and usable. Raglan Street and Nelson Street, areas where I walk with grandchildren and friends, are crowded with pedestrian obstacles along their footpaths, lack landscaping and on-street plantings, and are bereft of attractive indigenous trees. The Balaclava Station section has good pedestrian action but the embankment here has very poor vegetation, a mass of non-indigenous species and a mass of concrete.

The Green Line from Grosvenor Street to Albion Street has significant access issues, with narrow paths and no pedestrian access along the railway embankment. The Green Line must divert south along Gibbs St, west along Brunning Street, south down Somers St and east along Albion St. What a shambles!

The next in the Green Line, Albion and Monkstadt Streets and my neighbourhood, is relatively well-maintained, but desperately needs the opening of the trees over the canopy, a widening of the current pathway, more indigenous trees and much more public space.

The last part of the Green Line, as far as Port Phillip is concerned, and as also in my neighbourhood, is a disgrace. Without a pedestrian crossing at Glen Eira Rd to Lyndon Street, the necessary widening of the nature strip alongside what is supposed to be a walking path, and with very unsafe access to Hotham Street, there is an enormous amount to be done there. And that does not mention the lack of indigenous trees and public space.

And this brings me, in shock and anger, to the current Draft Budget Plan.

In short, whilst Albert and Middle Parks and Elwood have been allotted nearly \$600 per person, Balaclava \$794 pp, St Kilda Rd \$812 pp, Port Melbourne \$1,268 pp and St Kilda West \$1498, Ripponlea has been allotted **\$27.92 pp** for bike parking facilities at **Ripponlea Station!**

And there is very little in that Budget Plan that mentions a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, nor includes an adaption of existing infrastructure, particularly for assets that deliver critical services to the community. The natural environment, with drought and changes in average temperatures, is affected. Is there any mention in the Draft Budget about planting street

trees, indigenous trees, that will tolerate warmer temperatures? Does council weed management realise that weeds may grow across a wider area and for a longer season than previously experienced? Council staff, infrastructure and services will be affected by climate change but where and when does our council consider this?

[REDACTED]

And there is so much more to be told but I think you must have got at least some of my message.

Then there are our beautiful Ripponlea Gardens which have been a blessing since Council allowed Ripponlea residents to enter and enjoy the Gardens free-of-charge. It has been life-changing over the last few months, especially as it is the only large green and open space this side of Brighton Rd to Hotham Street, and from Carlisle St to Glen Eira Rd. The picnickers, the elderly in wheelchairs, the young parents with their toddlers running around happily, the teenagers happily sitting in groups under wonderful trees, all delighting in the opportunity to enjoy the only large space in their area. And now council is considering no longer allowing free admission to those living in Ripponlea. The garden of 5.7 hectares of sweeping lawns, magnificent trees, a tranquil lake, the Southern Hemisphere's largest fernery, and an orchard with over one hundred varieties of heritage apples and pears unavailable for those who love its so much! And pay so much in rates! What are you thinking of?

Please reconsider your ideas and think very carefully before making your decisions. There are many residents and ratepayers involved and too many Victorians making their way to Queensland due to taxes and disappointment.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CBR-154

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
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[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Graffiti is not ART

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

As a resident of st kilda east for almost 30 years changes have been evident yet slow. With gentrification of this fab suburb and development increasingly popular and inevitable I believe that attention to neighbourhood character and self pride to our suburb has been overlooked by its residence and its custodians the council.

The streetscape such as Carlisle has a variety of businesses of which many adorned with Graffiti type paintings and tagged facades.some of which above shop awnings.

Do these tenancies have planning approvals for these works?

Carlisle st has many original old buildings that are either neglected by landlords and or by tenants, these buildings could be repaired repainted to provide a cleaner and reinvigorated streetscape. An incentive could be proposed to owners and tenants by means of assistance be it financial or sponsored or other.

The bridge over Carlisle st is filthy with grime and graffiti and such a strong architectural element in the street , should be cleaned and maintained at all times.it's almost our gateway to Carlisle st. Graffiti is rife in this suburb and the longer it is left and encouraged with ghastly Murals the more it appears on public and private buildings.

enough is enough.

The park at Inkerman st Hewitson reserve has a small building recently painted with yet another mural and low and behold the artist has now continued this ghastly mural along a private building over the road.

We just can't avoid it wether driving past or walking it's seems st kilda council either encourages this form of work or totally oblivious.

In the 30 years I have lived here graffiti and murals has constantly got out of hand and created such an eyesore from what was a clean and compact residential environment.

Our streets are overgrown in places with weeds. Randomly sprayed with god knows what and left to die yet not cleaned or removed , for the time it takes to spray it would be quicker to remove the weeds etc while they are small.

We have weeds in our street that are knee high for over there months now half dead blocking drainage etc creating stagnate zones in some spots.

These are just few of my concerns that I believe need addressing sooner than later along with planning regulations regarding new development which also needs to be revised.

Yes We must look at the bigger picture ,but it's the smaller details within that picture that contribute to the overall image , that need to be addressed.

Its shopping streets and even its hidden gems that add to the fabric of st kilda and this why it's important to create a plan and stick to it so we can create a new and exciting and inviting place to be.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

CBR-155

[REDACTED]

Subject: Grand Prix Street Stages proposal

[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.  
Dear Councillors,

In the continuing difficult climate for our traders, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Representatives on your Business Advisory Group, would like to present a proposal for consideration.

In the past we have not done a great job in capturing the visitation to The Grand Prix to stay and play in our municipality. As the report attached identifies, after each day of the Melbourne Grand Prix carnival there is a large amount of foot traffic leaving the Albert Park precinct.

We would like Port Phillip to capitalise on the Australian Grand Prix this November through live, local music and a program for hospitality businesses that aims to capture visitation, increase dwell time and spend from the GP's Patrons. This concept aims to keep patrons leaving the grand prix in the local Port Phillip area by providing entertainment on strategically placed outdoor stages after each race day concludes.

We would welcome your support for this initiative and understand there are some remaining funds as a result of the St Kilda Festival being cancelled this year, that could help us achieve our goals.

Thank you in anticipation.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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## CBR-156

### **Older Persons Consultative Committee (OPCC) – Feedback Submission to the Draft Council Plan 2021-31 and 2021/22 Budget**

The OPCC is the key advisory Committee to Council providing advice, advocacy and feedback on issues that affect the health and wellbeing of older residents in the City of Port Phillip, including issues raised by older residents.

As outlined in Draft Council Plan 2021-31 Strategic Direction Inclusive Port Phillip it states that 'Council will partner with our Committee to ensure the diversity of our community's experience is represented in decision making'. On behalf of the OPCC I would like to present to Council our feedback on the Draft Council Plan 2021-31 and Budget. Our feedback has been presented in relation to the OPCC's Key Priority Areas outlined in the OPCC 2021 Action Plan.

The OPCC would like Council to consider and include in the Draft Council Plan and Budget the following priority items identified by the Committee:

#### **Ageism**

- OPCC to be key stakeholder in the development of the Older Person Policy, and consideration be made that Ageism is a key factor for discrimination of older people in Port Phillip.
- Budget allocation for training and awareness raising of Ageism in Council and the community, and its impact on older people,
- Consideration be given to changing the qualifying age for fee waivers for community facility hire to 60 rather than 65, as this reflects and is consistent with the State's designation of Senior status i.e. the Seniors' card kicks in at 60.

#### **Aged Care Reforms/Royal Commission**

- The Committee regards it of utmost importance that the Council continue to prioritise supporting/providing services for older people so they can remain living independently at home for as long as is possible.
- Ensure there are high quality aged care services that are accessible for older residents of Port Phillip.

#### **Communication/COVID-19**

- Council to continue fund services that celebrate, acknowledge and support older people particularly to enable us to stay connected and engaged e.g. Linking Neighbours, CoPP Seniors Festival, supporting Multicultural Seniors and other community groups that engage older people.
- Council needs to continue to support the Community Transport Service and ensure that it is accessible and inclusive of all residents.
- Council needs to ensure that our older residents who are not online remain informed of relevant and key Council information and services this includes Diversity to be available and provided in hard copy format.
- It is of vital importance that Council to continue to support and resource all library activities e.g. digital technology training tailored for older person's needs, writing workshops, talks, music programs.

## CBR-156

### Housing

- Given older people particularly women are the experiencing the highest rates of homelessness, Council needs to stay committed in providing resources and advocating for affordable housing in Port Phillip.

### Sustainability

- Support programs such as the EcoCentre, that will educate and assist older people with tackling the effects of climate change i.e. heatwaves, flooding, emissions.
- Consideration needs to be made for the needs of older people, their physical capacity and understanding (including appropriate languages) in relation to waste management.

### Safety/Physical Environment

- Council to ensure that there is appropriate Street Furniture particularly seating located in key public areas in Port Phillip e.g. Fitzroy Street, and consider the development of a policy/audit of the position of seatings and street furniture in the municipality.
- All public lighting needs to be audited (refer to OPCC letter to Council) and upgraded in public areas
- Footpath maintenance and access needs to be appropriately resourced to ensure they are accessible and safe for older people to utilise. Consideration needs to be made for footpaths to be smooth surfaces not ad hoc textures as these can create trip hazards particularly, for older persons.
- There needs to be more resources for public toilets to ensure that they are in all key public places, are accessible, clean, there is adequate toilet paper and have soap dispensers (for general hygiene, COVID-19)

In addition, given the unprecedented low interest rates in Australia at present the OPCC would like Council to consider the option of borrowing money now to deliver on key projects and infrastructure. This will support future generations. So often the argument is made that the next generation will inherit the current generations debt but if the debt will be lower and will establish long-term assets that they will benefit from, it's not really shifting 'our' debt onto them, this is future planning and aligns with what has been outlined in the budget.

OPCC looks forward to Council's response in relation to these items.



CBR-157

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Ripponlea Estate

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

Please continue allowing us free entry to Ripponlea Estate.

It is a beautiful neighbourhood experience where I walk with my husband and even pop in after school with my grandchildren for an hour or so. I wouldn't go very often if I had to pay - maybe once a year for a special occasion. The gardens are absolutely gorgeous!

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

CBR-158

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Riponlea access for Port Philip residents.

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I wish to provide feedback regarding the proposed scrapping of free access to the Riponlea estate for residents of Port Phillip.

I've been a resident in St Kilda East for almost 5 years & have on many occasion accessed the gardens in times where I have needed some time for much needed peace & reflection. Particularly in the past few months with easing of covid19 restrictions.

[REDACTED]. My work involves being exposed to some pretty nasty stuff at times & I have found that the peace & tranquility afforded to me to rest & unwind at Riponlea invaluable. In a place where there are no dogs, no playgrounds & the traffic sounds melt into the distance, it is a truly heavenly space. Don't get me wrong, I love doggos, I like kids, but Riponlea is something else. These gardens provide a much needed space for local residents to enjoy, relax & rejuvenate & I sincerely hope that this initiative remains ongoing for all Port Phillip residents.

Thank you

Kind regards

[REDACTED]



CBR-159

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Ripponlea access

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I would like to say how wonderful it is to be able to access the Ripponlea Estate grounds as a resident of Port Philip. This access has been important to us as we do not have the luxury of a large garden or open space. To spend time being able to enjoy the expanse of the Estate is really good for our physical and mental well being and I hope that the council will continue to support this initiative in the future.

Warm regards

[REDACTED]

CBR-160

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Ripponlea Feedback

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I hope this email finds you well.

I'm a Port Phillip resident and was one of the many residents who enjoyed access to Ripponlea's beautiful gardens via the Nation Trust Ripponlea Estate Garden Access programme. Sadly the current partnership ends in June and I am unsure if Port Philip Council will renew this partnership with National Trust. I hope that they do. Port Philip (like Stonnington and Glen Eira councils) is very fortunate to have well preserved National Trust heritage homes and gardens in their electorate and not only should these properties be protected but I think they should be celebrated, accessible and enjoyed by all. In todays hectic world, the opportunity to escape the hum drum and become lost and find peace in beautiful gardens is very special. Please consider renewing the Ripponlea Estate Garden Access programme.

[REDACTED]

CBR-161

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Ripponlea Estate - Ripponlea

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I am contacting you to let you know that my family have enjoyed the gardens at Ripponlea Estate over the last 6 months. I think this program is an excellent way of opening the facility to locals to enjoy and ask that the program continue. The usual entry cost makes visits too expensive for frequent visits.

Hope this feedback is helpful to you in making decisions that support our community.

[REDACTED]

CBR-162

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Ripponlea Estate access

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

Good day [REDACTED], My wife and I have enjoyed the access to the Ripponlea Estate on several occasions with the help of the resident access program. I believe this access is great for our health and the respect for the natural environment. My wife and I live in medium density housing like 87% of other Balaclava residents. Household density is increasing in our suburbs, yet opportunities to access nearby parklands is in danger of decreasing. Please consider the greater community benefits in keeping resident access to these very rare and special gardens. Thank you

[REDACTED]

CBR-163

Dear [REDACTED]

22 May 2021

I am a City of Port Philip ratepayer and have been one for the past 19 years.

I am writing to show my support for the Friends of Suai Covalima's request for continuing funding of the Friendship between our city and the community of Suai Covalima.

I am proud that the Council has kept the funding for the Friendship in this year's Budget and thank you very much for having done so.

As others have emphasised, it is not unusual for Local Government to have friendly and supportive relationships with other places around the world. The relationship with Suai Covalima is not one of aid or handouts. Our City is demonstrating its vision in supporting a longstanding Friendship within our region. But, of course, this Friendship is not only a matter of personal interest and satisfaction locally but is also in the broader interest of our nation.

I should also mention the investment made in supporting the Friendship by so many people over the 21 years of its existence. And, just because our Friendship is 21 years old, that does not mean it should end. There are also ongoing projects to which commitments have been made for community development work and it would be unconscionable and unfair to cease all funding.

Added to that: now would not be a good time to walk away and withdraw our support when COVID-19 rates are on the increase and Timor Leste has had the worst floods in 40 years.

Our country is a rich one and our municipality is relatively affluent. We can afford to look beyond ourselves and give the approximately \$2 per residential household each year needed to keep this vitally needed support going.

I also accept the proposed rate increase, capped at 1.5%, so Council can continue to provide services to those who need them.

In the unfortunate event that funding were to be cut, I would urge you that it should be only reduced over a period of five years, to allow the necessary local adjustments to be made over time.

But, of course, I urge you to maintain the current supportive funding of this important Friendship.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

CBR-164

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** FW: Council Funding of its successful Friends of Suai Covalima Program

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED]

I am writing to you because I've only just now become aware that the council has been considering ceasing all funding to its successful Friends of Suai Covalima Program, as part of its review of the 2021-22 Draft Council Budget.

At the outset I'd like to inform you that I've been a resident and ratepayer of the City of Port Phillip for over 15 years and a proud supporter of the Friends of Suai Covalima for over 10 years and would like to highlight the following:

- I have been an active member of the Friends of Suai Covalima , attended their fundraising events and toured Timor Leste and Suai with them, and witnessed the great work that has been achieved at the local High School and the local Community Centre , as well as empowering the local community. The Council can be justly proud of what has been achieved in the past 21 years, particularly as there is still so little support provided to local communities from the Timorese Government.
- I have visited Timor Leste many times and was inspired by the success of the Friends of Suai Covalima Program to not only volunteer myself, but along with some close friends, to support the struggling St Clara Orphanage in Dili, on an ongoing basis.
- I am aware that the Council makes an annual grant to the Community Centre in Suai of around \$60,000 and employs a Coordinator in Australia for 3 days per week to manage the program and to provide mentoring and support. I know from firsthand experience the great work of Carlene and Pat and what they have achieved.
- Whilst I am grateful to the Councillors for keeping the funding in this year's Budget, I implore you to continue to support the Friends of Suai Covalima – the City of Port Phillip should be so proud of what this Council's support has achieved in this part of this struggling nation. Australia is a rich country; the City of Port Phillip is relatively affluent and can afford to provide this support (it averages about \$2 per annum per residential household).
- I'm sure that if the ratepayers of the City of Port Phillip were more aware of the great contribution you've made to this impoverished nation, they too would be proud. We surely can't abandon this beautiful nation when they continue to struggle. Now is not a good time to walk away from supporting the Friendship when COVID-19 cases are increasing and Timor Leste has experienced the worst floods in 40 years. In fact it would be unfair and unconscionable to cease all funding.
- It's important to note that the City of Port Phillip is just one of many councils and Shires throughout Australia, and in particular Victoria, along with Rotary, that have adopted and supported towns in Timor Leste.

Regards

[REDACTED]

CBR-165

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Friends of Suai Covalima funding

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED],

I am really disappointed to learn that you are considering defunding the very successful Friends of Suai Covalima programme. It is a wonderful example of community to community assistance & mentorship & there should be more of it, not less!

I have visited & volunteered in Timor Leste on several occasions & have visited Suai twice, including the Community Centre supported by our Port Phillip Friends group. It really is the heart & soul of the Covalima district & does so much good work in so many different areas. I am amazed & disappointed that a wealthy council like Port Phillip could contemplate defunding such a wonderful organisation, particularly in the middle of a global pandemic & after massive floods have caused so much destruction throughout Timor Leste!

Please continue to support Suai & Timor Leste!

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

CBR-166

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Friends of Suai Covalima funding continuation

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED],

Firstly, thank you for deciding to continue funding for Friends of Suai Covalima friendship group in the current budgeting process.

[REDACTED], I was born and raised in the Port Phillip and Bayside areas of Melbourne, for the past 32 years. [REDACTED] and have had a long relationship with the people of Timor-Leste since my first deployment here in 2014 at which time I spent 12 months living and working in Suai.

Having seen firsthand the work that Friends of Suai Covalima do through the Suai Community Center and having worked alongside their staff on the ground I strongly believe that this program has a huge positive impact for both the communities in Suai and Port Phillip.

The current situation on the ground in Timor-Leste is extremely fragile with the recent severe flooding only compounding the extreme challenges faced as a result of the ongoing COVID19 pandemic. Communities here, now more than ever, need support from neighbouring countries through all mechanisms possible, including local government funded friendship groups such as this one.

I hope you will closely consider the deep and long-lasting connection between people and communities in Port Phillip and Suai, Timor-Leste and continue to fund this friendship group indefinitely. As a wealthy country and with Port Phillip being a wealthy area, the cost is very low to achieve such a deep positive impact for these vulnerable Timorese communities.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

--

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



CBR-167

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** STOP THE RATE INCREASE / DECREASE THE SPENDING !!!

[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.

[REDACTED]

*The Past two years have been the most extraordinary and impactful years of my life. At no time in my past 55 years have I seen so many businesses closed and jobs lost, many of my family members and friends have been negatively effected, some have suffered mental illness.*

*We have seen our savings eroded, our nest eggs depleted, and our income reduced significantly or cut. We have seen the costs of living increase through the rate rise imposed by the City of Port Phillip last year.*

*It is hard to make ends meet at this time, and to regain our financial foot hold, and now the council is planning to increase our rates again with complete disregard to the hardship we have encountered, and absolute distain to the effects of this additional cost on us in the community.*

*I would like to see you as councillors show some compassion, for us the rate payers, especially for the pensioners. The councillors should seek savings in the council budget rather than a rate increase.*

*The rates for equivalent value properties in neighbouring councils are significantly lower. This points to a high spending inefficient Port Phillip Council. The neighbouring properties also receive free parking and green waste bins and are paying lower rates.*

*We are being TAXED indiscriminately for the purpose of a council whose officers and management are intent on building a bigger council machine, and bigger budget, rather than one seeking efficiency.*

*My house, on a similar block, at a similar value, in several neighbouring councils pay approximantly 30-40% less in rates, 30-40% LESS !!!*

*I dont know where you all live however IMAGINE if YOU were paying significantly more rates than a neighbouring council and receiving LESS ! HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ? WHAT WOULD YOU DO ABOUT IT ?*

*I am astounded that the council received \$231 million in revenue and does not find savings, Really ??? furthermore seeks to increase rates, while concurrently managing to pay wage increases, grant money to favoured projects such as artists, and a village in East Timor and state*

education projects. I find it very difficult to digest that I received an increase in rates while the council spends MY MONEY on projects I do NOT endorse.

Certain Councillors deny there is a rate problem in Port Phillip and the same Councillors are trivialising the planned rate rise by saying it is only \$27 for the average residential property, this is insulting to the rate payers intelligence !. More and more ratepayers are becoming painfully aware we are paying up to twice, the rates paid for properties of similar value in other Councils.

Port Phillip council uses the average rate as a comparison to other Councils however average rates are misleading and deceptive because we have a much higher ratio of ( units / apartments ) to houses and that skews the average towards a lower number. You should be ashamed of yourselves. Refer: <https://ropp.org.au/fact-check-how-high-are-port-phillip-rates-compared-to-neighbouring-councils/>

Last year the rate rise coincided with a wage rise for council staff. The amounts were virtually identical. Im guessing you plan the same for this year !

I see the rate increases being beneficial for you the local council ! serving your own interest and the interests of its staff and the interests of the special interest groups, rather than the needs and expectations of the broader community.

I have been in business for over 26 years and because of Covid19 it has dropped 75% I cashed in my Super because I was and am still unable to sustain my expenses. My home loan was frozen by the bank THANK GOD !

Do you really feel it is fair for us the residents to accept more costs in our daily lives after what we have been through? Do the Councillors that spend my money believe I am getting good service for the cost I pay already ?

My Parents are Italian Immigrants, hard working people. I AM SELF MADE ! No rich mama and Papa. I worked my guts out for ALL of my adult life. [REDACTED] a handful of years ago. My story is of a hard working man. Hard working people HATE getting ripped off. Im sure most people do also.

A rates rise will be largely levied on people with a house on land and premium properties, ME those in smaller apartments will get off with little or no rise and in some cases a decrease. Social manipulation "AT ITS BEST" Tax the people who have worked hard to live in a nice home. The 1.5% rise proposed will do nothing but tax the top 20% of properties in the community to pay a wage rise for staff. RoPP is doing an amazing job in highlighting the ways of Port Phillip Council. Many resident are fed up with the overspending and hugely high Rates. As well as a Rate Rise proposed in 2021.

Be fair to the community there should be a wage freeze and a rates freeze to coincide.

Please vote for a rates freeze and show your compassion to the community you represent.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CBR-168

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** A Resident's Opinion

[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.

**[REDACTED], I would like to see you as a councillor show some heart felt compassion for your community at this time and seek savings in the council budget rather than a rates increase. The rates for equivalent value properties in neighbouring councils are significantly lower. This points to a high spending inefficient Port Phillip Council. These neighbouring properties also receive free parking. They receive green waste bins also and are paying lower rates. However since the City of Port Phillip cannot be transparent when comparing unit costs of business functions with other councils, and residents will continue to lobby against unjustified increases in local rates. Will you listen to the majority of residents?**

**Regards**

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

CBR-169

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Subject:** Rate Rise

**[External Email] Please be cautious before clicking on any links or attachments.**

[REDACTED], I have been a rate payer in Port Phillip since year 1956.

I am now an elderly citizen, I am finding each year the Port Phillip Council cry poor & struggling, why?  
?. Are they incompetent or incapable of their responsibility in management.

As a home owner I am expected to manage my affairs, I do not have the confidence to say the same about Port Phillip council who are handling our ward.

I have had a torrid time through COVID, as my neighbours have too.

My income has diminished considerably, And now to inflict more stress, the ones we rely on are about to increase our rates.

What are your priorities Port Phillip councillors for your selves first & the ones who should matter last ???????? Pease think again.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

## Submission on the Port Phillip Draft Plan and Budget 2021

I would like to commend Council on the Draft Plan and Budget, and for providing multiple opportunities for individual and community input on the Plan. I strongly endorse many elements of the directions being set in the Plan, and Council's ongoing commitment to and investment in a wide range of key issues which benefit our community, now and into the future.

I am grateful to have had an opportunity to view submissions from Progressive Port Phillip and PECAN, and while I am not a member of those bodies, I would generally endorse the points made in both. Hence, I will not repeat the detail covered in those submissions.

The comments on the Plan I would like to offer are in two parts. Firstly, I would like to address some basic principles in relation to the Council vision, and secondly comment on some more specific matters, based on these principles.

### Community Vision

As communities start to transition out of the challenging circumstances required by the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, there is a rare chance to consider a reset of current policies and practices. This opportunity coincides with the imperative to address the climate emergency and other, often related, environmental challenges such as the threat to biodiversity<sup>1</sup>.

To adapt the powerful phrase of Arundhati Roy's, the pandemic can be seen as "a portal, a gateway between one world and the next" where we can either break with the past and imagine our world anew, or drag those of the old ways and ideas which have proved damaging to our wellbeing through with us.

As many commentators have noted, the pandemic has shone a light into the cracks and fissures in the social fabric of our societies: for example, the low pay and poor conditions of so many of the service workers on which we are dependent, and the hardships faced by those with poor housing. This also helps illuminate where repairs to the social fabric are most needed; and the pandemic has shown us where valuable strengths lie, that could help inform a new approach.

Along with many others, I would argue that a major lesson we have learnt is that we need to find ways to reinvigorate understanding of the common good; to recognise that to be resilient to and combat future crises, investment in building social solidarity and connectedness, public goods (such as strong public health and health care systems) and civic infrastructure is critical. Among many other implications, this means recognising the important role of government at all levels in maintaining the social fabric, and the collective investment this requires; and reducing the social and economic inequalities that deprive so many of flourishing lives. Success in responding to the climate emergency, and a just transition which benefits future generations, will not be possible in societies that are fragmented, characterised by distrust, where private interests dominate public need, and government and public institutions are weakened.

My contention with regard to the Draft Plan therefore, is that local government has a major role to play in strengthening the common good, and in the stewardship of local resources as we seek to move to a fairer, greener, sustainable society and economy. These concepts could be strengthened in the vision statement.

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<sup>1</sup> Dasgupta, P. (2021), The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review. (London: HM Treasury)

There are many lessons to be learnt from international experience, which Council could draw on, to take a bolder approach. For example, some local, provincial, and national governments are embracing the concept of a “wellbeing economy”. A simple definition of this is that a “wellbeing economy approach ensures policies and resources are directed at growing the wellbeing of people, place and planet. This approach ensures that the shared benefits of society (social, environmental, economic and democratic) are available to all, now and for generations to come”<sup>2</sup>.

For example, North Ayrshire Council in Scotland has adopted a ‘Community Wealth Building’ approach to economic development. Many of the elements of this approach, for example, the strategic use of procurement, are already in use in the City of Port Phillip. Wales has a “Wellbeing of Future Generations Act” with goals that could be adopted at the local government level<sup>3</sup>. New Zealand moved in 2019 to deliver a “Wellbeing Budget” which presented the national budget around social and economic priorities<sup>4</sup>. While these ideas may not be able to be incorporated at this stage into the Plan, this may be something Council might wish to explore further in the future.

The proposed strategic directions in the Draft Plan are all consistent with a focus on improving community and environmental wellbeing. But the vision statement includes only two of these (ie “liveable and vibrant”) – leaving out the key elements of sustainability, inclusiveness and governance. Perhaps Council could give some thought to a vision statement that focused on the achievement of wellbeing (the “what”) underpinned by the strategic directions (the “how”). For example: “Proudly Port Phillip: Growing the wellbeing of our community and environment, now and for future generations”.

## Implications

While the above is only a brief sketch of the importance of advancing the common good, social solidarity, and community wellbeing, and reducing inequalities, as key principles, it underpins the importance of using these as a lens to assess proposed budget measures.

On this basis, I would argue that:

- The 1.5% rate increase should be strongly supported
- Free access to Rippon Lea Estate Gardens should be maintained
- The community child care subsidy should be maintained, or at least an equivalent amount used to support quality child care for vulnerable families
- Support for Arts programs should be maintained
- Further support for green space, particularly in areas that currently lack open space, should be prioritised, where possible
- Funding for Sport Phillip & Community programs and the budget for Ride2School Day, Healthy Tracks, Ride2Work should be maintained – to do otherwise is contrary to Council’s stated commitment to the “Increasing active living” priority under the Victorian Public health and Wellbeing Plan. The Draft Plan states that “encouraging more forms of active transport and ensuring everyone has opportunities to participate in physical activity is a key role of local government”.

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<sup>2</sup> Building A Wellbeing Economy Roadmap for Towns <https://www.centreforthrivingplaces.org/>

<sup>3</sup> A prosperous Wales; A resilient Wales; A healthier Wales; A more equal Wales; A Wales of cohesive communities; A Wales of vibrant culture and a thriving Welsh language; A globally responsible Wales.

<sup>4</sup> Taking Mental Health Seriously; Improving Child Wellbeing; Supporting Māori and Pasifika Aspirations; Building a Productive Nation; Transforming the Economy (creating opportunities for businesses, regions, iwi and others to transition to a sustainable and low-emissions economy)

In addition to the above, I would note that it is disappointing that Council has not included in the Draft Plan the health and wellbeing priority of healthy eating.

The Department's advice note to councils states that councils are encouraged to concentrate their next municipal public health and wellbeing plans on four focus areas:

- tackling climate change and its impact on health
- increasing healthy eating
- increasing active living
- reducing tobacco-related harm.

The advice note also encourages councils to "integrate action on these focus areas with response, relief and recovery efforts". Council has chosen not to focus on increasing healthy eating and reducing tobacco-related harm. While the latter is understandable, a healthy eating focus would be highly consistent with the council's strategic directions, and recovery efforts, particularly if framed in the context of strengthening and improving the local food system. Such an approach can encompass many dimensions of the relationship between food, health and wellbeing, including food insecurity and food safety, urban agriculture/community gardens and social enterprises, a vibrant local food economy including farmer's markets; and food waste and containers are a significant component of a circular economy. Food also has an important role in a multicultural community, and can be a means of learning about other cultures in schools, for example. Port Phillip is home to South Melbourne market, the Veg Out Community gardens, and food service premises comprise a high proportion of the business sector in the municipality, presenting many opportunities to promote safe, healthy, affordable and sustainable food consumption.

The Draft Plan notes that, based on VPHS 2017 data, that the Port Phillip community "generally has healthier eating behaviours than the Victorian population" (although noting some poor habits are still prevalent). It may be on this basis that healthy eating has not been prioritised, although on a key indicator, adult fruit and vegetable consumption is lower than the Victorian average. (Council might wish to note, that average fruit and vegetable consumption across the state is already very low in relation to dietary guidelines; and that the average figure disguises quite dramatic differences across socio economic groups). However, given the wider issues noted above, the survey data are not a strong basis to on which to omit this area from the Draft Plan.



## Comment on the Port Phillip Council Proposed Budget

May 2021

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Thank you for the work put into the proposed budget. In principle, I believe there should be no rate increases. Our council rates are high enough, in absolute and relative terms. You are spending our hard earned money and need to be more fiscally responsible. The council should focus on fiscal responsibility and efficiently delivering quality core services.

### Here are some of my concerns:

- With COVID hardship, low inflation and low wage growth (unless you are lucky enough to be in the public sector) in this year, in particular, it is poor form to increase rates. While house prices increase, the rate burden increases further, and many people just can't afford it. It is simply unfair. Why should we have to allocate more and more of our incomes disproportionately to rates? Why should people lucky enough to own a home feel they can't afford to live in them anymore? Why do so many people I speak to resent the council rate spending so much on what they see as "frivolous" initiatives and inefficiency?
- We appear to have a significant spending issue. My understanding is that Port Phillip rates are much higher than comparable councils:
  - Port Phillip ratepayers are paying more than nearby Bayside, Stonnington and Glen Eira. *The Rate Payers Association* show that using the median property value in Port Phillip of \$1.68 million in June 2018, Port Phillip rates and charges would be \$3,132 compared to amounts of \$1,978 in Stonnington, \$2,580 in Glen Eira and \$2,451 in Bayside for the same value property. And we get less services in terms of waste management and absurdly even have to pay to park in front of our own homes!
  - How can Port Phillip justify these higher rates? In terms of roads and footpaths, I understand we have less "length" to cover than the comparable councils. Furthermore, our population to service with amenities is less than two of the three comparable councils.
  - Port Phillip has a high number of residential properties, but less residents per property. Although we have a relatively high number of properties, I understand that the number of properties does not influence cost for most services (waste management excluded).
  - It must be noted that using the "average rate" rate comparison is a misleading indicator, as Port Phillip has a large number of lower value apartments.
  - Port Phillip Council employs more staff than neighbouring councils and pay their staff more than neighbouring councils.



## CBR-173

- So, from that I understand we are highly taxed locally, and I am not really sure how it can be justified!?! So, all I can do is suggest that we need to tighten spending and not pass on more rate burden to the community. Without getting into particulars, I offer the following as questions you should be asking around proposed budget spending items:
  - Does the item deliver core services in the most efficient way? Can we do it differently? More efficiently or effectively?
  - Are we spending too much on unnecessarily external consultants and expensive reports?
  - Is it firmly in our local government mandate? Can we get it funded elsewhere?
  - Why are we doing this? Is it broadly required by ratepayers? What would happen if we didn't provide it? If we were to start with a blank sheet, would the budget item from last year be on the list this year? What would the community value even more than this particular item?
  - Why are we funding charities that support communities overseas? Shouldn't residents be choosing their own charities?
  - Why are we funding an initiative or event? Should ratepayers really be paying for this? Should/ could an event be privately funded? Is it broad enough in appeal and truly valuable relative to other potential allocations of the rate payers money? Are we spending too much on one special interest group, or the groups with the biggest political clout? Have they had "enough already", or do they come back expecting disproportionately more than less well organised groups with equally valid needs and causes?
  - Where is the truly future focused thinking around the environment and sustainability, the things of broad impact that might make a real difference for future generations?

Thank you for all your hard work,



CBR-179

**Ratepayers of Port Phillip, Inc.**

Submission on Draft Council Plan and  
Budget for 2021-22

23 May 2021



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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## **Executive Summary**

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted the Australian economy, employment and the savings of ordinary Australians. This once-in-a-generation pandemic has been met with unprecedented fiscal and monetary intervention from federal and state governments which has prevented economic catastrophe. Nevertheless, household budgets are tight, and sectors of our community are struggling. Consumer price inflation is at a 70-year low and wage growth is also at record lows. In this economic environment, it is unconscionable for the City of Port Phillip (CoPP) to increase rates in the 2021-22 budget.

We strongly object to the proposed \$2.0 million increase in rates revenue and request CoPP to find savings in the budget to fund a much-needed rates freeze. We do not accept the argument put forward by council that this is not possible due to the compounding effect - residents also face compounding of rates over many years and household budgets are struggling more than the council budget. The proposed efficiency gains are inadequate because they still are not able to fund a rates freeze. We call on the Council to find additional savings without cutting services.

Ratepayers of Port Phillip advocates for:

1. A rates freeze for this budget funded by more efficient delivery of existing services,
2. A review of contractor payments and employee headcount particularly in the management division,
3. A renewed focus on service delivery, and a reduction in report writing which comes at great cost but delivers little value to ratepayers or residents,
4. An honest admission by council that rate increases fall disproportionately on the owners of free-standing homes.

Rate freeze opponents claim the rate rise only amounts to \$27 per property, but that includes the large number of flats & apartments across CoPP. House owners bear a far higher proportion of this rate rise, and often face yearly rate increases in the hundreds, and sometimes thousands of dollars which then compounds year after year. For many house owners, CoPP rates exceed the annual cost of groceries. This rates burden makes CoPP an increasingly unsustainable city to live in for ordinary Australians, and means that increasingly, only the rich will be able to afford to live in some parts of our city.

CoPP's rates are excessive compared to neighbouring councils, yet residents in CoPP are under-serviced by council. We believe this is due to mismanagement of funds, with chronic inefficiencies, lack of governance, and a neglect to focus on value for money for ratepayers.

The current division of rates revenue by property value exacerbates this problem in an era of property value inflation by allowing year-on-year rates revenue increases to fall disproportionately on house owners, relieving most residential properties from contributing. This model may be progressive, but it is unsustainable, and the council must act to, at the very least, stop increasing overall rates revenue.

## Introduction

Our submission raises substantive and long running concerns that we have argued for years about high council rates. Again, we propose this here by showing ways this council can cut its spending. Local Governments are responsible for delivering services and infrastructure required by ratepayers. RoPP's contention is that this council is failing to meet this responsibility by:

- delivering services, funding events, and building infrastructure that are neither the responsibility of local government nor required by ratepayers,
- not delivering core services in an efficient and economical way, such as roads, garbage collection, management of public properties and cost blowouts on projects, and
- expanding bureaucracy which prepares an endless number of reports that are never actioned, that never deliver a measurable outcome and are a significant waste of ratepayers' funds.

This document details where RoPP believes council can rationalise its services and infrastructure project costs without reducing the level of service delivered to ratepayers in those areas which are the responsibility of local government.

## General Comments

We were astounded to read that *'without action, the Financial Plan forecasts a cumulative \$109 million funding gap due to rate capping'* on page 57 of the draft Council Plan. This disclosure highlights the ambitions of CoPP to deprive ratepayers of an additional \$109 million if it were not for the State Government's protection of the 'fair go' rate cap.

Council should consider their broader responsibilities to our fractured community recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic by showing strong leadership and passing on a zero-rate increase for 2021-22. This could easily be achieved by finding efficiencies such as reducing the corporate consultant and contract spend allocated in the Budget at \$48.5M. We are astounded by the amount paid to contractors and consultants. CoPP needs to get a better deal for ratepayers. Our city requires strong leadership to find spending efficiencies and to help the repair of the economic emergency. This submission has been prepared by Ratepayers of Port

Phillip Inc. (RoPP) for consideration by council during the finalisation of the budget for 2021-22.

## Port Phillip rates are too high

Port Phillip ratepayers are paying more than our neighbours in Bayside, Stonnington and Glen Eira. Using the median property value in Port Phillip of \$1.68 million in June 2018, Port Phillip rates and charges would be \$3,132 compared to amounts of \$1,978 in Stonnington, \$2,580 in Glen Eira and \$2,451 in Bayside for the same value property.

Sources: <https://economy.id.com.au/port-phillip/housing-prices> and <https://ropp.org.au/property-rates-calculator/>

It is inequitable that ratepayers in CoPP pay excessive rates with year-on-year increases, and in return get poor value for money!

## Port Phillip is under-serviced

We are paying more than neighbouring councils and getting less services. Our neighbours pay less rates and get green and food waste bins and free parking permits, as shown in the table below.

*Table 1 - comparison of kerbside waste services and parking permits between councils*

Service	Port Phillip	Stonnington	Glen Eira	Bayside
<b>Kerbside Waste services</b>				
Landfill bin	120 L	120 L	120 L	140 L
Green bin	NO	YES*	YES	YES
Food bin	NO	YES*	YES	YES
<b>Parking Permits</b>				

For eligible residential properties	\$84 each	Two free	One free	Four free
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*\*\$98 p.a. optional*

It is surprising that Port Phillip Council purports to be a leader in sustainability yet does not provide food waste and green waste bin services. Port Phillip sends over 70% of waste to landfill, whereas the average Victorian council saves **50% more** waste from landfill than Port Phillip. Source:

<https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/councils/port-phillip/reports/waste-collection>

The option to introduce green and food waste bins was considered by council in 2018 but rejected because it "was found to be extremely expensive due to high set up costs, and would only meet the needs of half of our community." This decision by our council to deny residents green/food waste bin services has resulted in an extra 8,000 cubic tonnes of waste going to landfill **per year**. Source:

<http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/Minutes%20Ordinary%20Council%202017%20October%202018.pdf>

Council trialled FOGO (food organic and garden organic) waste bins in 2020, only after the Victorian government mandated these bins to be rolled out by 2030 ('Recycling Victoria, a new economy'). Council must prioritise spending on waste management and find efficiencies to fund green bins and food bins if we are going to be a sustainable city.

Other councils have had these bins for many years, and they are highly effective at reducing waste sent to landfill. For a council that has declared a 'climate emergency', it is very contradictory that this important sustainability measure was not introduced earlier and even now, it will not be fully implemented for some time yet. Source:

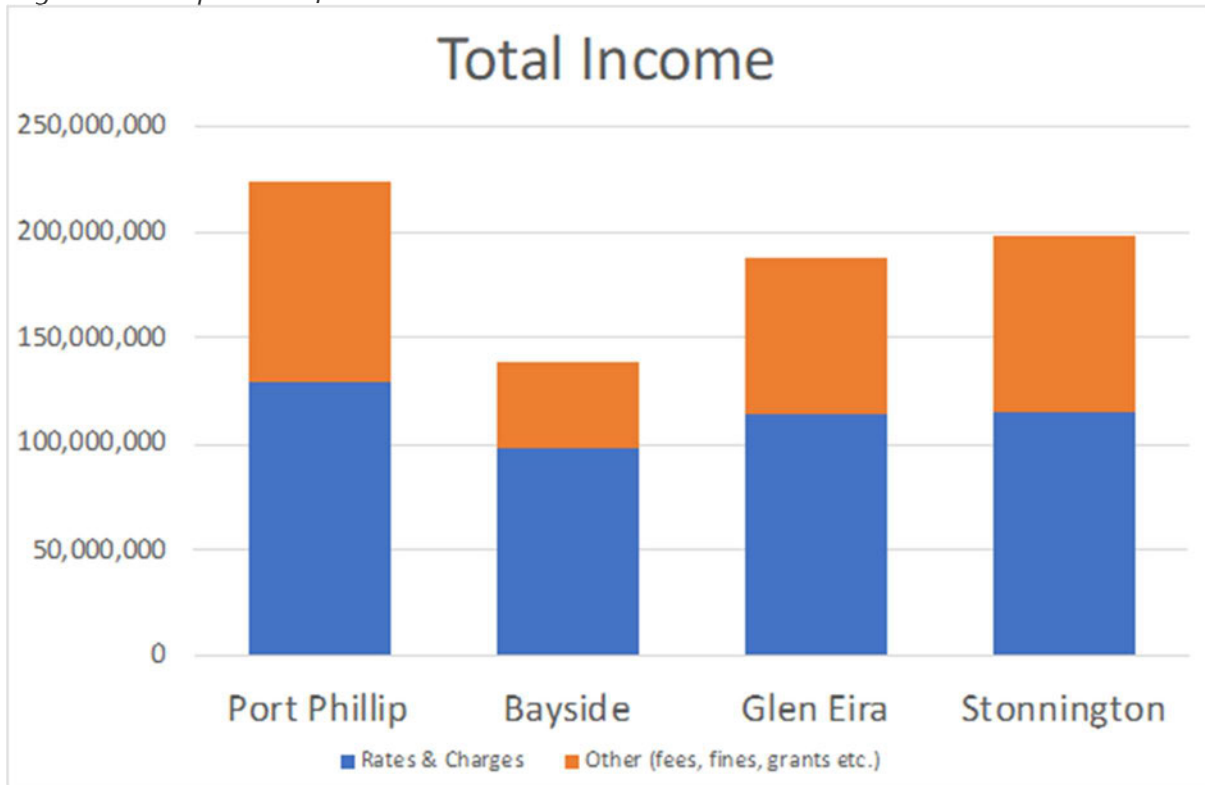
[http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/default/WasteManagementOperationsDocuments/WM\\_Waste\\_Recycling\\_A4\\_6PP\\_0317\\_PROOF5\\_Spreads.pdf](http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/default/WasteManagementOperationsDocuments/WM_Waste_Recycling_A4_6PP_0317_PROOF5_Spreads.pdf)



## Why are Rates too high in Port Phillip?

Port Phillip collected \$129 million in Rates & Charges, and \$95 million in other charges such as fees, fines and grants, that's much higher than neighbouring councils in 2019-20 (Fig 1). Rates and charges are proposed to increase from \$133 million in 2020-21 to \$136 million in 2021-22.

Figure 1 - comparison of total income between councils



There are a few potential reasons why Port Phillip might need to collect higher rates than other councils:

1. Coverage area & length of local roads
2. Population
3. Total number of properties
4. Average cost per staff member

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### 1. Coverage area

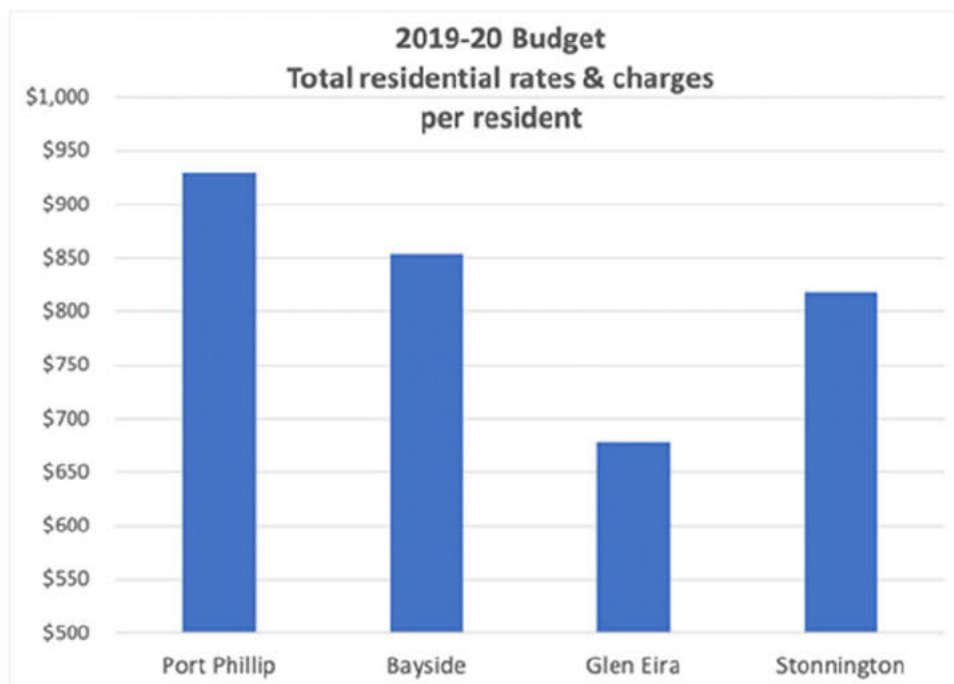
The larger a municipality is, the more money needs to be spent on maintaining roads, footpaths, parks, streetlights, stormwater pipes etc. However, Port Phillip has the smallest area and the shortest length of roads, but the highest rates. Port Phillip spends more than double compared to some neighbouring councils based on these metrics.

	Port Phillip	Bayside	Glen Eira	Stonnington
Coverage area (square km)	20.7	37.2	38.7	25.7
Rates (\$mil) / km <sup>2</sup>	\$6.24	\$2.63	\$2.95	\$4.48
Length of local roads (km)	215	355	433	261
Rates (\$K)/ km	\$602	\$276	\$264	\$442

### 2. Population

Council services are most fairly compared based on population. This is because the council provides services like libraries, parks, activity centres, childcare, customer service centres, parking permits etc. based on how many people they need to service. Does this explain the high rates?

	Port Phillip	Bayside	Glen Eira	Stonnington
Population	110,634	104,274	151,439	113,737



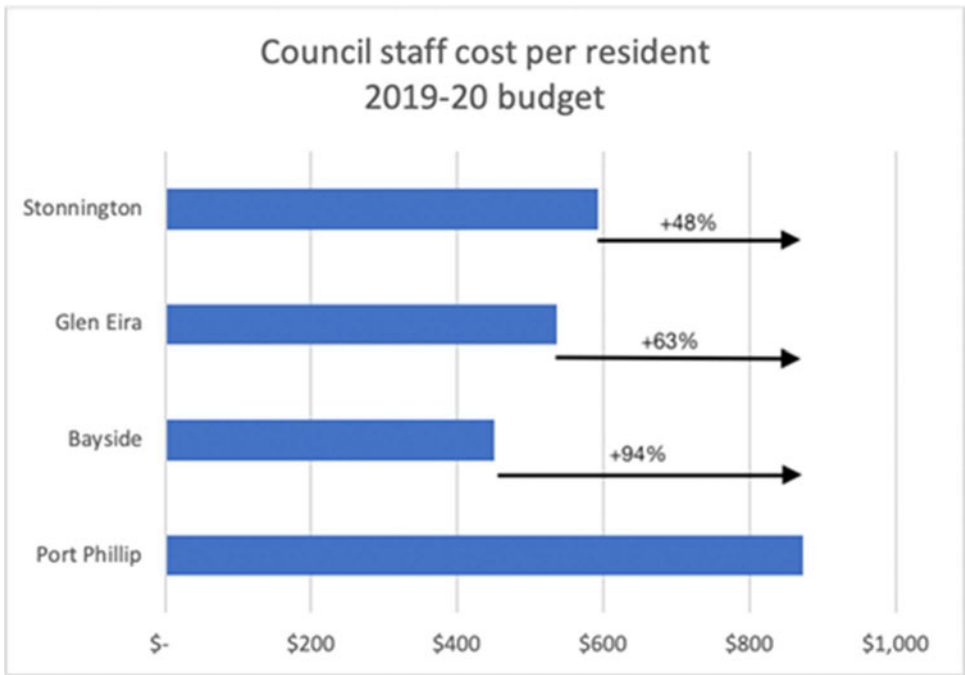
No it doesn't. Port Phillip has **higher rates & charges per resident** than neighbouring councils, and there is an interesting reason for that. Port Phillip Council employs more staff than neighbouring councils, and pay their staff more than neighbouring councils. The cost to ratepayers is huge and cost \$96.6 million in 2019-20:

	Port Phillip	Bayside	Glen Eira	Stonnington
Staff numbers (FTE)	883	440	860	642
Average staff cost	\$109,442	\$106,619	\$94,477	\$104,850
Total staff cost	\$96.6 million	\$46.9 million	\$81.3 million	\$67.3 million

Each resident in the City of Port Phillip pays \$873 for council staff costs, whereas for the other three councils, the cost ranges from \$450-592. The City of Port Phillip say that because they choose to provide services that others may not, that this is an unfair comparison. And yes, we agree to an extent.

Port Phillip Council states that the extra staff they employ are for council-run childcare centres parking enforcement, for street / beach cleaning, and for teams to run South Melbourne Market and major festivals like St Kilda Festival. **But even when these additional staff costs**

**are removed**, Port Phillip remains the most expensive and inefficient council compared to its neighbours.



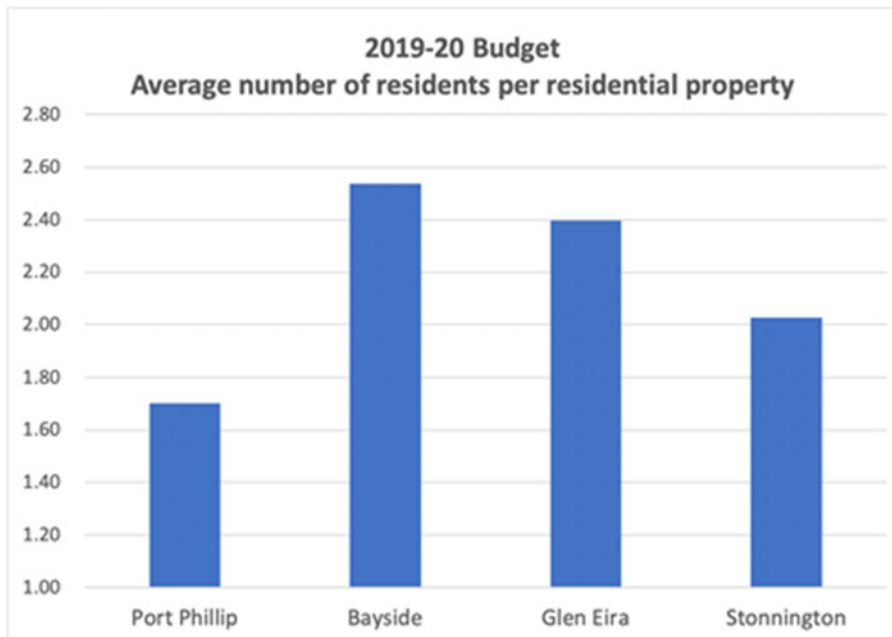
### 3. Total number of properties

For a minority of services, like collecting rubbish, the number of properties does influence cost. But in the City of Port Phillip, waste management only accounts for 5.3% of the total spend, according to the Essential Services Commission.

Some groups with vested interests in keeping rates high have claimed that **average rates** should be used to compare the rates charged by different councils. Let's look at why that is not a valid way to compare rates (and why those groups use this metric to deceive the public):

*Reason 1 – Port Phillip has a higher number of residential properties*

We know that most services council provides depend on the number of people they provide services to and the infrastructure they service (see sections above). Port Phillip has a high number of residential properties. Or alternatively, you could say that there are less residents per property:



Whether residents live in large properties together, or in small properties alone, this doesn't change the total amount of rates being charged by a council; it only changes the average rates per property. That's why average rates per property is a poor measure of whether council rates are comparatively high or low. The fact is, that given we have so many residential properties in a small area, rates should be a whole lot lower!

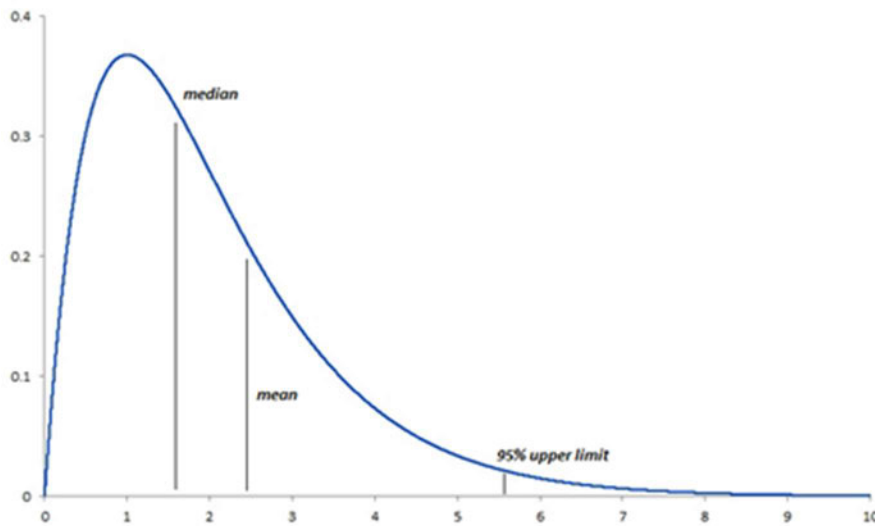
*Reason 2 – Not all properties are the same*

We have a progressive rates system whereby the level of rates you pay is proportional to your property value. While there are many small apartments paying rates similar to neighbouring councils, the brunt of high rates is borne by those with higher property values, many of whom may not have the propensity to pay (the value of your property does not always indicate your income).

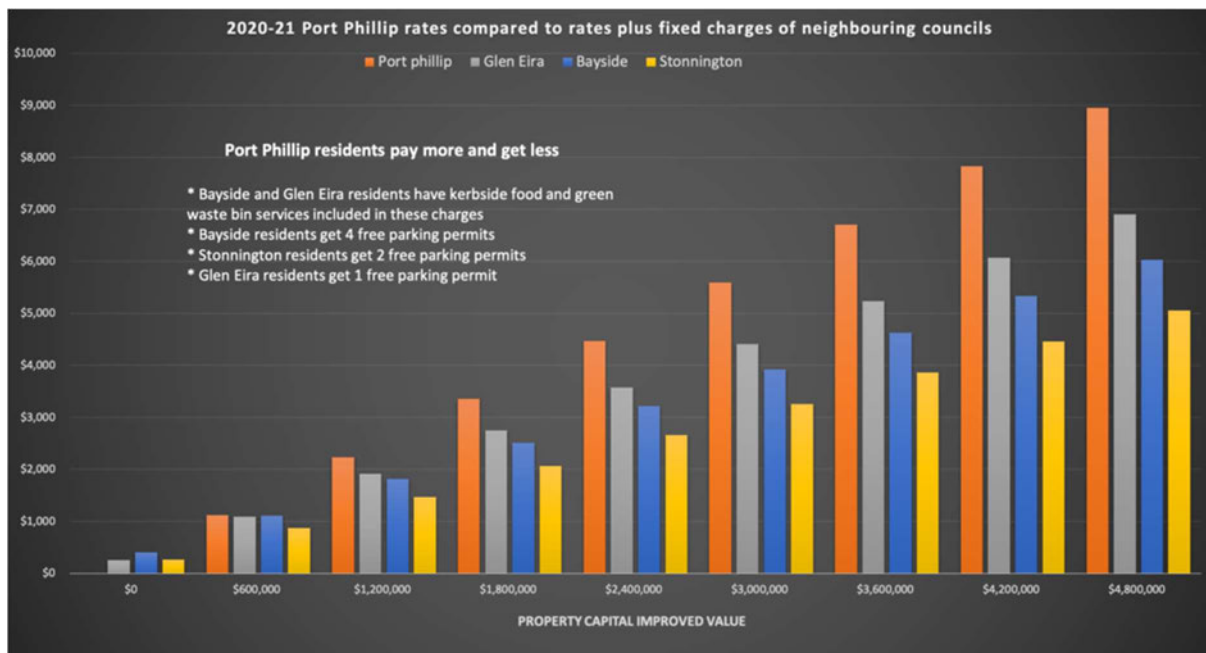
The reason average rates in Port Phillip are the same, or even slightly lower than neighbouring councils, is because of the positive skew in property values. Port Phillip has many apartments which are lower in value than the median (middlemost) property value. This should result in vastly lower "average" rates compared to neighbouring councils but Port Phillip council has the same average rates. This is only because the overall rates burden is far far higher. This statistical deception - *that average rates per property does not reflect why rates are so expensive overall* - is the reason that *average rates* cannot be used without a clear understanding of the

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skewness of property values in a municipality which is the case for Port Phillip. To reiterate, *the average rates per property* does not reflect why rates are so expensive overall, especially for many ratepayers in Port Phillip. This is demonstrated when the median value is higher than the average value as in the diagram below; and would be a similar graph for Port Phillip for *rates value vs number of properties*.



Comparison of rates plus fixed charges in 2020-21



Port Phillip council has significantly higher rates than neighbouring councils. The high number of apartments explains why using the average rate per property is a poor comparator between

councils. When viewed fairly, the City of Port Phillip is shown to be a high taxing and comparatively inefficient council. The table below shows that on any measure Port Phillip is a high taxing and inefficient Council compared to its peers.

**Budget 2019-20 (from June 2019)**

Council	Port Phillip	Bayside	Glen Eira	Stonnington
Total residential rates & charges per resident	\$ 929	\$ 854	\$ 678	\$ 819
Total Rates & Charges per resident	\$ 1,167	\$ 939	\$ 754	\$ 1,013
Total Income per resident	\$ 2,029	\$ 1,324	\$ 1,240	\$ 1,750
Total Expenditure per resident	\$ 2,080	\$ 1,110	\$ 1,119	\$ 1,373
Budgeted surplus per resident	\$ (51)	\$ 214	\$ 121	\$ 377
Residents per staff member	125	237	176	177
Rates & Charges/Coverage Area (\$/square km)	\$ 6,239,081	\$ 2,630,693	\$ 2,950,069	\$ 4,484,708
Average cost per staff member	\$ 109,442	\$ 106,619	\$ 94,477	\$ 104,850
Staff cost per resident	\$ 873	\$ 450	\$ 537	\$ 592
Residents per km of roads	515	294	350	436
Total rates & Charges per \$ of NAV (shown in cents)	3.76	2.78	3.42	2.38
ESC: total operating expenditure per person, 2017-18	\$ 1,745	\$ 848	\$ 875	\$ 1,192

#### 4. Average cost per staff member

Why are the City of Port Phillip employee costs so much higher than the Melbourne and Australian averages, and how is Council planning to reduce these costs going forward? The City of Port Phillip, Services Profile budget for 2020-21 lists employee costs at \$89.5 million. This is:

- \$3.2 mil. (3.8%) above the Melbourne average cost, and
- \$15.6 mil (21.1%) above the Australian average cost.

Of the 28 Services listed in the budget papers:

- 21 of the 28 services (75%) are above the Melbourne average cost, and
- 27 of the 28 services (96%) are above the Australian average cost.

These numbers infer:

- employees are being overpaid, or
- the ratio of management to workers is too high.

These disproportionately high costs and are contributing to the unacceptably high level of rates demanded by Council from ratepayers. While it may be unreasonable for ratepayers to expect Council to be operating at best practice, it is not unreasonable to expect Council to be planning to be better than average, not worse.

What benchmark is Council planning to use to measure employee costs in 2021-22?

How will working from home contribute to improved service efficiency and lower employee costs in the future?

Source: <http://www.salaryexplorer.com/salary-survey.php?loc=13&loctype=1>

<b>Budget 2020/21 - Employee Costs</b>						
#	Service Profile	Employee Cost	FTE	Average Cost	Comparison to Melbourne Average Salary	Comparison to Australian Average Salary
		2020-21		2020-21	2021	2021
		\$	%	\$	\$	\$
<b>1</b>	<b>We embrace difference and people belong</b>					
1	Affordable housing	530,000	3.7	143,243	135.1%	158%
1	Ageing and accessibility	5,093,000	55.9	91,109	86.0%	100%
1	Children	10,013,000	107.0	93,579	88.3%	103%
1	Community programs and facilities	1,986,000	16.9	117,515	110.9%	129%
1	Families and young people	2,602,000	24.3	107,078	101.0%	118%
1	Recreation	747,000	5.6	133,393	125.8%	147%
<b>2</b>	<b>We are connected and it's easy to move around</b>					
2	Transport and parking management	6,384,000	66.6	95,856	90.4%	106%
<b>3</b>	<b>We have smart solutions for a sustainable future</b>					
3	Sustainability	1,514,000	12.2	124,098	117.1%	137%
3	Waste management	2,223,000	22.6	98,363	92.8%	108%
<b>4</b>	<b>We are growing and keeping our character</b>					
4	Amenity	5,986,000	58.7	101,976	96.2%	112%
4	City planning and urban design	2,694,000	18.7	144,064	135.9%	159%
4	Development approvals and compliance	6,754,000	59.9	112,755	106.4%	124%
4	Health	1,543,000	13.0	118,692	112.0%	131%
4	Local laws and animal management	1,927,000	17.6	109,489	103.3%	121%
4	Municipal emergency management	436,000	2.6	167,692	158.2%	185%
4	Public space	2,093,000	17.1	122,398	115.5%	135%
<b>5</b>	<b>We thrive by harnessing creativity</b>					
5	Arts, culture and heritage	1,373,000	11.0	124,818	117.8%	137%
5	Economic development and tourism	712,000	4.8	148,333	139.9%	163%
5	Festivals	2,253,000	18.2	123,791	116.8%	136%
5	Libraries	4,190,000	42.8	97,897	92.4%	108%
5	South Melbourne Market	1,589,000	11.7	135,812	128.1%	150%
<b>6</b>	<b>Our community to you</b>					
6	Asset and property management	4,078,000	34.3	118,892	112.2%	131%
6	Communications and engagement	2,176,000	17.8	122,247	115.3%	135%
6	Customer experience	2,687,000	24.5	109,673	103.5%	121%
6	Finance and project management	7,105,000	62.8	113,137	106.7%	125%
6	Governance risk and policy	2,938,000	28.1	104,555	98.6%	115%
6	People, culture & safety	2,876,000	16.1	178,634	168.5%	197%
6	Technology	4,964,000	38.9	127,609	120.4%	141%
	<b>CoPP total employee cost</b>	<b>89,466,000</b>	<b>813.4</b>	<b>109,990</b>		
	CoPP total employee cost at Melbourne average salary	86,220,400	813.4	106,000		
	CoPP total employee cost at Australian average salary	73,856,720	813.4	90,800		
	CoPP employee cost excess over Melbourne average	3,245,600		3.8%	% Variance	
	CoPP employee cost excess over Australian average	15,609,280		21.1%	% Variance	
	Total number of services within average				7	1
	Total number of services over average				21	27
	Total number of services				28	28
					25%	4%



## Transparency and Efficiency measures

There seems to be a trend over the last decade or two of cost shifting, from the State and Commonwealth Governments to Local Governments. This, combined with the Council's clear propensity and voracity for spending every last rates dollar on services that are not core functions of local Government, has created the perfect storm that CoPP now faces: a budgeted spend much higher than necessary, and without the necessary reserves able to deal with emerging issues.

We ask that CoPP address the first issue by fighting back and not accepting cost shifting from other levels of Government. We ask that CoPP address the second issue by immediately identifying which of its outputs are "core" (mandated by legislation or universal community expectation) and which are optional (nice-to-haves). This would increase transparency and accountability for the choices that CoPP makes when it comes to spending public ratepayer money. We expect Council charges market rents for Council assets. For example, the Australian National Academy of Music's (ANAM) rent of the South Melbourne town Hall, St Kilda Marina and West St Kilda Beach Pavilion.

We ask that CoPP address the second issue by immediately adopting Zero-Based Budgeting (<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/z/zbb.asp>). This would enable CoPP to clearly identify which of its outputs are "core" (mandated by legislation or universal community expectation) and which are optional (nice-to-haves). This would increase transparency and accountability for the choices that CoPP makes when it comes to spending public ratepayer money.

## Conclusion

Port Phillip council has significantly higher rates than neighbouring councils based on all relevant metrics except average rates, which are not useful in making comparisons between councils. We call for meaningful reduction in council expenditure by improving efficiencies, rationalising the top heavy management and eliminating those services not required by all rate payers, and for the money saved to be directed towards a rate freeze in the 2021-22 Budget.

What more can we say? If our rates were truly the same as neighbouring councils with the same level of services, our community group wouldn't need to exist at all.

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**Disclaimer:**

All figures stated in this article are taken from the 2019-2020 council budgets. Rates & Charges quoted include the fixed per property charges that almost all councils charge (75 of the 79 Victorian councils charge for waste services on a per property basis).

**Sources:**

<https://www.propertyandlandtitles.vic.gov.au/valuation/council-valuations>

[http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/ICP\\_2017-27\\_COUNCIL%20PLAN\\_year%203\\_Complete.pdf](http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/ICP_2017-27_COUNCIL%20PLAN_year%203_Complete.pdf)

[https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/council/item\\_10.2\\_-\\_attachment\\_2\\_-\\_annual\\_budget\\_2019\\_20.pdf](https://www.bayside.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/council/item_10.2_-_attachment_2_-_annual_budget_2019_20.pdf)

<https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/media/4649/2019-20-annual-budget.pdf>

<https://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/about/corporate-documents/budget/council-adopted-budget-2019-2020.pdf>

<https://haveyoursay.portphillip.vic.gov.au/budget-20202021/online-budget-session-4-may>

To whom it may concern -

I am writing this submission to request Council reconsider the proposed changes to Arts Program budget, particularly the decision to not renew partnerships with, or pursue greater support for, local arts organisations and institutions.

Key arts organisations Theatre Works, Red Stitch Actors Theatre, Rawcus Theatre Company and Phillip Adams BalletLab are essential and magnificent contributors to the Australian performing arts ecosystem. These cultural hubs are **nationally and internationally acclaimed** not just for the high quality of work they present, but also for the capacity building work they achieve in nurturing emerging artists and arts workers who go on to contribute groundbreaking art to Australia and the world.

These organisations are vital voices - and Port Phillip can and should claim and support them as your own.

I write from my space of arts and culture expertise, including but not limited to as the current [REDACTED] for Midsumma Festival, as the 2021 recipient of the [REDACTED] Award for Community Arts and Cultural Development, as a member of the [REDACTED] Arts Advisory Expert Group, and a 2019 [REDACTED] fellowship recipient.

Particularly, the cuts to these local arts institutions are alarming given the central role creativity plays in the Community Vision articulated by council:

*... We are renowned as a cultural hub, from live music to our creative industries. This creativity drives music, exhibitions and events which delight residents and encourage visitors to keep returning...*

*... We are proud that our participation in civic life means Port Phillip has retained its unique character and heritage while being admired as a creative hub that continues to evolve and innovate. We know our voice is heard and helps deliver meaningful outcomes...*

- Excerpts from “*Our draft Community Vision: Proudly Port Phillip: A liveable and vibrant City that enhances the wellbeing of our community.*”

How can a vision which articulates a **cultural and creative hub** be achieved when nationally and internationally recognised arts organisations are being greeted with funding changes that will create instability and uncertainty during an already volatile time for the arts sector?

**Rawcus Theatre Company** is an organisation that **champions diversity and disability** representation in groundbreaking and profound ways whilst fostering and maintaining a high degree of artist excellence - work that is “**world class theatre** - sumptuously imagined, visually stunning and profoundly moving” (The Age). Further writing on their work - revealing its insightful, socially relevant and immensely valuable nature - are

available here, and I urge you to consider continuing support for this vital work. <https://rawcus.org.au/about-us/reviews-articles/>

In addition to presenting challenging, rigorous and high quality independent theatre, **Theatre Works** is particularly important as a **capacity building institution** that nurtures and builds artists and arts workers, who go on to become heavyweight contributors to the Australian theatre scene. Former Theatre Works artistic director [REDACTED] has gone on to program at Arts Centre Melbourne and is now Artistic Director for Sydney World Pride 2023, representing Australian performing arts on a global level; recent Theatre Works playwright [REDACTED] who premiered “The Great Australian Play” at Theatre Works has this year been commissioned to write a new Australian work for the globally recognised Malthouse Theatre; and stories such as this are abundant from the engine room of creativity that is Theatre Works - **a local treasure of Port Phillip.**

**Red Stitch Actors Theatre** is “one of Melbourne’s best-known and respected theatre companies” (Sydney Morning Herald) and “has always been a theatre company that punches above its weight” (The Australian), and is an ensemble and company which ensures new and contemporary Australian theatre works can develop, thrive and find audiences. In a national arts environment which frequently sees international and remount plays prioritised, Red Stitch plays a vital role in ensuring Australian culture remains vibrant and viable.

**Phillip Adams BalletLab** is **recognised internationally as a visionary and leading company** in contemporary dance - and its founding director, [REDACTED], was awarded the 2018 Australia Council Award for Dance in recognition of the 17 year history of BalletLab developing extensive local, national and international avenues of collaboration, choreography, development and presentation of new Australian dance work on global stages.

And these magnificent arts organisations **not only contribute to the national performing arts ecosystem** - punching above and beyond their weight - **but also enrich local cultural life**, contribute to visitation of arts workers, artists and patrons across the city, and contribute economically through employment and through cultural visitors who attend performances and workshops and spend at hospitality venues in the area. **By not committing to continue or renew partnerships with these key organisations, Council will be impoverishing the cultural and creative hub reputation of Port Phillip, and impoverishing the future of arts in this nation.**

I urge Council to reconsider the proposed cuts to the Arts budget.

With regards - and with emphasis on the importance of the arts to creating meaningful cultural life for individuals and societies -

[REDACTED]

23 May 2021

I am writing on behalf of the community that lives in the vicinity of Christ Church St Kilda, at the north end of Acland Street. Together we request that the Draft Council Plan 2021-22 include a small allocation for re-establishing the children's playground on the corner of Eildon Road and Church Square.

Historically, there was a playground on this very site, which was established and encouraged by the church for local children to play, going back more than fifty years. A couple of years ago, the lease for the playground was terminated by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne in anticipation of the building of a new car park for a large-scale childcare centre to be established on the site, but this was rejected by the Heritage Council of Victoria and so will now not be going ahead. The local parish has indicated that they would favour the re-establishment of a "light touch", small scale playground, subject to negotiations with the City.

The loss of the previous playground two years ago was keenly felt by local parents since it was unique in its provision for small children in a sheltered space. Equally important was its function as a community conversation hub that fostered interactions between old and young alike, offering key benefits to mental health and well-being, sorely needed in recent times.

We do not envisage it being expensive or in any way intrusive on what is otherwise a tranquil and reflective space. There are also many locals keen to assist in caring for the gardens and beautification of the area.

We hope Council reflects on this small request and sees the benefits of an investment in a vital pocket of St Kilda for what we regard as a very valuable community dividend.

Best regards

[Redacted signature]



21 May 2021

**Port Phillip EcoCentre Submission**  
**RE: DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2021-31 AND DRAFT BUDGET 2021/22**

Dear Port Phillip Councillors and Council Officers,

Firstly, congratulations on the recently confirmed Victorian Government matching funding for City of Port Phillip to redevelop the Port Phillip EcoCentre. As our city recovers and rebuilds post-COVID, this dynamic community centre and volunteer hub will continue to exemplify and drive an inclusive, liveable, sustainable and vibrant community.

The Port Phillip EcoCentre (EcoCentre) is a community-led environment hub where qualified scientists, teachers and over 3000 volunteers design and deliver award-winning programs to care for our land, water, wildlife and wellbeing. Despite the disruptions of pandemic lockdowns, last year the EcoCentre coordinated more than 21,000 environmental volunteer hours with a strong focus on the parkland, Elster Creek and coastal habitats of Port Phillip.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback to City of Port Phillip's (CoPP) *Draft Council Plan 2021-31* (Draft Plan) and *Draft Budget 2021/22*. Please find our key feedback below.

**Leverage council-community partnerships.**

We commend your careful consideration informing the capped rate rise, which assures continuity for many of Council's critical, co-delivered services that reflect long-expressed priorities of our community. Port Phillip faces significant challenges rebuilding from COVID-19 impacts. During such times, community-led organisations are well-positioned provide a nimble, reliable and immense contribution to the resilience our municipality.

**Boonwurrung culture is contemporary and continuing.**

The Yaluk-ut Weelam Clan and Boonwurrung people are our contemporary neighbours with continuous living cultural knowledge of the land and waters that comprise modern Port Phillip. However, in the draft Vision, the language frames the Boonwurrung people in terms of a 'legacy' rather than a continuous, living cultural and community presence.

*"We recognise the legacy of the traditional owners of the land, the Yaluk-ut Weelam Clan of the Boonwurrung and acknowledge the foresight of others who have come before us." (p30)*

Sovereignty was never ceded. Port Phillip always was and always will be Boonwurrung Country. Modern Port Phillip is home to numerous Elders, and culture-holders including N'arweet Carolyn Briggs AM PhD. It is appropriate for the vision to acknowledge the traditional owners in the present tense. For example, City of Melbourne envisions that Aboriginal culture, knowledge and heritage will enrich the city's growth and development:

*"For the Boon Wurrung, Woiwurrung (Wurundjeri), Taungurong, Dja Dja Wurrung and Wathaurung language groups of the Kulin Nation, Melbourne has always been and will continue to be an important meeting place and location for events of social, educational, sporting and cultural significance."<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/vision-goals/Pages/city-aboriginal-focus.aspx>

**Council must invest in climate and the environment as a priority, proportional to their importance to health, economy and the character of Port Phillip.**

Councils are obliged under the Local Government Act to mitigate and plan for climate change risks<sup>2</sup> and to govern with consideration of any decision's cumulative impacts on future generations.<sup>3</sup> Further, from 1 July 2021, the Victorian EPA Act mandates General Environmental Duty to reduce the risk of harm from business activities to human health and the environment, from pollution or waste. This shifts local government's legal obligation to active strategies to prevent harm.

Port Phillip is a densely paved municipality distinguished by its coastal profile – 14km of foreshore and low-lying suburbs built atop natural wetland zones. Floods are increasing. Pollution flows through stormwater from upstream municipalities. Extreme heat is a threat to Port Phillip's youth and aging populations, as well as to trading days on high streets. Iconic tourism sites abut foreshores facing erosion. Prior Council surveys indicate more than 80% of residents are unprepared for extreme weather events (answering 'no' or 'I don't know'). Therefore, climate and sustainability investments by Council are a pragmatic as well as strategic matter for our city.

**Commit to Climate Emergency Response with clarity and ambition, including an indicator for community-based emissions reduction.**

Since the release of the Draft Plan, the Victorian Government has launched the *Climate Change Strategy*, including interim targets for rapid decarbonisation and building resilience to the impacts of climate change. Although this strategy has targets below science-based best practice (and even below the government's own independent panel advice) these targets set a minimum goal to which Council's plan must be tethered.

As drafted, the Council plan does not include clear, specific commitments to municipal emissions reduction or other community indicators to assess whether Port Phillip will meet its mandate to adapt to climate change, to meet General Environmental Duty, and align with (or ideally outpace) the Victorian Emissions Reduction Targets.

*“We are reducing our own emissions and preparing our City and community for a changing environment.” (p25)*

**Refer to Port Phillip's declared Climate Emergency in the active, present tense (p25) and link specific goals in response including a long term commitment of Council resources to reducing municipal emissions from the industrial and commercial sectors.** Port Phillip residents have previously asked for “emissions targets that are evidence-based and ambitious but achievable”<sup>4</sup> and identified that Council should play a leadership role in supporting community's sustainability actions, including financial assistance (e.g. solar bulk buys) and initiatives for renters and apartment dwellers.

**Expand Council's sustainability and climate staffing,** to work in tandem with EcoCentre offerings, partner councils and State Government. The *Victorian Climate Change Strategy (2021)* states that every \$1 spent now can avoid future costs of up to 6x as much.

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<sup>2</sup> Local Government Act - 9(2) (c) Councils are required to promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks.

<sup>3</sup> Local Government Act - 9(2)(b) Councils are required to give priority to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

<sup>4</sup> Sustainable City Community Action Plan 2017-2020, What you told us (p9)

**Thank you for co-funding the EcoCentre programs and facilities. The EcoCentre provides a strong return on this investment and there is strong community support for our partnership.**

**1) EcoCentre capital co-funding is secured.**

We are thrilled that the Victorian Government has confirmed \$2.8m to match City of Port Phillip's pledge for EcoCentre redevelopment, which has secured Heritage permits and is shovel-ready following two community consultations in 2020. We are pleased that 'subject to 50% partner funding' text can be removed from both the Draft Plan and Draft Budget 21/22.

**2) EcoCentre programmatic co-funding is impactful.**

Council provides a critical core funding as part of the EcoCentre's diverse funding mix of fee-for-service programs, philanthropic grants, state and Commonwealth grants and community donations. Port Phillip funds approximately 30% of our budget, with 60% of program benefits delivered to Port Phillip residents and landscapes, and \$10 economic impact delivered for every \$1 invested by Council into the EcoCentre.<sup>5</sup>

Our programs are designed to complement and extend Port Phillip's council services, collaborating at an ecosystem scale for initiatives in alignment with Council Strategies. The EcoCentre Annual Report features Stories of Change and quantitative performance indicators to evaluate the reach, impacts and outcomes of our strategies and programs.

The EcoCentre's capabilities provide an effective and trusted outreach partnership that continues to help Council address issues that are of community interest but not currently funded through Council programs.

**2) Community strongly support the Council-EcoCentre partnership.**

In 2020, EcoCentre support and climate action were the top theme of Council budget submissions (115 submissions). Over the past five years, City of Port Phillip has been copied into letters of support from approximately 1000 individuals, schools, community groups, other bayside Mayors, Members of Parliament, and research institutions who value the EcoCentre model and advocate for its jointly-funded capital and programmatic expansion, enabling an associated array of community and ecological benefits – and many transformative personal experiences for the 87,000 service users annually:

*"I enjoyed learning about leadership and about waste because I realised that I could take part and help solve the issue" – Year 5 student, Tomorrow's Leaders for Sustainability program, Port Melbourne Primary*

*"Thanks for all your wonderful resources and the gentle and inspiring way you talk to children."  
– Early Learning Centre educator*

*"I have been left with such a feeling of empowerment. The discussion about systemic change intertwined with the individual choice to take action was a powerful call to action." – Health services partner*

*"When I leave an EcoCentre program and return to the world, I feel uplifted and hopeful in a way that I haven't in a long time." – Community Enviro Fest participant*

*"There are a few changes the EcoCentre has brought into my life: I went from eating meat every day to 2x per week. I used to roll my Council bins out every week but now it's down to half. I haven't bought a single thing (except food) since I started at the EcoCentre because I would rethink every purchase decision and either realise I did not need it at all, or could improvise with something I already have. I have to start up my car once a week because I have hardly driven it – switched to walking, cycling and trams." – citizen science volunteer*

*"Thank you - the conversation we had at the EcoCentre was instrumental in how I applied for and discussed my skills in the applications and interviews." – EcoCentre volunteer / emerging environmental professional*

<sup>5</sup> Y 9-20 fu d g va ue eco om c mpac va ue f om *Economic and Environmental Benefits Statement* (Esse a Eco om cs 20 7, H p V Hype



## Reinstate funding for the Port Phillip Urban Fresh Food Network (PPUFFN garden group).

City of Port Phillip recognises social inclusion as a determinant of health. Research suggests that being part of a cohesive neighbourhood and participating in community life can counteract adverse health effects resulting from socio-economic disadvantage.

For \$21k p.a. (inc GST), Council engages Port Phillip EcoCentre to run inclusive food and community gardening activities over 48 Fridays, blending participants of all backgrounds. Council's funding deed covers approximately 50% of program costs for coordination, equipment and food staples, with the EcoCentre leveraging this for matching grants. Council's co-funding for professional coordination (by a qualified mental health nurse with permaculture expertise) enables this successful mix of complex needs, with a strong retention rate for participants and the capability of referring to wraparound support. Unlike most community garden models, the plots are collectively shared and volunteers can share the harvest for home meals as well as learn to use them in the shared lunches on Fridays.

The program supports an average of 600 participations contributing 2-3k volunteer hours, including management of our popular community compost, and typically has a waitlist of 50+ people. Participants range from retired professionals to new migrants, jobseekers, social housing residents and social/health worker referrals, and represent a mix of ages (18-70), physical abilities and at least seven languages. Between 25-50% of our participants are experiencing formally disclosed socioeconomic disadvantage.

Participants reported:

- 100% met new people and friends by participating
- 79% learned a new skill
- 83% learned more about gardening, composting or healthy eating
- 76% felt a greater sense of happiness
- 59% increased access to fresh, healthy, affordable food
- 100% felt more connected to their local nature and environment

"I love coming to the garden group. The whole team at the EcoCentre are a wealth of knowledge and very supportive, and the diverse group of volunteers make each Friday a day filled with lots of learning, laughter and support. There is a wonderful sense of community and a sharing. Everyone contributes different skills to bring about a wonderful collaborative day. The garden group shows the power of team work and the importance of community and it brings lots of joy to the end of the week."

"Really helped me to form my identity and get back into life after a long bout of unemployment and mental health issues."

"One of [Sacred Heart Mission's] most popular activities because the EcoCentre is inclusive, non-judgmental, welcoming, interesting, educational and fun."

"It seems almost silly that something as simple as joining a gardening group can make such a positive impact where many overpriced drugs have failed me. I want to get out of bed everyday now. You cannot even begin to imagine how much all of it means to me.... I truly hope that the EcoCentre will get more funding to run more of these programs."

The PPUFFN program is adaptive, including through COVID, and in anticipation of possible temporary relocation, since November 2020 we have introduced a suite of community sites / gardens at which we can continue an interim program if funded to do so.

### Additional feedback to the Draft Plan

1. Reorganise the sustainability goals to emphasise outcomes beyond cleanliness, for example 'A bayside city that is greener, cooler, cleaner and climate resilient.'
2. 'An environmentally aware' community is not enough (p46) and we suggest the phrase 'An environmentally aware and active' community. The EcoCentre activates new skills, behaviours, leadership and volunteering as well as connection to local nature and reports annually on related indicators.
3. Commit to equitable access to green spaces across the municipality. Environmental infrastructure planning and management are both a practical and ethical concern. Increasing vegetation cover, permeable land and open space access in a dense municipality requires lateral thinking including leveraging local planning laws and Developer Contribution Schemes, as well as investment 'over the road' to sites like Ripponlea Gardens (free access), a feasibility study for the community-proposed Green Line, and Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve (flood mitigation infrastructure).
4. Commit to making extreme weather preparedness plans for heat and floods as familiar a concept as bushfire plans are to households in regional areas.
5. Commit to collaboration with other councils and local government to support Council's community service organisations to plan for operation through extreme weather events.
6. Maintain CoPP funding for community engagement including rooftop solar sessions and Enviro Leaders program, whether delivered in house or through additional budget for the EcoCentre; in addition to the new initiatives identified for reducing commercial and industrial community-based emissions.

City of Port Phillip faces a critical decade to protect its natural heritage, iconic coasts and community health.

The Port Phillip EcoCentre remains committed to collaboration with Council and wider stakeholders to mitigate and adapt to the local impacts of projected climate crisis, environmental threats and health challenges, guided by the best available science. We look forward to the revision of the Council Plan accordingly.

Sincerely,



CBR-195

Dear Councillor

I have been a member of Friends of Suai since 2009 when I participated in a program in Suai improving the English language skills of teachers of English. In that time I have been impressed by the range of Projects which the Covalima Community Centre has undertaken with the support of the Port Phillip Council. These have included the Scholarship program for school-leavers; the tree-planting program; the lighting program and the sanitation program at the local high school. Most recently the Covalima Community Centre has supported people during the Covid pandemic.

I think it would be a retrograde step if the funding to support these programs in Covalima and the Co-ordinator employed by Port Phillip Council was to be stopped without seeking alternative avenues to continue the funding of these projects. I currently support financially the Scholarship program which enables school-leavers to continue their schooling and obtain qualifications to enable them to get a job/career.

I understand the Council will continue to support the Program this year. However more time is needed to find substantive donors who will ensure the program continues. I ask you to consider granting funds for five years to enable suitable donors to be found. The mentoring and support provided by the Co-ordinator will also need to be replicated.

As a close neighbour I think it is appropriate that Local Government continues to support programs such as the Covalima Community Centre particularly while such areas recover from the effects of the Covid pandemic.

Yours sincerely

██████████  
██████████

## Creative Industries are a critical part of City of Port Phillip's economy and life and need Council's support to survive and thrive

### Submission on City of Port Phillip Draft Council Plan

#### Introduction

Cultural and creative industries are valued at \$1.1b pa, \$3m per day in the city of Port Phillip representing 9% of the total creative economy.

Creative industries are 35% of the economy of Port Phillip, they provide 12,700 jobs in direct employment, 14,100 jobs in indirect employment. As a sector, the creative and cultural industry is the second largest employer in the City of Port Phillip.

Port Phillip has the highest concentration of creative industries employment in Victoria. We are home to some of the state's major cultural assets in The Palais, The National Theatre, Gasworks etc. Without a plan, these assets will deteriorate and cease to be a major calling card for Port Phillip.

In addition to the economic benefits, creative industries provide demonstrable benefits to the community and to individual health and wellbeing through the generation of opportunities for participation in arts and cultural programs. This participation leads to an increased ability to recognise feelings and empathise with others which improves social relationships, leads to pro-social behaviour, increases tolerance and builds resilience. They make Port Phillip a better place to live.

There is no mention in the Draft Council Plan of how this vital part of the local economy will be invested in to ensure it continues to add to the life and economy of the city and not be lost to other local government areas. We need to fight to retain and Port Phillip this place that we love and for it to continue to be a significant contributor to Melbourne's status as one of the world's most liveable cities.

#### A Creative Industries Plan

The City of Port Phillip needs to continue to have a plan for the creative industries. This plan could and should include:

- Continuing to map and catalogue the distribution of creative businesses to identify neighbourhoods in which development pressure and gentrification may displace creative industries in the City of Port Phillip.
- Equitable access to creative programs across the City of Port Phillip.
- The Council's role in facilitating and supporting creative industries, to partner, broker, promote and advocate, and to ensure that everyone in our community is empowered to share, create and participate equally in our cultural and economic prosperity.
- Investment in the creative and cultural industries including live music and the games development sector in line with available budgets each year,
- Events and festivals that celebrate local culture and creativity, connect residents to one another and drive economic benefit for local traders and our community.
- High-quality library spaces and collection services that provide opportunities for people to connect and learn and deliver on key actions outlined in the Library Action Plan.
- The development of Music Precincts – Council needs to partner with Music Victoria, not just leave it to them to organise, otherwise they will concentrate on council areas interested in

partnering with them. We need to capitalise on the work already done in the Live Music Action Plan.

- Arts funding for the Key Arts organisations in the Council area. These are important organisations engaged in creating and developing work for and with local artists.
- For Arts to flourish and attract people, we need art, music, dance etc to be created by and for people who live in Port Phillip.
- Action on vacant spaces to get them revitalised and used by the community for creative industries
- Music needs to happen in every suburb every week not just in festivals. Festivals are great, but people come into the suburb and then leave, we need more music for and by the people who live here.
- Council activation of spaces for music and events without people incurring huge expense e.g. During restrictions there were pop up bands in the St Kilda Botanic Gardens who should be able to play there on a Sunday afternoon and accept donations.
- Offering emerging and local artists from diverse backgrounds assistance in terms of funding and spaces to create and produce in.
- Work to develop and attract diverse, new talents, create specific showcases and events to present their work.

### Summary

This is not all about money. What we saw during lockdown was the capacity of people to create something from nothing. Council is in a unique position to offer advice, partnership and logistics support to enable the community to develop and grow the creative industries that have long been the economic heartbeat and soul of the Port Phillip community. The Panel has been proud to be a part of this and volunteers to make the most of what the Council has to offer. This cannot happen without a Creative Industries plan.

### The City of Port Phillip Art & Soul Advisory Panel

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]



May 23, 2021

## **PORT PHILLIP BICYCLE USERS GROUP SUBMISSION ON CITY OF PORT PHILLIP COUNCIL BUDGET 2021**

**About us:** The Port Phillip Bicycle User Group (PP BUG) promotes cycling in our local community. Our goal is for cycling to be a highly attractive option for 8 to 80+ year olds— whether for fun, fitness or transport. We want people in our city to ride more often by making cycling an easy, safe and practical choice. As most trips are less than 5km, this will also alleviate congestion and demand on carparks.

### Bike infrastructure

In its *Move Live Connect* Integrated Transport Strategy (2018-2028), CoPP planned a strategic network of safe, separated bike lanes to be built over a decade. However, by the beginning of 2021, the only delivered route was a separated bicycle lane along the northern half of Moray Street, built in partnership with Melbourne Metro. Council is yet to deliver on the other routes. In 2021, we are significantly behind schedule.

**We support** the funding allocated for the Inkerman St bike corridor (\$9.9m in 2026), Garden City Bike Path (\$1.5m in 2022), the Park St bike link (\$2.1m in 2022) and the Park St temporary bike lane (\$150,000 in 2022).

To deliver on the *Move Live Connect* (MLC) plan, **funding needs to be allocated towards planning and construction of the remaining protected bike routes** listed to be built before 2028. These include Moray Street (south end); Inkerman St – Fitzroy Street/ Canterbury Rd; Sandringham Line/ Westbury St – Ripponlea to Windsor; Dickens St - Balaclava to St Kilda Beach; Acland St / Mitford St / Beach St - Fitzroy St to Elwood Beach; Tennyson St/ Blessington St - Elwood to St Kilda Beach; Byron St/ Glen Eira Rd - Ripponlea to Elwood.

**Pop-up bike infrastructure.** To enable rapid transition to safe cycling, we recommend immediately building out the complete MLC separated bike network as "pop-up bike lanes" with temporary infrastructure, such as water-filled barriers, floppy bollards, or planter boxes. As temporary facilities, these will serve as on-site testing of options, so the community can make informed decisions before permanent facilities are installed.

As a lead example, build protected, temporary cycle lanes along Kerferd Rd, ahead of the planned State-government led Shrine-to-Sea project (which is now undergoing a broader consultation with stakeholders).

Prioritise other immediate, effective and low-cost interventions, to enable safer cycle commuting: Remove parking from the left-most lanes of St Kilda Road and Brighton Road. Remove parking from the left-most lanes of Beaconsfield Parade and Marine Parade. Remove parking from Chapel Street. While this alone will not be an acceptable level of safety for the long-term, they will remove one source of danger, that of being car-doored (hit by a person opening the driver's side door while parked).

**Information gathering to assist strategic planning.** In particular, we request a safety audit of the principal cycle access connections to the City of Melbourne at Eastern Rd/Sturt St, South Melbourne at Kingsway and Montague St to Docklands.

#### The climate emergency

In 2019, CoPP declared a climate emergency. Council has estimated that transport is responsible for 16% of our city's emissions, making it the second-largest sector. It is also the fastest-growing, where other sectors are declining. Given the limited time we have to avert catastrophic climate change, reducing transport emissions is crucial. Building safe cycling infrastructure is a proven, cost-effective method of enabling active, climate friendly transport, at a scale that can make a difference.

Council is uniquely responsible for the provision of safe cycling routes on its roads. All studies show that building such infrastructure is also a net positive across non-climate related measures including congestion, retail profitability, resident health (both by increasing activity levels and reducing air pollution), and mental health.

This failing should be remedied: Council needs a comprehensive strategy to reduce transport emissions, with increase in active travel at the heart of it.

#### Promotion of cycling

Council is proposing to reduce the budget for a range of cycling promotion programs, including Ride2School. This is a disappointing signal, particular as this is a very small investment on the part of council. We request any savings here be re-allocated towards programs that have been evaluated as being successful at increasing the numbers of people (particularly children and beginners) cycling.

[REDACTED]

for Port Phillip Bicycle Users Group  
portphillipbug@gmail.com

CBR-203

23 May 2021

City of Port Phillip Council  
Planning and Performance Team/Engagement Team



Submitted via 'Have Your Say' website

**RE: SPCHG SUBMISSION TO DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2021-31 and DRAFT BUDGET 2021/22**

South Port Community Housing Group (SPCHG) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Draft Council Plan 2021-31 and Draft Budget 2021/22. SPCHG and the City of Port Phillip have a long history of partnership in the shared aims of addressing homelessness and increasing opportunities for marginalised residents in the City of Port Phillip.

SPCHG is a community managed organisation based in South Melbourne for 35 years. Apart from housing management, the unique feature of our organisation is our commitment to providing opportunity and encouragement to our tenants to connect to community- to counter the social exclusion that so often goes hand in hand with homelessness. Our commitment to community means we have always operated exclusively in the City of Port Phillip.

We support and welcome Council's aims to facilitate and advocate for:

- The Victorian Government to introduce mandatory 'inclusionary zoning' and strengthen 'voluntary housing agreements' to increase housing delivered through the planning system that is affordable to very low, low, and moderate income households.
- The Victorian Government, community housing organisations, and the philanthropic and private development sectors to facilitate new affordable and social housing within the municipality, including the renewal of existing social housing sites to achieve the outcomes identified in our In Our Backyard Strategy.
- The Victorian Government to fund services and supported housing that meet the needs of people with complex mental health needs and implement the recommendations of the Victorian Mental Health Royal Commission.
- The Australian Government to effectively address the recommendations from the Royal Commission on Aged Care Services.
- The Victorian Government to ensure it provides adequate provision of open space for vertical schools to support the health and wellbeing of the young people of our City.

We commend the new Council for their continuing commitment to acknowledge and take actions to address the severe issues of economic downturn as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. And that this is likely to have a 'disproportionately severe effect on some groups, such as noncitizens, young people with low educational attainment, those nearing the end of their working lives and women. We agree and are already observing the increase in disadvantage and demand for social welfare and housing services.

It is in this context, we are disappointed the Council are seeking to cut a range of small but important community services, with a modest saving, for underrepresented groups in the community. Over the years we have worked closely with Council staff to develop opportunities for our renters to connect and participate in community. Many of these opportunities exist via the small but important community services the Council extends to underrepresented or marginalised



residents. Our annual Community Festival event is a case in point, often sponsored by the City of Port Phillip and a wide range of small, local businesses, provides a rare opportunity to celebrate and promote diversity and strength of community in the City of Port Phillip.

As the draft plan notes, Port Phillip has some of the most expensive housing in Victoria and the problem of affordability is becoming more entrenched. The recent Anglicare Australia 2021 snapshot report of housing affordability found not one rental unit affordable to people living on a JobSeeker income payment.

Despite not having the favoured status and balance sheet of a Housing Association, SPCHG have a strong track record in delivering and increasing affordable housing options in the City of Port Phillip.

- In 2011, with the assistance of the Victorian government and Nation Building stimulus funding, we led the construction of 40 one bedroom apartments in Bank St., South Melbourne. In 2014, we purchased and saved a 31 bedit apartment complex from private sale with support from the local community.
- We have converted 100 rooming house rooms to self-contained studio apartments since 2009, improving safety and security for our renters and improving the management of the properties.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, we extended our services to deliver weekly meals to our most vulnerable tenants, and produced and delivered a weekly newsletter informing our renters of the developing situation under lockdown, public health messaging and opportunities in the community for support.

The state government's new \$5.3bn Big Housing Build initiative is a huge step forward for Victoria in the effort to reduce homelessness. Having worked with the Council for many years on ongoing development and review of its housing strategies, (most recently *In Our Backyard*), we were glad to see Housing First recently receive significant funds for the Marlborough St (Balaclava carpark) project and St Kilda Community Housing receive funds for a small Common Ground development in Wellington Street, St Kilda. We commend Council for these initiatives. Despite this generous investment from Council, delivery of units remains a way off and implementation of the flagship strategy, by the Councils own assessment, remains at risk. We look forward to the opportunity to bring forward proposals for Council's consideration and support in the Council's 2021-22 budget.

SPCHG stands ready to partner with the City of Port Phillip over the next ten years, to continue our long history of practical and progressive support for social housing projects for people who need them most.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name]

[Redacted title]

[Redacted contact information]

## CBR-204

### Budget Proposal

Re: Funding agreement for Emerald Hill Toy Library, trading as Middle Park Toy Library and South Melbourne Toy Library

Emerald Hill Toy Library operates two independent toy libraries - Middle Park Toy Library and South Melbourne Toy Library. These toy libraries are operated as a not-for-profit community service to families within the City of Port Phillip for 25+ and 6 years respectively. Our services allow families to borrow a wide range of quality toys, puzzles and games that support young children to build key development skills and learn about the world around them through play.

We are mainly funded through an annual membership fee which generally covers the majority of our operational costs, however, also receive support through the City of Port Phillip through:

- Subsidised lease agreement of \$144 per year for each library (totalling \$288)
- An operational grant;
- A low income subsidy (providing families on health care cards access to the toy library); and
- A general membership subsidy, which is calculated based on membership numbers.

The Committee would also like to point out that this year's Council funding agreement required the Toy Libraries to cap fees to concession card holders at \$30, which is less than what is required to break even AND for which the toy libraries receive no additional gap funding.

This support from the City of Port Phillip equated to roughly \$6K per year in 2020 and a similar amount in 2019.

At the start 2020 we had 220 across both our toy libraries, in comparison to 120 members at the start of 2021. Our toy libraries were closed for 8months, 5 months were due to the lockdown with an additional 3 months due to Council imposed restrictions as our toy libraries are co-located in Council buildings with MCHN services at both South Melbourne and Middle Park.

We were able to open a Click and Collect service in October 2020 on Saturday mornings only, at which point we also extended all toy library membership for 8 months, the period in which we were closed and thus have forgone any membership fees for this period.

Since then, whilst being able to move to a Book and Browse service, we have been unable to re-open out toy libraries to pre-COVID opening hours (1 weekday session + 1 weekend session) due to Council imposed restrictions because of the co-location of our services with MCHN services.

Our toy library whole heartedly supports Port Phillip Council's commitment to its toy libraries as outline in the Children's Services Policy:

*Council will work with partners to ensure that every child, regardless of their abilities or background, will have access to affordable, safe, accessible, quality Early Years' services to support development to their full potential.*

We have demonstrated this support with the introduction of 20 Outreach Membership provided to vulnerable members of our Community through the Family, Youth and Children team at the City of Port Phillip for which our toy library receives no funding from the Council.

As a result in the drop in membership numbers (from 220 members in Jan 2020, to 120 members in Jan 2021), extending membership by 8months to cover the period that we were required to close due to State Government (5months) and addition Council imposed restrictions (3months), reduced

CBR-204

Council funding from approx. \$6000 to \$4000, and requirement to cap fees to Concession Card holders in order to be eligible for Council funding, we will see a loss this year of \$-10,993.

This assumes that we are able to re-open a weekday session which will significantly help us to retain existing members and hopefully rebuild our membership base.

Due to our Committee's prudent financial management we are able to sustain this operating loss for a year however, without any additional funding the Committee will be required to reduce our services which may include the closure of one of our toy libraries.

We would like the City of Port Phillip to consider increasing our operational grant from \$1300 to \$4000 to enable Middle Park Toy Library and South Melbourne Toy Library to continue to provide their valued services to families within the City of Port Phillip.

Sincerely



## FUNDING THE ARTS

SUBMISSION to CoPP COUNCIL PLAN and DRgfAFT 2021/22 BUDGET.

23 MAY 2021

### RESPONSE TO 21/22 DRAFT ARTS BUDGET

#### Introduction

“Arts and Culture” find their place in our Council Plan under the broad policy heading of a “Vibrant Port Phillip”. Sharing this category are “Economic Development and Tourism”, “Festivals”, “Libraries”, and “South Melbourne Market”. Some of these (notably Festivals) also involve ‘the Arts’ proper; all are ‘culture’. This submission covers only CoPP’s Council Plan and Budget response to the Arts.

In general terms, (but with a few notable exceptions) the City’s Arts budget seems to have been kept largely intact. For this we are genuinely grateful, and we congratulate Council on achieving this in the face of unprecedented pressures.

#### Budget Opacity

It is also possible that we have been unable to read or interpret the proposed budget with sufficient accuracy to find what may end up being ‘hidden cuts’. For all its generally well organised presentation, there is still a shroud of opacity surrounding this budget’s Arts funding. The lack of explicit clarity is evident from top to bottom:

- It is hard to find a statement of the City’s clear philosophical intent and approach to arts funding, particularly under the current COVID conditions. Is this council actually striving to ramp it up, or cut it back – or is it just a neutral steady-as-she-goes approach – and why?
- It is also very difficult to collect all the elements of arts funding into a comprehensive list, to get a proper synoptic picture. An extracted Arts summary would help us all.
- And then there are important details just left buried, in marked and unmarked sites. An example of this latter is the apparently new \$50k project budget allocation for improving public accessibility to the Port Phillip Collection. This would actually a ‘good news’ story in our eyes, but it has not been released in the budget documentation. It would have almost completely offset the \$56k “changes to arts programs” cut announced publicly in the changes to services summary – itself a notably obscure description of what these cuts were to.
- We have also just witnessed how Red Stitch and other major arts orgs had not found the dramatic changes proposed for their funding arrangements until just before submissions were due. As a consultation tool there have obviously been some shortcomings.

#### WHY WE SHOULD FUND THE ARTS

I fully support Council’s funding of the arts, and I call for more. It is understood that the economic outfall from the COVID 19 pandemic puts huge pressure on all non-mandatory funding – which the arts budget by and large is. But the economic crisis also demands a massive and immediate rescue and recovery response. The Arts are inextricably bound up on both sides of this ledger.

We do appreciate that in the context of the pandemic, the enjoyment of the arts by the city’s residents may be seen a less pressing consideration. But there are reasons more fundamental than that for us to be focusing our funding on the arts, with more pressing urgencies:

- 1) By long tradition and by current reputation Port Phillip is one of this State's preeminent 'homes of the arts' (obviously along with Yarra and the MCC). We pride ourselves for being everything from the nursery to the grand stage for many of the major arts -- music, theatre, film and the visual arts the most prominent among them. It is now incumbent on us in the current crisis to show commitment, generosity, expertise and leadership in supporting creative industry and the arts -- if we are hoping to sustain our powerful (but easily shattered) reputational and economic advantage in these areas.
- 2) It is our moral duty, and to our economic and cultural advantage, to help rescue and sustain the creative industry and arts sectors which disproportionately depend on this city as their home, and disproportionately contribute to its economic and cultural well-being.
- 3) As other cities have shown (eg Moreland, MCC), a really full-scale arts recovery program can have a powerful, multiplied effect on general economic recovery.
- 4) There are also less tangible issues of public morale. There is evidence all around the world that moments of arts-led beauty and transcendence can have genuine influence in economic recovery and wellbeing.

As a city, we have *traded* off our massive but now dwindling reputational strength in the creative arts. It is precisely *now* that we need to step up in this time of need, not step back.

## **SOME TROUBLING FEATURES**

### **The economic benefit argument**

The points above are important arguments for more arts funding not less. But economics-based arguments are themselves liable to lead into over-simplified arts funding fixes. Just as with education and research funding, arts funding is also easily misdirected under common misconceptions of how sustainable economic benefits are achieved.

The direct quick-funding-fix is like a sugar-hit – some of which our struggling economy may well need right now – but which is unlikely to last long. It is only from a rich, dense, surrounding creative environment that any economically beneficial elements emerge. Ideally, all funding should be aimed at enriching the cultural nutrients around these emergent elements – not just at applying stimulants to the feature plants once they've emerged. Just picking the winners does not help the cultural ecosystem that generated them.

Much of the rhetoric and rationale for arts funding in this budget suggests an over-reliance on the direct economic benefit criterion. Unfortunately, this narrow-view approach seems to be an influential factor underlying many of the shifts in this year's arts funding budget.

### **Competitive tendering**

Closely related is an apparent trend away from established funding relationships with established partners, towards competitive tendering on an annual basis. Though there is a case to say that competitive tendering can keep dependent fundees on their toes, performing to their fullest capacities, and seeking to become less dependent through time, it is also true that it achieves the exactly opposite affects as well. Competitive tendering saps and demoralises their energy and enthusiasm, severely depletes their capacities to perform, and kills them off prematurely.

In this budget we are seeing "key arts organisations" -- such as Red Stitch, Theatreworks, Tapestry Workshop, Rawcus, Phillip Adams BalletLab , and more – being taken off stable mid-term funding

and forced into the competitive queue. The South Melbourne Symphony Orchestra now has nowhere else to go. These are some of the most precious arts organisations in our city.

For relationships that merit long-term support (which surely most of these do), it is severely counter-productive to subject them to an annual competitive grant application process. It is a system that feeds administrators rather than artists. Each organisation's creative energies are increasingly poured into paperwork rather than performance. No organisation that needs to plan more than a year in advance can limp on year after year in this state of uncertainty.

Is the Cultural Development Fund budget being expanded to accommodate the influx of core arts orgs into its competitive arena? Apparently not; we understand the CDF is actually being reduced in size. And with the maximum grant being now set at \$12k, many of these bodies, whose forward planning absolutely depends on triennial funding (in \$30k lumps), will not survive. Particularly in this economic climate, this is an extraordinarily unproductive blow.

Instead of conducting itself within a genuinely collaborative and nurturing environment, arts funding (at this level) will now be carried out on a blood-soaked competitive battlefield, with only the few left standing. We know that a productive garden needs thinning, culling and weeding, but we don't expect our prized specimens to be depleting their energies fighting each other for survival.

This, for our medium size arts organisations, is undoubtedly the most destructive feature of the 21/22 draft budget.

#### **Temporary v permanent cuts**

Another issue of opacity is in the clarity with which Council's one-off 'COVID emergency' funding cuts have been distinguished from intentionally permanent cuts (not to mention what may become unintentional permanent cuts). Out of necessity during the COVID19 economic crisis, Council has had to suspend funding to many programs to which it would otherwise have strong long-term commitments. Many of these funding disruptions are appearing again now in the draft budget. In some arts-funding cases it is, however, difficult to tell whether the item has been permanently cut from Council's agenda, or just temporarily suspended. There is a degree of apprehension that some savings, originally announced as suspensions, will quietly become permanent. Before any final consideration of the budget, all relevant items should be clearly earmarked and explained, so it is clear to the community what we will be losing and what we will not.

#### **ARTS ACQUISITION FUND – A SMALL EXAMPLE**

Changes to the Arts Acquisition Fund have remained largely unannounced. But in its example we see all the problems with this draft budget's arts funding played out.

The Arts Acquisition Fund is only a tiny cog in the budgetary machine, but it is the life-support for something that is unique and spectacular in our city's cultural capital and cultural heritage. Our collection encapsulates and carries our city's soul, its history and its story-lines, as told by its incredible lineage of visual artists. Its unique locally-connected collection policy makes this something that (apart from the City of Melbourne with its massive resources) no other city has achieved. It is an ever-deepening and unfolding story – entirely dependent on this small acquisition fund for being so.

Its funding future is only obscurely tabulated in the draft budget, with one key aspect left entirely unrecorded (as described under 'Budget Opacity' above). None of its changes are noted in the

Budget's 'Changes to Services' table, despite its proposed annual expenditure being effectively halved! (from a \$30k p/a \$60k spend every two years, to \$30k each two years) The fear of surreptitious budget cuts is here well justified. (It is unlikely that any of the pool of extraordinarily expert local artists and curators who have contributed their time to the Acquisitions Committee over the years would know about this.)

The proposed suspension of acquisitions for two years appears to be based on a mistaken characterisation of the function of the fund. Last year its suspension was also proposed, based quite understandably on its characterisation as a 'discretionary item' in an economic crisis, and unlikely to cause detriment to the collection by missing a year. It was then reinstated when another aspect of its function was better understood: as an ideal, tailor-made deliverer of economic relief to locally-based artists. A role which was successfully delivered and gratefully received.

Its virtues as an arts rescue package are these:

- It channels money directly to locally-based artists, rather than intermediary organisations,
- The artists' work is selected by professionally expert peers, drawn from their Port Phillip community.
- The artists are selected on the merit of work already made, so they can get on with their economic survival, rather than being tied up acquitting a grant received.
- Instead of depleting Council's coffers, this form of aid actually adds, measurably, to its asset-based capital and immeasurably to its cultural capital.
- The program and the collection itself endow this council a high level of credibility within the wider art world.

As a tiny amount, uniquely targeted, the Fund functions as an ideal vehicle for relief to the arts community -- which Council is needing to provide right now. If we were to be logical about it, we should swap this year's proposed internal review of collection programming and engagement with an immediate round of acquisition -- putting the aid out now, when it's needed, holding over this valuable review for when there's more time to think.

The halving of the acquisition budget (prior to the review) is counter-productive for all the reasons above.

The town hall's recent *Vista* exhibition showed work from the collection that is profoundly important to our understanding of our city. The capacity of the fund to make occasional spot purchases of historic artwork, and also to service the receipt of donated works, is also essential for this vital task.

We do brilliant work with this already modest amount. The Cities of Boroondara (\$80k pa) and Darebin (\$90k pa), by comparison, acquire a lot more, with only half the rationale.

I urge you to think again -- and consult again -- before accepting these changes to the Fund.

### **ST KILDA FESTIVAL -- A BIGGER ISSUE**

We all know the economic benefit the St Kilda Festival brings to multiple sectors of the local economy; the benefits it brings to live music in Melbourne by putting a hundred bands before an audience of hundreds of thousands; the benefit to young people of free entry to a major music festival; and the entertainment it brings to so many Melburnians and local residents alike. The efficiency of its clean-up is of course legendary!

I am a strong and confident supporter of the Festival – but I acknowledge that due to its very nature large question marks will always hang over it. It is such a massive single expenditure, on a single day, with hard-to-define beneficiaries and local advantages, and hard to calibrate satisfaction or dissatisfaction among local residents affected by its annual disruption. Combined with this is the constant serious question of what else could be done with that money – particularly if it were spent on the arts. The size of the spend alone, and the accumulated concerns, give rise to considerable scepticism within the local community. If the Festival is to maintain its credibility it needs to be subjected to continuous public scrutiny and vetting on its actual value for money, and its actual popularity with local residents. These findings need to be regularly published.

If the Festival’s success is pitched at such a metropolitan scale, should it not be substantially funded by State government? Pressing this question further would definitely help.

### **OVERALL OBSERVATIONS**

On most counts, the draft budget seems to present a picture of Council’s arts funding as stable and even possibly adequate. This picture is reinforced by the highlight announcement of Gasworks and Linden at long last entering into stable ten-year funding agreements and long-term leases. We thank Council for finally getting these stars into alignment. The St Kilda Film Festival and the Gaming Industry Awards demonstrate again the sort of creative arts success stories that our council can achieve at the State level and for the City itself.

On the downside, an over-reliance on the economic justification of the arts, and a lack of clear, visionary championship of the arts, in their own terms, tends to erode the City’s claims as their true home, hot-bed and haven.

The most disappointing and potentially disastrous issue is the apparent determination to transfer many stable longer-term funding relationships into the totally unpredictable annual competitive funding queue of the Cultural Development Fund. This is a totally inappropriate way to address the recurrent funding of key organisations, and an inappropriate use of the CDF funding model itself. We also express our concern for the tiny budget of the Art Acquisition Fund, and our caution with the St Kilda Festival’s giant one.

These individual concerns are all compounded by the general difficulty we have found in navigating and uncovering the salient details of the draft arts budget.

I of course remain committed to constructive engagement with Council on all issues in its funding of the arts and in the wider cultural environment.

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CBR-208

I write with deep concern about the proposal to discontinue triennial funding for our highly successful and critically important arts programmes in the City of Port Phillip.

As a long-term resident of the City of Port Phillip, I have availed myself of the opportunity to indulge in and support the innovative local arts programmes (particularly the theatre) to replenish my spirit while working in oncology and palliative care. It has been a core feature of my attraction to and loyalty for St Kilda

As with many of the patrons of the arts, I have felt starved of this stimulation during the necessary restrictions of COVID-19 and have hankered for the return of our amazing artists. As a health-care professional, I have not suffered loss of income, but my friends in the arts have suffered greatly, not only from income loss, but from the loss of ability to perform and create. It seemed that, gradually and cautiously, the arts were beginning to bounce back, and being able to attend performances again has lifted community spirits.

I find it short-sighted that a city council that prides itself as a 'creative hub' and a vibrant community could plan to omit triennial funding for Key Arts Organisations. What will happen to the soul of St Kilda? What will happen to the cultural buzz of the community? These organisations, already teetering, will likely succumb and fold. We cannot let this happen.

I implore you to reconsider and revise the draft budget.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature block]



May 23, 2021

Re DRAFT TRIENNIAL BUDGET and THE ARTS

**Surely you have forgotten something ?** I sincerely hope it's not deliberate.

What has happened to the tradition that our Council has had in supporting local Arts groups ? It has come to my attention that there is a ground swell of action within the community because of the lack of inclusion of grants for established key local arts groups within the City of Port Phillip in the ongoing funding in its draft budget for the next three years. There will be no basis for further consideration until 2024 unless this deficiency is remediated.

There has been no warning information about this apparent change in policy which in the past has been much admired. Rawcus, a unique inclusive theatre ensemble along with Theatre Works, Red Stitch, The Australian Tapestry Workshop, The Torch and Phillip Adams Ballet LAB Temperance Hall will all lose their funding. Particularly in the aftermath of the Covid 19 pandemic this unanticipated reduction in funding will have a major effect on the viability of organisations which have played a great role in our community. Their influence has not been merely local but has advanced the status of our City nationally and on occasions internationally.

Community funding supplements state and any federal issues along with support created by their own efforts. Importantly it also acknowledges and validates local values.

I am writing as a resident/ratepayer and clinical psychologist with both professional and personal knowledge of the value to any community provided by the Arts in general. I am not just referring to the things which we might enjoy personally. My concern is for the crucial role that the Arts play in providing the basic connective tissue of the organic process which makes up any community and any country.

## CBR-210

I had been appalled in the lead up to the last council elections to hear talk of selling the cities modest but important art collection and to capitalise on the public exhibition gallery for office space, because the Arts should not be in the province of local government.

I disagree. This is a community issue. At this time in our country when, we are still facing uncertainty of a health, economic, political and international nature, rational discussion and communication in the strengthening of community at all levels are of essential importance. Ever since some ancient forebear scratched an image on a cave wall the Arts have played a major role in stimulation of thought, expression and communication and consolidation.

Community involvement to support artists who offer their work to their own community, from a base in that community, strengthens the value and worth of that community.

It is shameful that this decision to dispense with the past funding commitment was not made public beforehand. It would appear that there have been some "cultural changes" within the Council since the recent election, and it is a regrettable and retrograde change from past attitudes where there has been modest but consistent local support for the Arts. It is at odds with the professed vision for the next 10 years which includes descriptions such as " Vibrant Port Phillip.....talks to creative industries",

While municipal councils have a high level of responsibility to their citizens/ratepayers for infrastructure and services support for the creative industries contributes concretely to consideration of our own being and expression of our thoughts, feelings and beliefs in a dynamic interaction which shapes our culture. With little political and public recognition of the data which has been gathered confirming the Arts sector in all its forms also stimulates a major economic contribution to the community.

I have written to a large number of other ratepayers and residents in our City Community, asking them to reflect on their own position about local support within a community for the Arts. You will find that my reaction is a very general one.

Thank goodness that the Age newspaper has at least provided some last-minute

## CBR-210

information to the general community. It is be hoped that last-minute word of mouth communication will allow people to understand the urgency involved in addressing this situation and the possibility of deliberate or unwitting malfeasance which must be corrected before access to the drafting process is closed.

My hastily prepared comments are of a general nature in respect of the importance to the community. I have had 40 years of practice both clinically in psychotherapy and with expertise relative to our justice system. Be assured that in my my personal professional experience the value of the Arts in their various forms my experience provides great confirmation of the effects on many troubled individuals.

Individuals function within communities. They are empowered by community processes. The value of the arts psychologically, socially and also economically cannot be disregarded. To do so brings the administration of a city/community into danger and disrepute.

Please call me directly on [REDACTED] if you would like to discuss this.



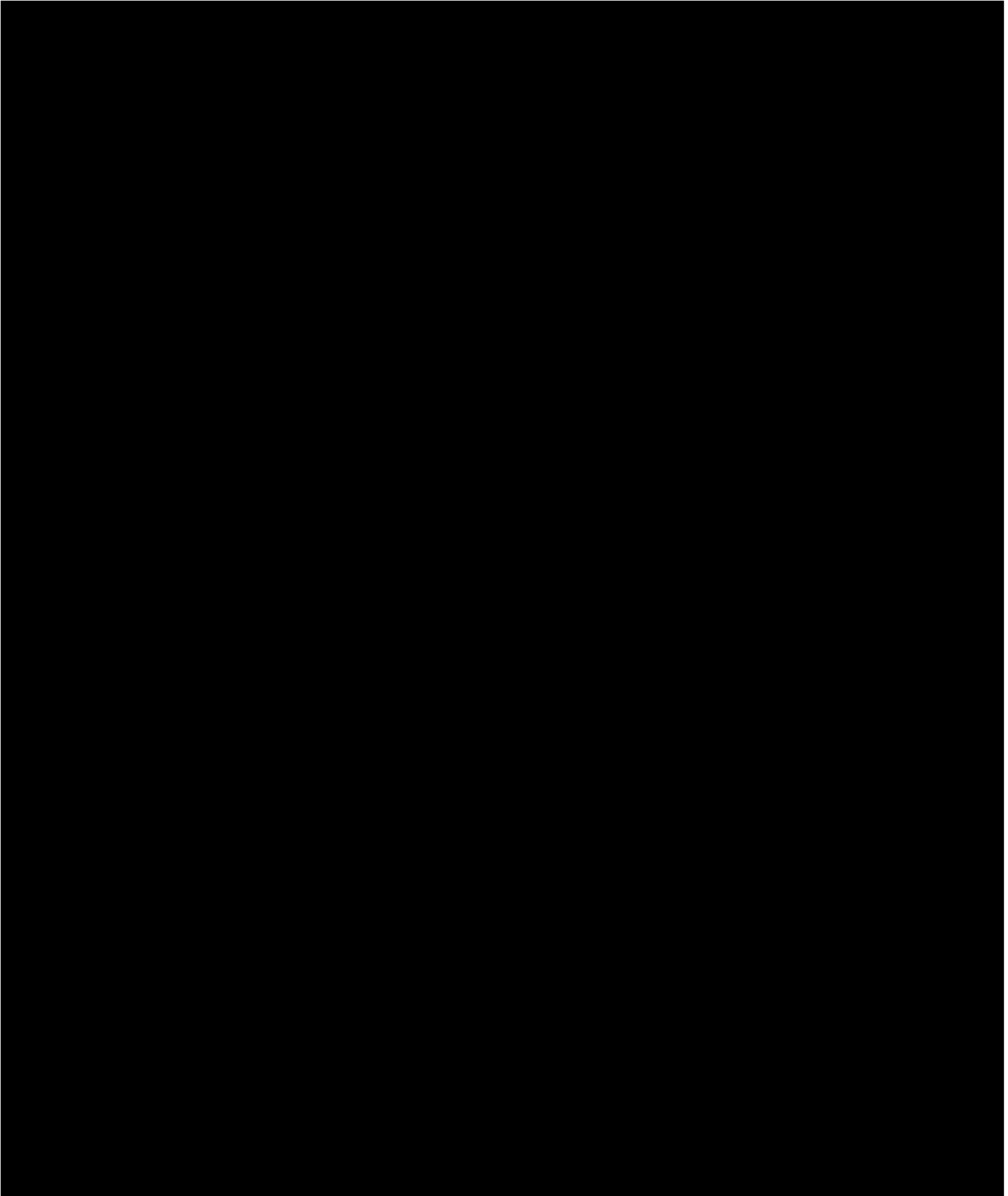
APPENDIX

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Dear Mayor and Councillors of the City of Port Phillip,

I am writing to you because I've only just now become aware that the council has been considering ceasing all funding to its successful Friends of Suai/Covalima Program, as part of its review of the 2021-22 Draft Council Budget.

At the outset I'd like to inform you that I've been a resident and ratepayer of the City of Port Phillip for over 15 years and a proud supporter of the Friends of Suai/Covalima for over 10 years and would like to highlight the following:

- I have been an active member of the Friends of Suai/Covalima, attended their fundraising events and toured Timor Leste and Suai with them, and witnessed the great work that has been achieved at the local High School and the local Covalima Community Centre (CCC), as well as empowering the local community. The Council can be justly proud of what has been achieved in the past 21 years, particularly as there is still so little support provided to local communities by the Timorese Government.
- I have since visited Timor Leste many times and was inspired by the success of the Friends of Suai/Covalima Program to not only volunteer myself, but along with some close friends, to support the struggling St Clara Orphanage in Dili, on an ongoing basis.
- I am aware that the Council makes an annual grant to the Community Centre in Suai of around \$60,000 and employs a Coordinator in Australia for 3 days per week to manage the program and to provide mentoring and support. I know from firsthand experience the great work of Carlene and Pat and what they have achieved.
- You are no doubt aware that the Friends of Suai/Covalima is providing funds to the CCC for a Civic Health Fund so that they can play a part in responding to community needs related to COVID-19 prevention and support for communities impacted by the floods. The Red Cross resources are stretched due to their continued support for flood victims who lost their homes and livelihoods. Some government funding is expected but has not yet been received.
- It's important to note that the City of Port Phillip is just one of many councils and Shires throughout Australia, and in particular Victoria, along with Rotary, that have adopted and supported towns in Timor Leste.
- Whilst I am grateful to the Councillors for keeping the funding in this year's Budget, I implore you to continue to support the Friends of Suai/Covalima – the City of Port Phillip should be so proud of what this Council's support has achieved in this part of this struggling nation. Australia is a rich country; the City of Port Phillip is relatively affluent and

CBR-212

can afford to provide this support (it averages about \$2 per annum per residential household).

- I'm sure that if the ratepayers of the City of Port Phillip were more aware of the great contribution you've made to this impoverished nation, they too would be proud. We surely can't abandon this beautiful nation when they continue to struggle. Now is not a good time to walk away from supporting the Friendship when COVID-19 cases are increasing, and Timor Leste has experienced the worst floods in 40 years. In fact, it would be unfair and unconscionable to cease all funding.

Regards

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**Submission by Triannual funded arts organisations - City of Port Phillip.**

**Group Statement:**

We submit this letter as a cohort of six professional arts organisations currently funded under the City of Port Phillip Arts Organisations Funding Program. We ask that City of Port Phillip's Councillors consider our request that the multi-year funding for arts organisations be included in the new council budget for 2022 and beyond.

Our primary focus of six arts organisations is the delivery of arts, culture and events across a broad representation of diverse communities of artists and non-artists and essential arts workers in the City of Port Phillip. Collectively our organisations share over 150 years of history that has helped shape the City of Port Phillip into a cultural destination proudly celebrated today by strong thriving communities.

We wish to express to the Council the significance of our contributions to the cultural life of the City of Port Phillip and the legacy-building for the arts our organisations have achieved. We collectively employ 1000+ independent artists and arts workers annually, in addition to providing space and resources to keep a world-class arts sector thriving in the City of Port Phillip. It is also important to note that we strive to provide visibility to minority voices in the arts and for people of First Nations with increased job opportunities. In short, our facilitation of arts and culture in the City of Phillip has built a foundation and proposed new models for the continuation of next generations artists to prosper, for without this establishment we become a lesser society.

We have established a home for the arts in the City of Port Phillip where dance, theatre, music, visual arts, disability arts, LGBTQIA+ communities and support for First Nations artists at the very heart of our remit, is celebrated at the highest of esteem. Our organisations boast esteemed Australian artistic leaders that also have renowned international reputations.

Collectively, our organisations deploy a multi-directional and inclusive program that draws a list of Melbourne's most celebrated festivals and events to the City of Port Phillip. We attract thousands of Festival and events audiences to our Melbourne Fringe, Midsumma, Melbourne Festival (now RISING), Melbourne Film Festival, Melbourne Fashion Week, and Melbourne Design Week programming, to name a few. These initiatives and many more equate to direct investment into local business and job creation. Our remit of our arts services feeds directly into the local economy and as a valued source of both industry growth and financial investment.

We know that arts and culture are highly valued by our local community, too. In the federal electorate of Macnamara, in which the City of Port Phillip is located, 94% of residents attend cultural events, with the percentage of ticket buyers for local events being 109% above the national average.<sup>2</sup> People employed across cultural and creative occupations in Macnamara account for 11% of the total electorate workforce, compared to 3.9% of the national workforce.<sup>2</sup>

The City of Port Phillip's draft 2021 – 2031 vision aspires to create a "legacy for generations to come," stating: "We are renowned as a cultural hub from live music to our creative industries ... Port Phillip... [is] admired as a creative hub that continues to evolve and

innovate.” We believe that such a vision can only be achieved if arts and cultural organisations within the City are adequately supported.

To receive the news that Council has proposed to not renew the Organisational Funding Program has left us with a confusing message. While we appreciate the careful work undertaken by Council to create a new budget to support priority areas of investment, it is vital to stress the urgency of our need to sustain our professional cultural services. The immediate impact of the decision to not renew the Organisational Funding Program heavily dampens our future financial sustainability, artistic viability and, in all of our cases, will cause a significant loss to community programming and essential jobs.

While being inclusive, our artists and organisations are professional and operate at an elite level. We strongly advocate for a renewal of the three year Organisational Funding Program to acknowledge our sector’s needs which are not dissimilar to those of professional sports. We are key to the success of the City of Port Phillip’s culture precinct and should be considered in future planning. We also ask Council to consider the local community’s engagement with our sector and organisations, as indicated by the many letters of support we know that you have received.

This is not the time to neglect the good work that our organisations have made.

Despite the enormous challenges of the past year, we stand resolute and spirited to open our doors once again and continue to share our work.

We acknowledge our strengths arise from our shared dedication and commitment to uphold the cultural presence for the City of Port Phillip and independent artist contributions that help sustain our lively community.

We ask that City of Port Phillip’s Councillors consider our request that the multi-year funding for arts organisations be included in the new council budget for 2022 and beyond.

Please see below for more information about our organisations:

**BalletLab/ Temperance Hall statement:**

Temperance Hall is a thriving multipurpose arts venue in South Melbourne. Home to multi award winning dance company Phillip Adams Balletlab and a variety of artistic and cultural programs and events across the double storey complex. Temperance Hall is a unique hub for artists to develop and present innovative new Australian dance and performance works and delivers a program of sector support initiatives which include artist residencies, exhibitions, festival programs, mentoring and hosts a variety of local arts organisations. Our programs demonstrate a wealth of diverse artistic practises, building upon our mission and vision to introduce and ignite new cultural life to South Melbourne, further cementing Temperance Hall as an experimental festival hub on the Southside.

Artistic Director Phillip Adams has been a pivotal voice in that regenerative cultural process, having built a legacy for the autonomy of queer practice in Australia, with Temperance Hall becoming a landmark destination for queer arts practise and presentation. We support and advocate for the unique voices and ambition of the LGBTQIA+ communities through the co-commission of new works and our festival associated programs at Temperance Hall. We are also proud that we have extended our engagement to support senior dance artists and their practice, involve young people through our education programs and support disability arts through partnership projects. In 2019 alone over 3000 people passed through Temperance

Hall's iconic blue doors. It is estimated that ancillary spending in the City of Port Phillip by visitors to Temperance Hall amounts to over \$150,000 annually.

[www.temperancehall.com.au](http://www.temperancehall.com.au)

**Rawcus statement:**

Rawcus is an award winning and critically acclaimed Ensemble of disabled and non-disabled artists. We create and present exceptional theatre shows and offer inclusive arts experiences for diverse people. Rawcus has been based in the City of Port Phillip for 21 years supporting diverse people to participate and contribute to the vibrant cultural life of our community and activate public spaces. We provide employment for local artists and arts workers and support local business through choosing them as our preferred suppliers. The loss of the multi-year funding will mean a loss of employment for disabled and non-disabled artists and the inclusive programming with local artists, participants and audiences.

[www.rawcus.org.au](http://www.rawcus.org.au)

**Australian Tapestry Workshop statement:**

Based in the City of Port Phillip for 45 years, the Australian Tapestry Workshop (ATW) is an international centre of excellence for contemporary tapestries, created in collaboration with artists and architects. We offer a rich public program that engages and supports creativity to bring tapestry weaving, exhibitions, talks, cultural exchanges, residencies, competitions and publications to cultural tourists, school groups, and the general public through visitation and digital programming. Through training programs, classes and artists residencies, we share knowledge and pass on unique and specialist skills.

Our far-reaching reputation and connections enable us to deliver a local, national, and international program within the COPP. The ATW draws audiences who contribute to the local economy through spending on hospitality and retail. Including high calibre guests such as Sydney Biennale, Artistic Director [REDACTED], Gold Medal winning architect [REDACTED], philanthropist [REDACTED] AC, Sir [REDACTED] Australian Institute of Architects National President [REDACTED]. In 2019, we estimate that visitors to the ATW (5038 attendees) have contributed nearly \$200,000 to the local economy. We also partner with local businesses as preferred suppliers. We enhance the City's liveability with residents having access to our cultural programs, which promote civic participation and learning. Annual COPP funding enabled the ATW to plan and fundraise to deliver our ambitious, creative and strategic community-driven programming. Recognising support from the COPP on grant applications and requests for in-kind support had a significant impact on our ability to gain the support and trust of the local philanthropic community. Recent programming highlights that would not have come to fruition without COPP annual investment include;

- Bringing tabla master Pandit Ashis Sengupta (India), shakuhachi master, Reison Kuroda (Japan), mezzo soprano Angela Cortez (Singapore) to perform 'WOVEN SONG' with Indigenous soprano/composer Deborah Cheetham AO at Asia Triennial of Performing Arts 2020.
- Bringing Chilean contemporary textile artist Ana Teresa Barboza to stay in the COPP for an artist's residency in 2019.
- Exhibitions and accompanying public programs: 2019; 'Place Makers', 'Millefleur', 2020; 'Linda Britten: Woven Song Couture', 'Make the World Again', 2021; 'Weaving Futures'.

- Hands-on workshops Batik-tulis with Indonesian artist Dias Prabu, Somalian finger weaving with Muhubo Sulimen, jewellery with Lisa Waup, braided rag-rugs with Ilka White, finger crocheting with Indonesian artist Mulyana and Spanish knotting with Paula do Prado.

The loss of COPP multi-year funding will mean ATW employee cuts and put a further demand on the team due to increased administration time spent on securing smaller grants. It will decrease the opportunities we can offer to artists – many who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Culturally/Linguistically Diverse, LGBTQI+ or having a disability. It will negatively impact our ability to provide free/subsidised public programming and present them on the weekend.

[www.austapestry.com.au](http://www.austapestry.com.au)

### **Red Stitch Actor's Theatre statement:**

Established in 2001, Red Stitch Actors' Theatre performs contemporary Australian plays and award-winning new writing from around the world in our intimate St Kilda venue. We play a vital role in the development and presentation of new Australian works through our unique INK playwriting program, and offer opportunities for theatre-makers at all stages of their careers to hone and develop their craft.

The ensemble of actors and creatives who comprise our company endeavour to produce the best in contemporary playwriting from around the world, to enrich the craft of acting and script development in Australia, and to sustain a unique organisational model – one that puts artists at the centre of its practice. With a national reputation for the quality of our work, Red Stitch remains at the forefront of contemporary Australian theatre practice.

Red Stitch attracts annual audiences of around 15,000, engaging approximately 200 artists and arts workers each year. We estimate our impact on the local economy to be around \$400,000 per annum.

Loss of funding will impact our capacity to deliver activities including our acclaimed INK program, which develops and produces original new Australian work, with many world premieres taking place in St Kilda. As support from COPP allows us to leverage funding from other sources, there will be negative flow-on effects. The administrative burden of replacing this funding will be extremely challenging, and the cuts are likely to cause loss of employment opportunities for artists and arts workers.

[www.redstitch.net](http://www.redstitch.net)

### **Theatre Works statement:**

Theatre Works is a company and a community located in a historic Parish Hall in St. Kilda, Victoria. For 40 years, Theatre Works has been a vital national incubator of high-quality Australian theatre. An adventurous presenter, Theatre Works unearths and provides a platform for hidden voices and unheard stories from our contemporary community. As one of the few arts organisations that actively seek diverse, independent artists and nurtures creative career development, Theatre Works is an essential part of the national theatre ecology. Theatre Works plays a vital role in the independent theatre ecology of Melbourne. Our audiences come from our local neighbourhood and from across the wider metropolitan area.

Theatre Works is an independently constituted organisation. We believe there is power in being independent and our longevity is something that we should celebrate and acknowledge. We survive and thrive on the creative resilience of artists and our communities.

The loss of this funding will directly result in the loss of at least two core staff positions and will have further flow on effect in our reduced capacity to deliver projects that create work for artists and to provide vital opportunities for our community to reconnect with culture and society through artistic and creative opportunities.

### **2019 Attendance Statistics**

26 Productions (16 World Premieres) supporting 352 Artists / 260 Volunteers

Ticket Sales in COPP 13,396

1 Regional tour to 13 regional venues / 1 international tour (NY & LA) Attendance 3,855

*Economic Return on Investment \$465,777*

### **2021 Attendance Statistics as of 21.05.2021**

\*\*Note we are operating on 1/3 Capacity under covid restrictions

4978 patrons (ticket sales), 1356 Booths purchased.

16 productions presented, 13 sold out shows

3700 Café customers

600 Monthly Saturday Market day attendances

Overall attendance 8798

*Economic Return on Investment \$237,546*

For your reference, our 2019 annual report <https://bit.ly/3ig1PoZ>

For your reference, our 2020 annual report <https://bit.ly/2QzEwyh>

Website: [www.theatreworks.org.au](http://www.theatreworks.org.au)

### **The Torch statement:**

Since 2011 The Torch has been its *Indigenous Arts in Prisons and Community (IAPC)* program to Indigenous offenders and ex-offenders in Victoria. The program assists artists to reconnect with culture, earn income from art sales, foster new networks and to pursue educational and creative industry avenues upon their release.

For 10 consecutive years The Torch held its main annual exhibition **Confined** at the Carlisle Street Arts Space. The core audience for this project is our major supporter group of residents and workers connected to the City of Port Phillip. Exhibitions by The Torch have facilitated in selling over \$2,000,000 worth of artworks, license fees and commissions for artists engaged in its program. The Torch's gallery in St Kilda is the only space of its kind in Australia that exclusively represents Indigenous offenders and ex-offenders and allows them to commercially sell their artwork with 100% of the sales proceeds going directly back to them.

All Torch participants (approx. 480) are the most marginalised in our society. Each participant is Indigenous and has lived experience of intergenerational poverty, trauma and display the effects of cultural disconnection. The Torch champions access and equity at all

levels, but importantly gives vital economic opportunities to those marginalised by wealth disparity. The Torch embraces participants as artists rather than ex-offenders, supporting them to reconnect to community and create paths away from prison. An independent evaluation of the program revealed that 92% of In-Community participants confirmed that being part of the program helped them stay out of the justice system.

By publicly celebrating the voices of our artists, we aim to break down barriers and raise awareness in the broader community. Our exhibitions provide Indigenous offenders with an opportunity to connect with the community and to highlight the issue of over-representation of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system. The artists represent a broad range of Indigenous language groups and cultures from across Australia and their cultural diversity is celebrated through the rich visual range of works on show, enriching the local community and enhancing the City of Port Phillip as an outstanding and vibrant arts hub.

In 2019, around 5,000 people visited The Torch's **Confined** exhibition and during that year another 1,000 bought artwork with the majority visiting our gallery in St Kilda to collect and browse other works. We estimate our impact on the local economy to be around \$240,000 per annum.

Loss of CoPP multi-year funding will impact our capacity to deliver exhibitions, reducing artwork sales for our artists whilst also diminishing their prospects in gaining industry skills experience when employed at these events. The loss of the CoPP funding will also reduce permanent employment opportunities for artists at The Torch with 25% of our permanent workforce currently consisting of artists who have successfully transitioned through the IAPC program. Replacing the lost funding will be burdensome on an already stretched fundraising department. <https://thetorch.org.au/>

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**CITATIONS:**

<sup>1</sup> [The Economic Impact of the City of Melbourne's Investment in the Arts](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Australia Council for the Arts: Electorate Profiles - Macnamara](#)

**CBR-215****Submission for project consideration in Council Plan 2021-2031****Conversion of Dickens Street Extension from cul-de-sac car parking to green open space for local community**

I seek council to consider the funding for re-purposing the West end of the Dickens St Extension between Brighton Road and Chapel Street from a cul-de-sac street end into a green open space for the local community to use.

Especially been locked out accessing the oval on school grounds during lockdown last year it became apparent how important green spaces are for the health of the community in Balaclava. The current purpose of street car parking facilities mainly used during school drop-off and pick-up times and hardly used on the weekends is under-utilised and can be easily converted into a much needed, shaded green space linking Balaclava - poor in open green spaces - with St Kilda Botanical Gardens and Elwood which enjoys a much higher density of street tree canopy.

The arguments are:

- re-purposing under-utilised public space
- reducing car parking facilities for school drop-offs and pick-ups to encourage active transport options for students who's longest way to school is max. 1.2 km (as per current school zone) as part of CoPP's Move, Connect and Live Strategy 2018-2028
- delivering open space to areas under served by public open space as part Public Space Strategy (p. 33 Balaclava/St.Kilda East "This neighbourhood has a diverse community, with a higher proportion of young children and young workers and a lower proportion of older person and persons living on their own, compared to the rest of the City. We need new open spaces in this neighbourhood, and the existing spaces should provide the opportunity for children's play, as well as a mix of uses for young families and young adults.")
- using existing mature tree canopy to provide respite from summer heat for humans and animals rather than cars
- extending the proposed biodiversity corridor along Bothwell Street including the green space wedged between Bothwell Street, Nightingale St and Chapel St to continue along Dickens St to link the corridor with the open space on school ground

The benefits for the community are:

- community services “triangle” between Carlisle Street, Chapel Street and Brighton Road strengthened with a shared outdoor space to gather and connect
- multi-purpose summer outdoor activities in the shade of dense tree canopies
- re-claiming land for the local community which has been lost being dissected by two major roads

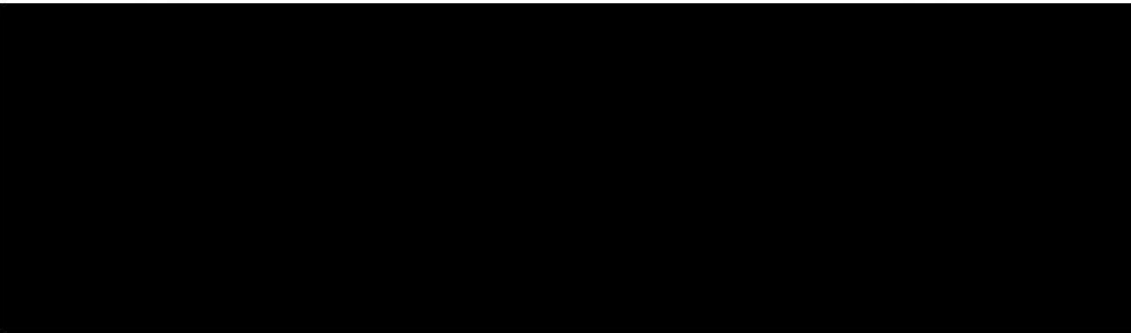
Council’s Public Space Strategy

Looking at Map 6 Neighbourhood actions for Balaclava/St Kilda East on page 34 of the Public Space Strategy it appears City of Port Phillip is struggling to find opportunities to provide new open space to the area; Coles carpark redevelopment and indicative hatching between Inkerman St, Hotham St, Alma Rd and Orrong Rd are the only two proposals to provide new open space.

I believe shortening the cul-de-sac of Dickens Street to create a new green open space for the Balaclava neighbourhood is an overlooked opportunity for council to implement their Public Space Strategy.

Summary

I call on council to consider the funding for the conversion of Dickens Street to be integrated into Councils Plan 2021-2031.





## BEST Submission: Draft Budget and Council Plan 2021

We seek the following:

- **Strategic Response:** A clear and visible financial commitment is needed to meet the aspirations of **the Carlisle Precinct Structure Plan** and the associated **Carlisle Street Supermarket Precinct Guidelines** in that area.
- Additional resources are essential if the Council is serious about the implementation of the Carlisle Street Supermarket Precinct carpark area strategy and a Masterplan is essential to guide the development of this area. Studies need to be finalized and serious money needs to be allocated if this aspect of the Strategy is to be completed.
- **The Balaclava area needs to have projects specified to meet** the Greening Port Phillip Strategy and canopy cover targets in line with guidance from DELWP. Priority should be given to address our main pedestrian walkways including Woodstock Street and Nelson Streets.
- The **Public Spaces Strategy** is in urgent need of completion as it is clear that all public spaces including roads in Balaclava/Ripponlea and East St Kilda need careful review to maximize their efficiency and public realm capacity to respond to a hotter climate. Responses need to include clear walking paths, cycling, canopy cover and water use and flood mitigation and open space provision.
- **Budget to meet targets for Open Space** A Budget process is needed to ensure that the area east of Brighton Road can meet **open space/public spaces targets** of distance/accessibility/quantity and quality. Investment is required either from general revenue, land sales in the area and/ or the Resort (Open Spaces developer contributions) Fund to ensure timely and accessible open space for its citizens.

### Specific Items are needed

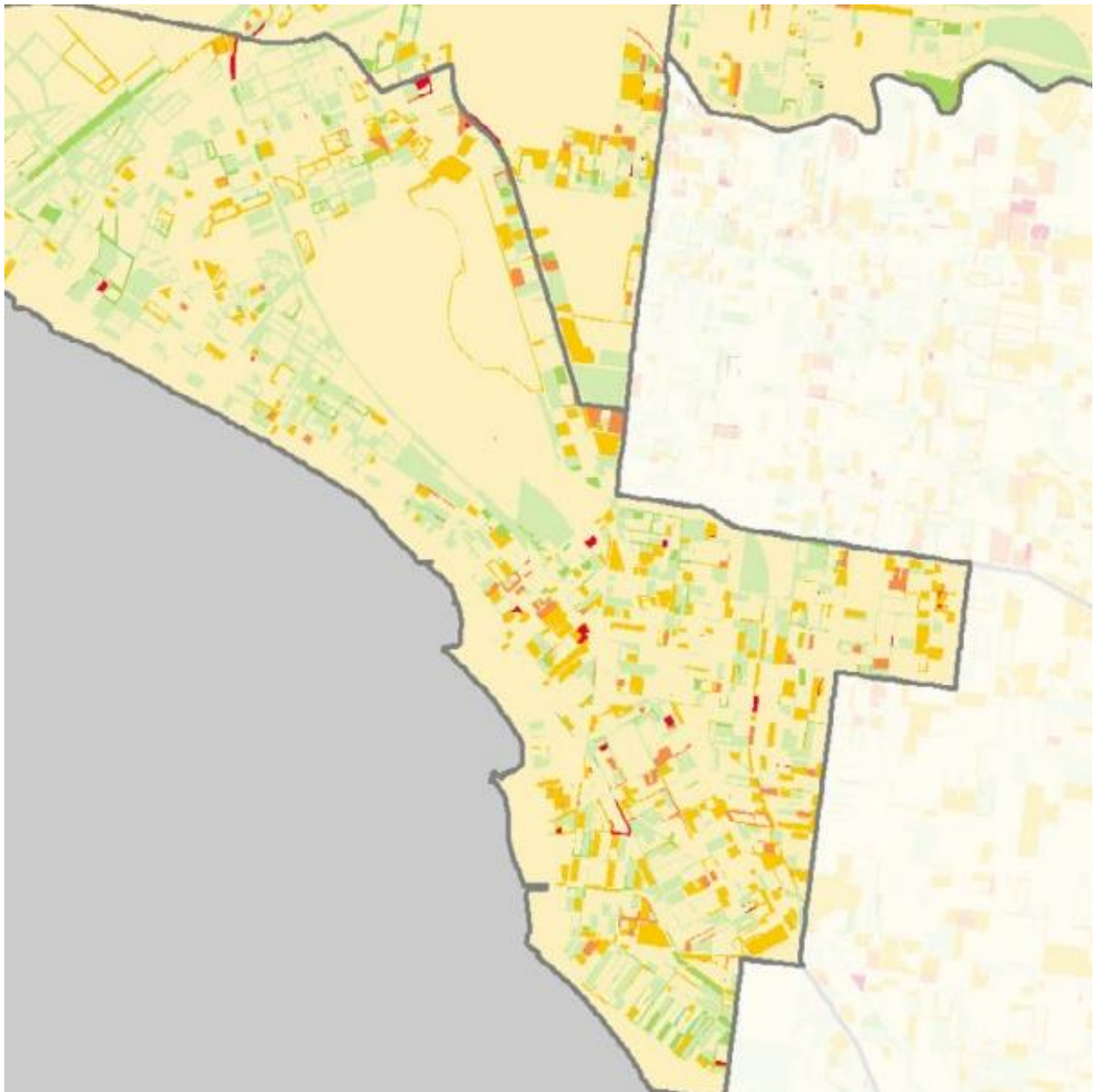
- \$60,000 allocated to scope the proposal for the **Green Line bio-link** between the major parks servicing the people in this area and finalizing at least one section of this proposal to the design stage eg Lyndon Street. This would go some way to recognizing and redressing the dearth of capital investment in the Ripponlea section of the city.
- Extension of the proposed Bothwell Street Bio link into a properly planned and executed safe area near the St Kilda Primary Park incorporating the **Dickens Street Extension area**.
- **A safe crossing at Nightingale Street** is still outstanding and was fully documented as part of the Balaclava Walk 2008. This walk needs to be completed.
- Maintain the arrangement with the National Trust for community access to the **Rippon Lea Estate. This is by far the best deal the Council can offer its community.**
- Reinstate the proposal for a pocket park in St Kilda East (Lansdowne Street)
- Review tree planting on Brighton Road – yes the Council is still responsible for this.

## Further Issues

The Draft 2021-2022 (and beyond) Budget does not meet the fairness test. The overarching issues and supporting strategies are discussed in the following sections.

### 1. State Wide information on Urban Greening (DELWP)

Satellite imagery of COPP between 2013-2018 from DELWP shows an overall decline in the tree canopy cover south of Fitzroy Street and especially in the Balaclava area. Other studies show either low or no vegetation in the Balaclava area, demonstrating that significant investment is needed.



DELWP map showing the change in tree canopy cover between 2013 and 2018



City of Port Phillip achieves a 3.0 rating in this scorecard from Nature Conservancy

## 2. City of Port Phillip Strategic Documents all support action to green Port Phillip and action on public realm opportunities

Strategic Statements support this including:

- The Carlisle Street Area Structure plan 2008
- Greening Port Phillip 2010
- The Carlisle Street Supermarket Precinct Guidelines 2011
- All CoPP Climate Response Statements including Act and Adapt 2018-2029

In August 2020 the City released its draft Public Space Strategy showing that the area east of Brighton Road has a severe and long term open space deficiency of 5% open space compared to other areas such as 31% in Albert Park/Middle Park.

Over this 13 year period some small and localized projects have been achieved which stand in contrast to the visible improvements in Port Melbourne and other areas north of Fitzroy Street (See mapping of greening above). Below are some positive outcomes in our area:

- Around Carlisle Street the Balaclava Walk has been partially completed however the area map shows it as an area of rapid tree canopy decline (red) with tree removal outpacing replacement. Further trees are slated for removal with the redevelopment of the Marlborough Street carpark.
- Replanting has occurred along Chapel Street and Inkerman Street, median planting in Marysville Street, in-street planting in Elm Street and replacement planting in some other streets with few exceptions however they are mainly in the least effective zone - footpaths.
- A small improvement in water retention has been implemented in Gibbs Street and complementary de-paving in this area. Once again however failing to maximize the open space potential.
- A current proposal to provide a Woody Meadows outcome along Bothwell Street.

### 3. Port Phillip Council Plan 2021-22 Vol 2, Capital Works Program: expenditure per capita by area

Figures published in the draft reveal that Balaclava, St Kilda East and Ripponlea suffer from a significant and long standing lack of investment in its urban infrastructure with no expressed intention by the Council to redress this parlous situation:

Area	Capital investment per capita
Ripponlea	\$27
Balaclava and St Kilda East	\$179
South Melbourne	\$534
Middle Park and Albert Park	\$589
Elwood	\$595
St Kilda Rd	\$812
St Kilda and St Kilda West	\$901
Port Melbourne	\$1,268
Montague (part of Capital City Zone)	N/A

### 4. Recent proposal/decisions and Budget funding proposals further disadvantage Ripponlea, Balaclava and St Kilda East

- The recent decision to sell Camden Street carpark purchased with traders' levies only specifies car parking spaces and toilets as developers' obligation in the sale. This contradicts the Guidelines for general amenity improvements to guide Council and developers in responding to the Carlisle Precinct Master Plan and the adopted Guidelines from 2011.
- The current budget proposal to withdraw from a recent agreement with the Rippon Lea Estate which has allowed residents of St Kilda free entry to this Park in an area which has very little open space in proximity to its residents.
- Either lack of money or lack of vision and the current lack of an endorsed Public Spaces Strategy provides a vacuum which leads to multiple opportunities for property purchase being missed (e.g. Duke Street properties adjacent to the Library)
- Failure for the Budget to fund the proposed pocket park in the Lansdowne Street area – a very small incremental improvement in an area with no open space at all.
- Yet another commitment to cement our few remaining permeable laneways.
- A less than optimal 'black spot' outcome proposed for the Alma Road Alexandra<sup>1</sup> street intersection – heavy on engineering light on design.
- Failure to address our public realm along main Streets–Brighton Road is in a disgraceful condition whilst CoPP has confirmed its remaining responsibility for tree planting.

<sup>1</sup> Garden entry at Rippon Lea restarted on Nov 4<sup>th</sup> 2020 **with 3,192 Port Phillip visitor entries** recorded to the end of March 2021 and 1978 registered families or 4971 people. Previous figures at the end of January 21 was 1587 registered families or 4075 people. Demonstrating widespread interest and use of the Gardens and a pathway of improved use despite lack of advertising and information about the program (Figures provided by the National Trust)

CBR-219

## PORT PHILLIP EMERGENCY CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK

The Draft Council Plan and Budget reaffirms some major commitments and restores funding for some key programs which were cut in last year's Covid Budget. However, the Plan doesn't pass the fundamental requirement of addressing the climate emergency which Council itself declared in 2019, and which was reaffirmed this year by the incoming Council.

One of PECAN's key requests has been that Council address the sustainability issues in a stronger and more focused way by formulating a Climate Emergency Action Plan. It hasn't done that in this Draft Plan, instead producing a Climate emergency response which summarizes Council action across a range of sustainability programs, but doesn't articulate a strategic vision, targets, timeframes and budgets in key program areas, especially community emissions, public space, integrated Blue Green Infrastructure, and education/communication. It is only a 3-page document, but page 3 outlines the programs not being continued, those continuing but with reduced capacity, and programs which will not be delivered; disappointing statements in a Climate emergency response.

### POSITIVE MEASURES

- Support for EcoCentre redevelopment and maintaining operational funding.
- Increased funding for Greening Port Phillip
- Support for Elsternwick Park during this 4-year Council term
- Continued commitment to reduction of Council's own emissions, electric vehicle infrastructure, sustainability as criterion for procurement of goods and services
- Increased funding for stormwater harvesting
- Importantly, a rate increase of 1.5% to sustain investment across council programs both in this year's budget and through its compounding effects into the future.

### PROGRAMS NOT ADEQUATELY FUNDED

PECAN's key priorities are first, the reduction of community emissions currently about 2 million tons of carbon dioxide annually, 80% of which comes from industrial and commercial sectors, mainly in Fishermans Bend and Port Melbourne. Our second priority is the provision of more open space. Both these priorities have been supported by Council's own deliberative panel in February this year, independent submissions to Have Your Say, and our webinars in 2020.

#### Community Emissions

The Sustainable City Community Action Plan (SCCAP) finishes this year but there has been no attempt to replace it with a program broadly directed at reducing community emissions. The Climate

# PECAN Submission to the Draft Council Plan and Budget

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emergency response does not provide funding for the development of a Power Purchase Agreement, which was one of our major priorities in our original submission, and which if well implemented could reduce these emissions by up to 10% and provide a model for other local companies. Instead, it proposes an advisory service to industrial enterprises (subject to their interest), but no funding. And it proposes testing options for energy efficiency measures for renters and apartment dwellers, in conjunction with other Councils, but again there is no new funding.

## Open Space

For open space, the Budget provides funding for many upgrades and improvements in all the areas already well served, but in the areas most wanting, St Kilda East, Balaclava and Ripponlea, only one small project in Alma Park is funded, and funding for resident access to Rippon Lea itself has been earmarked for removal (\$50,000), despite heavy usage by Port Phillip residents. Across Port Phillip the average open space is 17%, ranging from 31% in Albert Park/Middle Park to 5% in St Kilda East, Balaclava and Ripponlea. Open space capital works this year total \$11m and are projected to be \$15m next year, but there's no provision for new open space in the neglected areas described above.

Funding we sought for the PECAN Green Line proposal for a new walking/cycling track between Alma Park and Elsternwick Park (<http://pecan.org.au/projects/>) has been overlooked, without even funding for a scoping study for the first sections either between Alma Park and Inkerman St or the Lyndon St pocket park. And funding for access to Rippon Lea Gardens for Port Phillip residents is proposed to be curtailed.

The draft Public Space Strategy was released last year but provided no measures aimed at addressing the imbalance across Brighton Rd. An effective Strategy must begin to address these deficiencies; without a program of planned property purchases, no long term remediation can occur. The Draft Vision for Open Space is quite explicit in its requirements:

*Access to upgraded, expanded and well-maintained public and outdoor spaces for people of all ages and abilities to visit, in line with our 10-year Public Space Strategy (once adopted by Council), prioritised within available budgets each year.*

*Opportunities for people to innovatively use and connect with public space including parklets, play streets and other forms of activation (Draft Council Plan, Vol 1, p39)*

## Community Education and Engagement

Regrettably, the Climate emergency response outlines a number of community education, outreach and engagement programs that will either be reduced or not be continued, the combined effect of which is to virtually remove Sustainability from any meaningful connection with community. There doesn't appear to have been any evaluation of the closed SCCAP programs which may be valuable with some alterations and improvements - Smart Solutions for Business for example. There appears to be very minimal capacity for participation in community events by provision of speakers, participation in workshops etc. Does this include staff training or collaborative membership in joining with other organizations?

# PECAN Submission to the Draft Council Plan and Budget

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The Sustainable Business Network is to be discontinued, but it seems to us to be an important avenue towards programs included in the Climate emergency response - for example the advisory service to industrial businesses. But no staff capacity is being provided for this activity, nor for the proposed partnership with other Councils to investigate renewable energy options for renters and apartment dwellers. Other services being cut include any support for community greening activities, community education and development programs like the Enviro Leaders training program, which has been important over a long period and has a long waiting list of people trying to join. Any in-person events for business or community are also precluded. The Sustainability Department itself will now have only 8 staff members, less than 1% of Council's overall staffing.

How does this align with Council's Climate emergency response?

It appears that Council intends to vacate any leadership role or responsibility across the Port Phillip community in respect of Sustainability.

## OUR PROPOSALS

### Community Emissions

With the conclusion of SCCAP, a vacuum has opened in Council's strategic position concerning community emissions and community engagement more generally. Yet Vol 1 of the Draft Plan makes clear, under both Challenges and Vision sections, that community emissions are responsibilities of Council: *Climate change requires... changing how we deliver our services, and working with our community and partners to mitigate and adapt to climate change* (p25). And *The City is actively mitigating and adapting to climate change* (p44). Act and Adapt also contains numerous references to mitigating community emissions in Sections 7, 16, 17, 18 and 19.

PECAN considers that reducing industrial and commercial emissions is important for Port Phillip, and while the proposed advisory service to industrial businesses could represent an initial step, we recommend that it needs to be progressed to develop a PPA over this Council term, with development funding attached (1 FTE officer), rather than diverting staff time from community outreach and education programs. This officer could also progress the energy efficiency program for renters and apartment dwellers.

### Public Space Strategy

We recommend more investment and specific commitments to open space/greening projects needed in the areas with just 5% of open space, i.e., areas east of Nepean Highway: St Kilda East, Balaclava, Ripponlea and part of St Kilda, with about 25,000 residents forming nearly 25% of Port Phillip's population. With the Public Space Strategy yet to be finalized it is important that a concrete plan for adding new open space is included, using property reserves to the value of \$10m for appropriate property purchases during the term of the current Council Plan.

### Open Space

We also recommend a scoping study for a first stage of the Green Line proposal, either from Alma Park to Inkerman St or the Lyndon St pocket park. With additional open space in East St Kilda/Balaclava

# PECAN Submission to the Draft Council Plan and Budget

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requiring property acquisitions, the Green Line provides a realizable opportunity to generate useable public space without the expense or the time required for property purchases. There is strong support for the project in Glen Eira, and undertaking the scoping study would provide a strong signal that Council is serious about provision of additional open space in the City's most disadvantaged areas.

## **Continued access to Rippon Lea Estate**

We recommend maintenance of \$50,000 for access for residents of Port Phillip, and possible extension to other National Trust properties.

## **Elsternwick Park**

We recommend continued support for Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve and flood mitigation during this Council term, and continued Elster Creek partnership (of Melbourne Water and the four Councils) to take action on flooding of Elwood and surrounding areas, including the Reserve.

## **Climate Emergency Action Plan**

We believe there is a continuing need for a Climate Emergency Action Plan which consolidates a whole of Council response, promotes better community understanding of the climate emergency, and reframes Council staff and programs away from the business-as-usual stance. And we call on Council to develop such a Plan to guide action on the climate emergency.

## **Community Engagement**

We recommend maintenance of the community engagement and in-person events programs including the Enviro Leaders program, the Port Phillip Fresh Food Network at the EcoCentre, rooftop solar, Sustainable Business Networks, and continuing involvement in educational events and workshops.

## **Community Education - Incorporating the human dimension of the climate challenge in the top level statements of the Council plan**

The community education, outreach and engagement programs the Council currently undertakes, but which face cuts are in fact ways of addressing a dimension of the climate emergency challenge that has not been articulated in the climate challenge section of the Plan (p 25 Vol 1) but could easily be spelt out in that section. A key issue for Council is the very uneven understanding of the challenge of climate change in the community and the capacity of Port Phillip citizens to act on the climate emergency. Indeed, helping citizens understand the significance of practical measures to reduce emissions, to green Port Phillip, to mitigate flooding, to increase active transport, to expand community gardening and so on, is the other face of undertaking these activities. It is this understanding that grows with people's participation in Council supported activities that becomes a virtuous circle for mobilising Port Phillip citizens to act on climate. This unevenness in understanding requires an educational community engagement strategy best not described as 'behaviour change' but as deepening citizens' practical environmental awareness and action.

## **Revised Council Vision Statement**

We recommend that a statement about the educational challenge of climate change be incorporated in the Section on The Climate Change Challenge, providing a narrative for the



# PECAN Submission to the Draft Council Plan and Budget

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educational/communication support and strategies the Council currently undertakes and should plan to undertake.

This missing perspective should also be included in a slightly revised Council Vision statement, below:

## **Proudly Port Phillip: A liveable and vibrant City that enhances the wellbeing of our community**

A decade from now...

We recognise the continued living culture of the traditional owners of the land, the Yaluk-ut Weelam Clan of the Boonwurrung and their current elders and leaders of the Boonwurrung people and acknowledge both the harm caused and the foresight of others who have come before us.

We celebrate Port Phillip as a city of many distinct places, connected by the common threads of safety, inclusion and wellbeing so everyone can live their best life. We have a well-designed and planned city where the natural environment and heritage and character of the built form of our City is enhanced and protected.

We are renowned as a cultural hub, from live music to our creative industries. This creativity drives music, exhibitions and events which delight residents and encourage visitors to keep returning.

Our more diverse local economy enjoys greater protection from financial shocks and new investment and industries within our City are generating jobs and prosperity.

We have a range of accessible and active transport choices that make it easy for everyone to move around our City. Visiting lively shopping and dining destinations or accessing public transport is all possible within a 10 to 15-minute walk from our neighbourhoods.

Our health and wellbeing are enriched by having quality public open spaces close to home. We can visit these spaces easily to enjoy quiet moments or more active pursuits with our friends and families.

The beauty and biodiversity of our coastal, bay, park, waterway and inland environments are protected and enhanced for future generations to enjoy. We recognise we face a climate emergency and we have played our part in are committed to promoting and addressing environmental sustainability, from tackling climate change, including through reducing greenhouse gas emissions, greening Port Phillip, mitigating sea level rise and minimising flooding risks.

We recognise that the challenges we face, both environmental and economic, can best be addressed through the actions of a community which understands these challenges and works together to address them. Council takes responsibility for leading the community towards a more sustainable future.

We are proud that our participation in civic life means Port Phillip has retained its unique character and heritage while being admired as a creative hub and leader in environmental stewardship that continues to evolve and innovate. We know our voice is heard and helps deliver meaningful outcomes.

We have a local Council that strives to deliver services in the most efficient, transparent and equitable way and takes responsibility for assisting the community to understand the challenges we face. Our

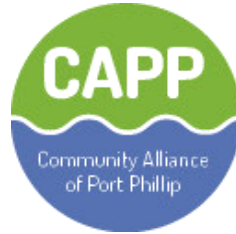
## PECAN Submission to the Draft Council Plan and Budget

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Council provides strong financial stewardship, is responsible and works hard to balance meeting community expectations ~~while being fiscally responsible and diversifying revenue streams with minimising costs for our community.~~

This is the minimum we hope for our community in 10 years' time – we hope to achieve much more.

This is our legacy for generations to come.



**COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF PORT PHILLIP  
PO BOX 1105 ST KILDA SOUTH VIC 3182**

**SUBMISSION - DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2021/2031 AND BUDGET 2021/2022**

**THE RATES**

The Community Alliance of Port Phillip (CAPP) supports the proposed rate increase of 1.5%. It is a very modest increase that is essential to maintain and where possible improve services that our community relies upon. This minimal increase acknowledges the financial difficulties that many residents and businesses have experienced due to the pandemic in 2020.

In this submission CAPP will focus on a number of priorities that Council should consider when finalising its Plan and Budget for 2021/22.

**SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Draft Plan & Budget recognises the challenges we face with housing affordability in the City of Port Phillip, with less than 1% of private rental housing currently affordable for low-income households and over 1000 people identified as homeless (Vol 1, p 22).

CAPP is pleased that the policy settings of Council continue to be to increase the proportion of social housing over the coming council term and to address issues of homelessness. Council's declaration in 2020 of a Social and Economic Emergency as a result of COVID-19 and continuing recognition of the need for recovery measures in response to the emergency in this Draft Plan & Budget are welcome.

***The Victorian Government's \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build announcement presents a critical moment in time for addressing housing affordability, social housing and homelessness in Port Phillip.***

The Draft Plan identifies that this:

*"... will provide incentives for developers to include affordable housing within new developments. This also presents opportunities for Council to facilitate the renewal of existing housing sites to increase much needed affordable housing for a diverse and inclusive community. " (Vol 1, p27)*

More than this, the Big Housing Build program also calls for partnerships with local government and community housing associations to participate in ambitious programs of social housing development. The City of Port Phillip has been a local government leader investing in social housing well before many municipalities, so the City is in a good position to make the most of partnering with the State Government on proposals for new social housing developments in Port Phillip. We also have strong and active community housing providers in Port Phillip.

CAPP is therefore disappointed not to see a major commitment identified in the Draft Plan to use some of the City's considerable property and cash reserves to mount a serious proposal for

additional or matched funding from the State Government to enable appropriate property purchases for re-development as social housing in Port Phillip, in partnership with our community housing providers.

CAPP recommends that the Final Council Plan include such a clearly articulated strategy, enabling officers to enter into discussions with the State Government with the financial backing of Council in order to maximise the possibility of Port Phillip benefitting from Big Housing Build support.

The Draft Plan & Budget summarises Council activities that contribute towards addressing the economic emergency, (declared in 2020) and notes \$1.4million of spending on Housing and Homelessness in 2021/22 (*Economically Prosperous Port Phillip* Statement, p 2). This is identified as 'Business as Usual' and 'Operating' expenditure, with no capital expenditure committed. This is disappointing for the reasons outlined above in relation to the Big Housing Build: **NOW** is the time to be making a bold plan to address the need for more affordable housing in Port Phillip when State \$\$ are on the table and Council is committed to addressing the social and economic emergency to ensure our city and its people recover well from the pandemic, especially the most vulnerable.

CAPP seeks further information to be included in the final Plan & Budget on major activity in relation to social housing, currently not transparent in the Draft:

- The allocation of Council's annual \$500,000 contribution for social housing over this Council term (i.e. as we understand it, \$4million is committed over the next four years to partnering with the State Government on the permanent Common Ground proposal in Wellington St, being \$2million already in Council's Housing Reserve, plus \$2million over the four years 2021-2024);
- Pro-active partnering with the Port Phillip Housing Trust (PPHT) and Housing First; i.e. to "*facilitate PPHA (now Housing First) to identify existing PPHT assets that can be redeveloped to increase their housing yield*" (as identified in *In Our Backyard: Growing Affordable Housing in Port Phillip 2015-2025*, page 25).

CAPP supports the Common Ground Proposal as an important approach to providing permanent housing with the appropriate supports for addressing rough sleeping and homelessness locally, and this project should be clearly identified in the Final Plan.

Equally important is delivering on the strategic framework of *In Our Backyard* that addresses redevelopment of existing social housing properties in Port Phillip to increase social housing yield and improve amenities, especially those held in perpetuity in the Port Phillip Housing Trust.

### Relevant proposed indicators

The Draft Plan & Budget proposes two indicators in relation to housing and homelessness:

- Number of people sleeping rough
- Social housing as a proportion of total housing stock

CAPP supports these indicators and would like to see targets specified and included in the Final Plan, in order to measure progress over the Council term.

### Planning measures

CAPP strongly supports Council continuing to advocate to the State Government for the introduction of mandatory 'inclusionary zoning' and strengthening of 'voluntary housing agreements' to increase housing delivered through the planning system that is affordable to very low, low, and moderate-income households, as outlined in the Draft Plan & Budget, (Vol1, p.37).

In the interim, we ask Council to make guidelines available for developers encouraging them to consider and include affordable housing in new developments in the city, as other councils have already done. (For example, see City of Casey: [https://www.mav.asn.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/24803/Affordable\\_Housing\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_Developers\\_PRINT.pdf](https://www.mav.asn.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/24803/Affordable_Housing_Fact_Sheet_Developers_PRINT.pdf))

## **CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING SERVICES**

Council has a proud history of supporting early learning and childcare services through the operation of its own five high quality centres and providing facilities and funding for eight community managed childcare facilities. In addition Council provides facilities for four kindergarten centres and subsidies for ten kindergarten centres.

National and international research has clearly established that children benefit significantly from high quality care and education in the preschool years and it is especially important for vulnerable and disadvantaged children. The benefits have an enduring impact on future learning and development. Over the years successive councils in Port Phillip and its predecessors have recognised this in their policies and budgets.

National public debate has recently focused on the economics of access to affordable high quality care and early education for pre school children to enable women's greater participation in the workforce.

It is therefore surprising and disappointing that in a bid to find savings in the budget that Council proposes to make cuts to childcare subsidies and increase costs for families.

In the community managed childcare sector Council is proposing to reduce the Quality Subsidy from 5% to 4% of total educator salary and wages expenditure and training costs. This subsidy is essential to maintain the employment of qualified and experienced educators as well as their ongoing professional development. Improving child to staff ratios and provision of teaching resources are assisted through this subsidy. Reduction in this subsidy will impact significantly on the care and educational experience of young children at these services. The only option will be to increase fees to make up the shortfall. Increased childcare costs at a time of low wage growth and families facing the impact of COVID affected employment is another financial burden and will negatively impact on women's workforce participation.

The argument put forward in the budget papers that the Quality Subsidy has already achieved its purpose and therefore a reduction will not impact service quality is illogical. Wages of the highly qualified and experienced staff still need to be paid and professional development is ongoing.

It should also be noted that the community managed childcare centres are also facing an increase in the Infrastructure and Maintenance levies that must be paid to Council. This further impacts the operating costs and fee structures.

CAPP strongly urges Council not to pursue the reduction of the Quality Subsidy.

The budget also identifies a 2.6% increase in fees for families using Council operated centres. For the same reasons outlined above CAPP urges Council not to proceed with this increase.

## WALKING AND CYCLING

The number of people cycling and walking in the City of Port Phillip - whether for exercise or as sustainable transport - has increased dramatically - and it continues to do so. A big bump in this activity during COVID19 lockdowns saw residents seek safe and family-friendly local physical exercise en masse.

But the cycling boom is also a product of longterm increases to urban density in the inner city and community need for active recreation space outside of dwelling complexes. Residents are making conscious choices to reduce unsustainable travel by motor vehicles, especially for short trips. Loss of confidence in safe travel on public transport and increasing road congestion has necessitated an urgent shift of travel choices.

The largest impediment to more people taking up their desire to cycle or walk from Point A to Point B in the City of Port Phillip is the incomplete network of safe cycling and walking paths and the fear and hesitancy that this causes. Our cycling and walking routes need to be visibly safe from vehicular dangers (both moving and parked vehicles with opening doors) and they need to connect our activity zones all the way to each municipal boundary, meeting similar corridors provided by other entities.

Research by organisations including Bicycle Network, the RACV and CoPP show that building connected and safe cycling and walking routes will not only fulfill current need, but encourage use and create demand. If a bike lane is not being used as expected, investigate what is wrong with it. Is it unsafe as a product of bad planning or underfunding?

According to City of Port Phillip 'Move, Connect, Live - Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-28', council proposes to complete twelve safer cycling corridors by 2027/8. This excludes three projects already delivered or under development, funded solely by the Victorian Government. These are:

- Moray Street to City (completed) with funding from Melbourne Metro Rail Authority (MMRA)
- Albert Road to Kerferd Road (Shrine to Sea project) funded \$13m by Victorian Government, to be delivered in 2023
- St Kilda Road Bike Lanes - (\$27.3m funding by Victorian Government) to be delivered by 2025 in conjunction with Melbourne Metro Rail works.

Only three of the twelve projects listed in Council's "Move and Connect – Integrated Transport Strategy 2018-28" have been allocated funding in the 2021-2022 draft budget:

- Park Street link - \$1m. But it does not actually 'link' with the already completed Moray Street to City Bikeway, as it falls one block short. This must be addressed
- Garden City off-road connection to Sandringham Light Rail Trail - \$1.125m

Both the Park Street Link and Garden City projects are co-funded under State Government agreements and it is assumed that this assures their inclusion.

- The third project that was included in the current Council budget is the Inkerman Street Bike Corridor (Fitzroy Street & Canterbury Rd to Glen Eira connection). But this project has only received \$440,000 in this financial year towards the \$9,975,000 total cost. (Only 4.4% of the total project cost). The Draft Budget and Plan lists a proposed completion date of 2026 - which is one year after the far more complex and expensive St Kilda Road Bike Lane would already be completed (a route to which this project is expected to be connected). The remaining 95.6% of funds will need to be allocated in the following 5 years (\$1.9m per year) to complete the project. CAPP urges Council to increase funding now so that this project can

be completed earlier to meet current resident needs. Council appears to be putting this project in idle and allocating a minimal amount to 'design processes, consultation and minor works. Funds will likely be wasted in the longer term as a result. By dragging the project out over five years, much of the early work may need to be re-done at additional project cost. Overlapping the project into another Council's term would possibly risk completion.

Not funded in the 2021-2 Draft Budget, but expected to be completed by 2027/8:

- Dorcas St / Nelson Rd / Foote St (Kings Way to Beach) .
- Sandringham Line / Westbury St (Ripponlea to Windsor)
- Dickens St (Balaclava to St Kilda Beach) .
- Acland St / Mitford St / Beach St (Fitzroy St to Elwood Beach)
- Tennyson St / Blessington St (Elwood to St Kilda Beach)
- Byron St / Glen Eira Rd (Ripponlea to Elwood) .
- Bridge St / Richardson St / Loch St (Port Melbourne to St Kilda).
- Alexandra St (Pahran to Balaclava)
- Armstrong St (Middle Park Beach to Albert Park trail)

To fulfill the timeline in this standing strategy, the remaining NINE cycling corridors listed would need to be completed in the five following budgets: a commitment to fully funding up to two cycling projects a year. Without an earlier increase in funding, this is optimistic.

There is a community generated proposal - published by PECAN - building on the work of previous councillors and activists and the Balaclava Walk project - to fast track the Ripponlea to Windsor corridor project.

This cycling and walking route would be a vital link across the municipality from corresponding corridors in Glen Eira and Stonnington, and connecting the villages and parks of East St Kilda, Balaclava and Ripponlea. This is a council area desperately lacking sufficient public open space, and consideration should be made to including early work on this project in the current draft budget.

In the theme of reducing spending on cycling, this Draft Budget also cuts funding to four vital cycling social education and facilitation programs: Ride2School Day, Healthy Tracks, Ride2Work, and Festival of Everyday Riding by \$15,000 every year for the foreseeable future. This decision should be reversed.

Aside from previous commitments to the listed co-funded projects, the State Government only committed \$15m funding statewide for cycling infrastructure projects in the 2021-2 Budget. This means a shift in the burden of increased financial responsibility to local government.

City of Port Phillip has 59km of bike lanes, a figure unchanged over many years. Yet the City of Melbourne next door currently claims 135km. Other neighbouring municipalities (Stonnington, Glen Eira and Bayside) are also prioritising budget spending on safer cycling and walking routes. CoPP needs to do likewise.

The City of Port Phillip needs to step up and meet increasing resident needs for better and safer cycling and walking infrastructure today, not an earnest yet vague target across the decade. The future is now.

## **OPEN SPACE**

CAPP supports the proposal from PECAN for an allocation of \$50,000 for scoping and budgeting for the Green Line public open space initiative. This proposal provides a means of linking existing open space along the railway reserve. It will require investment at Local Council level as well as State Government. Initial scoping funding is needed from Councils to enable an approach to be made to Government in the next State Budget.

In 2020 the Council released the Draft Public Spaces Strategy that exposed the inequity in the amount and accessibility to open space across the municipality. It identified the relative lack of open space, community amenity and greening in Balaclava and East St Kilda. Only \$3m will be invested for this purpose in Balaclava and East St Kilda over 2021/24 while other areas will receive double or triple that amount. CAPP supports Progressive Port Phillip's proposal to build a \$10m open space fund, over time, dedicated to greening Balaclava and East St Kilda.

## **RIPPON LEA ESTATE GARDENS**

CAPP urges the reinstatement of \$50,000 to enable continuation of free access to the Rippon Lea Estate Gardens for Port Phillip residents. These gardens are adjacent to the East St Kilda/ Balaclava area where open space is limited. This would go a small way to redressing the inequity faced by East St Kilda residents in access to open space.

## **ARTS FUNDING**

CAPP supports Council's funding of the Arts. Council is to be congratulated on the announcement of Gasworks and Linden at long last entering into fixed five+five year funding agreements and long-term leases. We thank Council for finally getting these stars into alignment. The St Kilda Film Festival and the Gaming Industry Awards demonstrate again the sort of creative arts success stories that our Council can achieve at the State level and for the City itself.

We also understand that the economic outfall from the COVID 19 pandemic has put huge pressure on the budget. But the economic crisis also demands a massive and immediate rescue and recovery response.

There are fundamental reasons for us to focus our funding on the arts with more pressing urgency:

- Port Phillip is – by long tradition and current reputation – one of the pre-eminent 'homes of the arts' in this State (obviously along with Yarra and the MCC). It is in our DNA to be everything – from the nursery to the grand stage – for a multiplicity of the arts. Music, theatre, film and the visual arts are the most prominent among them. It is up to us to show commitment, generosity, expertise and leadership in supporting creative industry and the arts if we are hoping to sustain our powerful (but easily shattered) reputational and economic advantage in these areas.
- It is our moral duty, and to our economic and cultural advantage, to help rescue and sustain the creative industry and arts sectors which disproportionately depend on this city as their home, and disproportionately contribute to its economic and cultural well being.
- As other cities have shown (eg Moreland, MCC), a truly full-on arts recovery program can have a powerful, multiplier affect on general economic recovery.



- There are also harder to pinpoint issues of public morale. There is evidence that moments of arts-led beauty and transcendence can have genuine influence in economic recovery and wellbeing.

As a city, we have traded off our massive but now dwindling reputational strength in the creative arts. It is precisely *now* that we need to step up in this time of need, not step back.

CAPP is deeply concerned about a number of elements that appear to dominate funding decisions reflected in the budget:

### **Competitive tendering**

There is an apparent trend away from established funding relationships with established partners, towards competitive tendering on an annual basis. This process saps the energy and enthusiasm of Arts organisations and severely depletes their capacities to perform, even killing them off prematurely.

In this budget we are seeing “key arts organisations” – such as Red Stitch, Theatreworks, Tapestry Workshop, Rawcus, Phillip Adams BalletLab, and more – being taken off stable triennial funding and forced into the competitive queue. The South Melbourne Symphony Orchestra now has nowhere else to go. These are some of the most precious arts organisations in our city. These organisations merit long term support and it is counter productive to subject them to an annual competitive grant application process.

This is a system that feeds administrators rather than artists. Each organisation’s creative energies will increasingly be poured into paperwork rather than performance. No organisation that needs to plan more than a year in advance can limp on year after year in this state of uncertainty.

It is clear that the Cultural Development Fund is not to be expanded to accommodate the influx of core Arts Organisations such as those listed above. The maximum grant is now being set at \$12k whereas these organisations’ forward planning depends on \$30k triennial funding. They will not survive, especially in this economic climate.

For our medium size arts organisations this is undoubtedly the most destructive feature of the 21/22 draft budget. This decision must be urgently reversed.

### **Temporary vs Permanent Cuts**

There is a lack of clarity around whether some Arts programs that were temporarily suspended during the height of the COVID economic crisis have now been permanently cut. There is a degree of apprehension that some savings, originally announced as suspensions, will quietly become permanent. Before any final consideration of the Budget, all relevant items should be clearly earmarked and explained, so it is clear to the community what we will be losing and what we will not.

### **Budget Opacity**

- It is hard to find a statement of the City’s clear philosophical intent and approach to arts funding, particularly under the current COVID conditions. Is this council actually striving to ramp it up, or cut it back – or is it just a neutral steady-as-she-goes approach – and why?
- It is also very difficult to collect all the elements of arts funding into a comprehensive list, to get a proper comparative picture. An extracted Arts summary would help us all.
- There are important details left buried, in marked and unmarked sites. An example of this latter is the apparently new \$50k project budget allocation for improving public accessibility to the Port Phillip Collection. This would actually be a ‘good news’ story in our eyes, but it has not been released in the budget documentation. It would have almost completely offset

the \$56k “changes to arts programs” cut announced publicly in the changes to services summary – itself a notably obscure description of what this cut applies to.

### **The Arts Acquisition Fund**

Changes to the Arts Acquisition Fund have remained largely unannounced.

The Arts Acquisition Fund is only a tiny cog in the budgetary machine, but it is the life-support for something that is unique and spectacular in our city’s cultural capital and cultural heritage. Our collection encapsulates and carries our city’s soul, its history and its story-lines, as told by its incredible lineage of visual artists. Its unique locally connected collection policy makes this something that (apart from the City of Melbourne with its massive resources) no other city has achieved. It is an ever-deepening and unfolding story – entirely dependent on this small acquisition fund for being so. Its virtues as an arts rescue package are these:

- It channels money directly to locally-based artists, rather than intermediary organisations;
- The artists’ work is selected by professionally expert peers drawn from their community;
- The artists are selected on the merit of work already made, so they can get on with their economic survival, rather than being tied up acquitting a grant received;
- Instead of depleting Council’s coffers, this form of aid actually adds, measurably, to its asset-based capital and immeasurably to its cultural capital; and
- The program and the collection itself endow this council a high level of credibility within the wider art community.

Its funding future is only obscurely tabulated in the draft budget, with one key aspect left entirely unrecorded. None of its changes are noted in the Budget ‘Changes to Services’ table, despite its proposed annual expenditure being effectively halved from \$60k to \$30k every two years. CAPP urges Council to retain the previous funding level for the Arts Acquisition Fund.

### **St Kilda Festival**

We acknowledge the economic benefit the St Kilda Festival brings to multiple sectors of the local economy; the benefits it brings to live music in Melbourne by putting a hundred bands before an audience of hundreds of thousands; the benefit to young people of free entry to a major music festival; and the entertainment it brings to so many Melburnians and local residents alike.

The challenge of the Festival is that it represents such a massive single expenditure on a single day, with hard-to-define beneficiaries and local advantages, and hard to calibrate satisfaction or dissatisfaction among local residents affected by its annual disruption. Another question mark is what else could be done with that money – particularly if it were spent on the Arts. The size of the spend alone and all the accumulated question marks, mean that the Festival must continually be publicly vetted and challenged on its actual value for money.

CAPP remains skeptical on all these counts, and believes that an alternative version or a complete replacement of the Festival may well benefit a broader range of Port Phillip businesses, a more defined range of local musicians and audiences, a wider range of people in need of support, at a lower rate of irritation to local residents. Perhaps a biennial festival would spread the range of benefits. At the very least if the Festival’s success is pitched at such a metropolitan scale, should it not be substantially funded by State Government? CAPP urges Council to advocate strongly in this regard.

22 May, 2021

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### **Feedback on Draft Budget 2021/22 and the ten-year Council Plan.**

I have lived in the City of Port Phillip for nearly 25 years now and have been proud of Council's support for small business, the arts and entertainment industry and for those of us who are less fortunate than most COPP ratepayers. I am sad to see this budget and plan set-out to turn us inwards and diminish our generous heart. This is not who we are.

I wish to raise several matters of importance to me.

#### **Friends of Suai/Covalima**

I was very disappointed to hear us inaccurately described in the budget debate as a 'community organisation.' The program is actually a Council program, underpinned by formal agreement between the two municipalities and has been so for 20 years. I have been on the Community Reference Committee (CRC) since 2009, providing advisory support to Council.

I understand that the growth and development of the Covalima Community Centre could suggest that a major review of CoPP's support is appropriate. While I would prefer the current agreement to run its course, I support the development of a transition plan, rather than a sudden cessation of all support. Developing a gradual transition plan will allow for celebration of Council's present achievements and a re-orientation of the Friendship to the future.

#### **Increasing our rates**

I don't like any increase but I accept that the delivery of Council programs, continued good management and good organisational governance require this increase. Along with this it is important that the organisational structure is regularly reviewed to ensure that operations are as efficient and effective as possible as well as outcome focused.

#### **Early Years Quality Subsidy**

I have been a [REDACTED] following sitting as a community member on the Council advisory committee on the design of this [then] new centre. Reducing the subsidy from 5% to 4% of total educator's salaries raises two concerns for me.

First this is the wrong expenditure item to be targeting. In the early years field it is well established that quality of care is driven by four factors: educator-to-child ratios program resources, educator qualifications and ongoing professional education. Reducing the subsidy strikes at one of the significant factors in the delivery of quality care – ensuring the on-going development of good quality teaching.

Second, it is the wrong place in the developmental life-cycle. It is also evidence based that investing in early years is cost-effective and moderates the impact of social disadvantage in early childhood, promoting health and wellbeing in adolescence and adulthood and reducing later demand for services.

[REDACTED]

The CoPP has a record of supporting those of us who are less well-off – this move will place our more vulnerable children at greater risk.

I respectfully urge Council to retain the Quality Subsidy rate of 5%.

### Environmental matters

I am really pleased to see that support for the Eco Centre continues. This centre and its various programs and activities is an essential part of our community response to our changing climate and weather patterns.

I find the 'Climate emergency response' to be inadequate. In view of Council declaring a climate emergency recently I had been expecting a stronger, more focused response.

I support funding for storm-water harvesting, for the commitment to reduce CoPP's own emissions and generally your increasing funding for the greening of our city.

I strongly urge Council to develop a solid 'Climate Emergency Action Plan' considering the Vision, Targets, Timeframe and budget. Anything less really lets our community down.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



## **PORT MELBOURNE TENNIS CLUB**

**PO Box 289 Port Melbourne Vic 3207**

22 May 2021

To the Councillors of City of Port Phillip

### **Submission re City of Port Phillip 10 Year Plan – Port Melbourne Tennis Club**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to the City of Port Phillip 10 Year Plan.

#### **Background**

The Port Melbourne Tennis Club, situated at Morris Reserve, Port Melbourne is a local community tennis club that has been established since 1885 with 300 members and growing, including a volunteer run committee and office bearers. Situated on a small parcel of land comprising three courts and one of only a small number of accessible tennis facilities in the CoPP area, the club has continued to grow in its service of a broad range of the Port Melbourne community from juniors through to retiree age groups (members range in age from pre school to their 80's).

Activities include coaching, social tennis, competitive tennis through intra and interclub tennis competitions, outreach programs, donated court use to local schools (eg Port Melbourne Primary, Albert Park College, Southport District tournaments), participation in Tennis Victoria events to help improve participation in the sport (eg Get Your Racquet On), flexible memberships that meet the varied needs of the community, and occasional social events for members (COVID permitting). The community benefits extend beyond tennis to health, well-being and fitness and members enjoy a strong sense of social connectedness. This social cohesiveness was particularly evident during the 2020 lockdowns for those who may otherwise have been at risk of social isolation.

#### **Facilities**

The current en tout cas tennis courts were constructed in 2007 and the general lifespan of such courts is approximately 15 years. As such, the courts are nearing the end of their useful life and consideration will be needed as to the best way to replace this asset so that we may continue to meet the diverse needs of City of Port Phillip residents, workers and visitors by providing affordable dedicated tennis facilities in the municipality. We note that PMTC provides one of the few opportunities for City of Port Phillip residents to join and play tennis immediately, and the Committee are proud to be supporting the growth of the sport we love. We view the appropriate planning for the replacement of the current courts to be a key priority and we seek Council's partnership in this endeavour.

We would like to flag the desire for collaborative long-term planning for the existing clubhouse facility. The facility is over 60 years of age and the club is open to discussion regarding Council's

appetite for future redevelopment. This may become increasingly relevant over time in light of the upcoming development of Fishermans Bend and the potential need for additional building spaces for various community groups. While our main focus will always be to contribute to the growth in tennis participation in the community, we would welcome the chance to explore opportunities with other local groups that may emerge through clubhouse replacement in the future.

We seek Council's guidance regarding the future of the public toilets which are incorporated into the external portion of the clubhouse, fronting Swallow Street. Potential for the relocation of these facilities has been flagged in City of Port Phillip's Public Toilet Implementation Plan 2013-2023 and the club requests clarity in order to confidently plan for the future of the overall facility. In consideration of the ongoing Graham Street underpass works and the increase in activity that these works are likely to attract, the club asks Council to please consider the relocation of these aged public toilet facilities to a more appropriate location that may better serve a larger share of the community. Furthermore, the upcoming Garden City Bike Path route may also present a safety concern for patrons wishing to access the public toilets in their current location.

**Lease**

So that we may continue to grow all aspects of our club, including junior programs and augmenting our established community links with local schools, we ask that Council please consider providing the Club with a 7-12 year tenure term, at a minimum. This will provide great support for the Club in our future applications for State/Federal Government and Tennis Australia grants, noting that assistance from these groups will be sought for court replacement in the near horizon and a short tenure term may dissuade these groups from investing in a 15-year asset.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to the Club's needs included in the City of Port Phillip 10 Year Plan. [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I welcome many aspects of Council's proposed 2021-22 budget but am strongly opposed to some proposed cuts to services, in particular the reduction in the subsidy for community childcare and the plan to stop free access to Rippon Lea Gardens for CoPP residents. In addition, cutting the funding to key arts organisations at a time when they are just starting to recover from a disastrous 2020 is a retrograde step and one which seems out of character for a municipality known for its vibrant arts scene and cultural life.

I agree with the 1.5% rate increase because I believe it is required to maintain programs and avoid further reductions in services, and I congratulate Council for its rate relief program for ratepayers who are encountering difficulties.

I believe there are areas which can be identified for savings within Council's budget which would cover many of the proposed service cuts. I fail to see why we need to spend \$500,000 for a new program of high pressure cleaning. I believe our streets, parks and beaches are well cleaned and have no problems with the standard of service.

██████████ the Friends of Suai Covalima Community Reference Committee, an advisory committee to Council, my particular concern relates to the proposal to reduce the relatively modest grant to this Council program.

One of the principal objectives of this friendship is for newly independent East Timor, and in particular the District of Covalima, to learn from the City of Port Phillip about local democracy, council service provision and community engagement, as decision-making and power is devolving from the national to municipal level for the first time. The municipality to municipality link enabling us to share our experience is a vital element of the Friendship Agreement, signed between the two authorities in 2020. This experience cannot be replicated by other tiers of government in Australia and I respectfully argue that it is entirely appropriate for all levels of government to be involved in programs with neighbours in our region.

Council is aware of the many achievements and benefits of the program to the people of Suai and more widely, to Covalima District and I will not repeat those here. It might be tempting to believe that the gains made in Covalima mean there is no need to engage further with the District and with people there, but we should remember this is one of the poorest countries in the world and the poorest in South East Asia. The Friendship means Council can continue to provide support and share knowledge and experience with those who really value this exchange of ideas and who want to learn from us.

The Council has received tremendous value for money from this program over the years. For a relatively small annual input, the outcomes and the lasting impact in Suai are huge, both in terms of the development of individuals through education and training, being able to achieve positive changes in their lives, providing students with access to clean water, the protection of the local environment and the overall benefits for a community which is actively engaged in its own development. Not to mention the knowledge the people there have,

that another municipality and a community in Australia has their back, and expresses its friendship in actions, not just words.

The benefits of the program to residents here in Port Phillip are many, particularly the opportunity to engage with each other and with our wider community, including the Timorese community, local businesses, schools and service organisations, and it has enabled residents to be active in their local community, to forge friendships, and to share skills, all of which has brought them much joy, cross-cultural understanding, and enriched their lives. Having the City of Port Phillip as the program funder has enabled the Friends of Suai Covalima to leverage off that fact in gaining further support.

I ask Council to retain the funding for Friends of Suai Covalima in the 2021-22 budget and to continue this support, allowing realistic time for a gradual reduction if that is Council's final decision, so as to allow alternatives to be developed in the future.

██████████  
████████████████████



## Submission to Draft Council plan 2021 - 31

Vibrant Port Phillip is core to our values at Arts Access Victoria (AAV), so this feels like a value alignment. However, the new 10 year plan does not address the core to a vibrant city and that is the community and its contributions.

AAV, located in South Melbourne for its 46 year history is the states leading Disability-led arts organisation. Under our disability-led community arts and cultural development model, we are committed to establishing and holding spaces where Deaf and Disabled people can create bold and evocative art that connects across audiences. As a place where people can be brave, dream big and be their authentic selves. We are dedicated to building a culture where Deaf and Disabled artists are recognised for their creativity and excellence of their work, acknowledged and celebrated for the stories they tell and are a vital part of the artistic landscape. One in five people identify with disability and as you age this increases.

The council plan seems to eliminate the arts and cultural organisations that have contributed to the thriving community and contribute to the economic development of COPP. Supporting Deaf and Disabled artists and arts workers as individuals, through to ensembles, grassroots through to established artists allows for vibrant cultural exchange and develops the community from where they are at. Supporting clear pathways to employment. To participate in COPP major festivals the development has to start somewhere. We support the development of an inclusive arts ecology and recognise that exclusion is not just a social or economic problem, but also a problem of cultural visibility, identity, and language. Deaf and disabled people are not visible in this plan.

The Art and Soul – Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2018-22, although strong is due for review and so further cuts to community services could occur. Just as we are seeing in this plan with cuts to community and the arts sector as we are seeing with cut to funding to high calibre independent organisations Rawcus, Red Stitch, Tapestry Workshop, Ballet Lab, contemporary space Theatre Works as strong contributors to the culture and economy. These along with AAV should be highly regarded locally when they are recognised as state and national leaders it doesn't make sense that we are not seen as partners to the plan or part of any indicators.

There is strong evidence of the economic argument for arts and culture  
<https://www.communications.gov.au/departmental-news/economic-value-cultural-and-creative-activity>  
The Bureau of Communications and Arts Research (BCAR) analysis shows cultural and creative activity contributed \$111.7 billion to Australia's economy in 2016-17. The arts and cultural sector and people with disability have money, attract money and want to spend money in places that are for them.



In July 2021 AAV and COPP are partnering on the THRIVE Festival an Emerald Hill place making and disability-led festival. This is something we are very proud to produce and present but can see that although we expect 100s of audiences and over 50 Deaf and Disabled performers, local businesses are on board and Deaf and Disabled people will be attracted to Emerald Hill precinct for this celebration it is clear this will be the last under this plan.

How are you planning and activating Clarendon Street, the new precinct of Fishermans Bend a once in a lifetime opportunity as our creative industry cluster and an opportunity for jobs and growth. AAV has approached COPP to partner in an accessible cultural hub for Deaf and Disabled people but we are not at all in the plan. COPP has been seen as the leader across Australia in the development and support of Deaf and Disabled people, this plan does not identify any of this significance.

What COPP would like to work towards is of value, we just don't feel how you will achieve this values the contributions of the Deaf and Disabled people and the arts and culture sectors they participate in.

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]



**F R I E N D S O F E R M E R A**

INC. NO. A0044209J

ABN 71 798 504 036

*Supporting Communities in East Timor*

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**Submission to the City of Port Phillip re Continued Financial Support for Friends of Suai in Council's 2021/2022 budget.**

The Friends of Ermera, based in the City of Casey, formed in 2002. At that time we looked to Friends of Suai to guide us through the early stages of our development. We have maintained a close working relationship over almost 20 years, sharing ideas, supporting each other's events and learning from each other.

Community Based. Our two organisations grew out of our local communities, Casey and Port Phillip, and both continue to be grounded in those local communities. Over the years our committee members have met the many, many local residents of Port Phillip who are members and supporters of FoS. We have found them to be passionate about the programs in Suai and committed to building the capacity of the people of Suai.

Friendships Cemented. The FoS have fostered links between the local residents of Port Phillip and the people of Suai. Many of your local residents, including school groups, have had the opportunity to visit Timor-Leste, at their own expense, and develop life-long friendships. Witnessing the transformative effect of a visit to Timor-Leste on our local students is always a delight. Alumni from these trips have gone on to study International Relations, Community Development and have become active members and supporters of FoS. The activities of FoS not only support development and capacity building in Timor-Leste, but they also raise awareness in our local community of global issues. FoS's activities provide the people of Port Phillip with opportunities to participate as global citizens, making a real a difference to the lives of others.

Modelling Best Practise FoS is very aware of the need to model best practise in everything it does. This is so important when working in a developing country and also vital when handling funds provided by local residents. The protocols and processes FoS have developed in cooperation with the people of Suai have ensured that there are always clear lines of accountability and have also provided the community leaders in Suai with an effective, community based model of behaviours. Over the years FoS have been leaders among the Friendship Groups in having regular independent reviews of their policies and programs.

Celebration of Cultures City of Port Phillip is well known for its festivals especially the ones that celebrate the many cultures represented in our community. FoS have developed a strong connection with the local East Timorese families who initially came to Melbourne as refugees in the 1970s and 1980s. This strong connection is reflected in the mutual participation in each other's cultural and fundraising events.

Wider community Support

Local service clubs, churches, businesses, and residents have assisted FoS to raise funds for specific programs. Many local residents have become regular donors, while some have committed to funding the study costs of young people completing their studies. Many local businesses have generously donated gifts, vouchers and services to aid in FoS's fundraising efforts.

In conclusion we would like to add that the activities of FoS not only support development and capacity building in Timor-Leste, but they also raise awareness in our local community of global issues. FoS's activities provide the people of Port Phillip with opportunities to participate as global citizens, making a real a difference to the lives of others.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

22 May 2021

# Draft Budget 2021-22 – Have your Say

## Background

The Prosperous Port Phillip Business Advisory Group was established in 2020 to seek advice from a cross section of the business community in the CoPP on ways to ensure that business in the municipality continues to thrive, to generate sustainable employment and contribute to making Port Phillip a dynamic and prosperous city.

The National Institute of Economic and Industry Research reported that 95,150 people were employed in the City of Port Phillip in 2019 over a wide number of sectors. This compares with 117,420 residents.

The number of businesses registered in Port Phillip is 21,727. The number of non-residential ratepayers is 7,851.

As part of our deliberations the Business Advisory Group members completed a survey of the projects and activities that were considered the most effective to support business through Council funding and staff involvement. These included in order of priority:

- Destination management planning
- Destination marketing
- Providing incentives to attract new tenants with a sustainability or creative focus.
- Renewal programs on High Streets (in addition to the work currently being undertaken for Fitzroy St)
- Research/Data gathering that would be useful in assisting businesses plan their growth and provide property owners and agents with data to attract new businesses.

It was recognised that the contribution of businesses to the community is more than purely economic. Businesses give the municipality a sense of place offering social wellbeing through the services they offer, as well as creating jobs and driving economic recovery.

## Comments on Draft Budget 2021-22

The Business Advisory Group has reviewed Council's Budget for 2021-22 and is disappointed with the inadequate funding for business support and development. Specifically, we are disappointed with the cut to funding for Economic Development and Tourism in the draft budget, particularly given Council has declared an economic emergency.

Prosperous Port Phillip Business Advisory Group

The operational budget for economic development and tourism is being halved in the draft budget.

The 2021-22 Budget compares poorly with the 2020-21 Budget:

- The budget for Reactivation of Public Space was \$450,000 last financial year and this financial year has decreased to \$290,000.
- Beautification of High Streets was also a priority of the Group, yet only one high street in the municipality has been allocated budget: \$75,000 to Renew Fitzroy Street whilst all other High streets have been left out.

We seek Council's reconsideration of the funding in the budget for Economic Growth and Development and make the following points:

- While around twenty per cent of Council's rate incomes is derived from rates on commercial and industrial properties, only \$0.35 for every \$100 of Council expenditure is being spent on Economic Growth and Development, a significant disparity.
- This is a disappointingly low figure given how hard COVID-19 has hit the 7,851 non-residential rate payers in the city of Port Phillip.
- One hard hit area is tourism. Tourists visiting St Kilda has dropped by 78 percent with 8,000 jobs lost in the first 3 months of COVID-19, many of these being in hospitality, tourism and event businesses.
- Port Melbourne traders have been impacted by the suspension of the cruise industry. Port 3207 estimates that the local traders have lost \$1.5 to \$2 million in revenue
- Next year when the spirit of Tasmania leaves, Port 3207 expects to see a further \$2 million being lost to local businesses around Bay Street
- At least 2,363 local visitor economy businesses have been impacted by this loss of tourists in the City of Port Phillip

## Our Recommendations

As Councillors are aware, business precincts and Main Streets deliver huge contributions to the amenity of the city. They provide places for citizens to come together to work and play which are the cornerstone for creating a lively and liveable city. They provide jobs and will help drive the economic recovery for the municipality.

### Firstly

We are calling on Councillors to direct Management to review the funding for business support and to allocate the appropriate level of funding for economic development, precinct activation and business support. That is, reallocate funding back to economic development, commensurate with the needs identified and in line with the previous budget.

### Secondly

We are given to understand it may be difficult to increase the overall budget this year however, if there are funds left over from the current financial year that could be allocated to economic activity and business support, that could go part way in assisting the needs. Ideally to allow funds to be spent in the new financial year and allocated prior to June 30 - this would benefit business enormously.

These funds could be allocated to continue to support outdoor dining spaces and continued beautification of High streets.

### Thirdly

Longer Term Funding of Business Support. The Business Advisory Group is also seeking a commitment from Council for a more appropriate and equitable level of funding for economic development in the 2022/23 budget and beyond.

## Moving Forward

Over the coming months, the Business Advisory Group will work together and with Council officers to outline what we see as vital for long term business recovery and growth, working towards identifying a four-year plan for projects that should be funded in the coming years.

Based on our current investigations, we recommend Council consider the following elements in the forthcoming budgets:

- \$500k for outdoor dining,
- \$500k for small business grants,
- \$500k for beautification grants,
- \$1m for a destination marketing campaign,
- \$1m for a voucher program, like regional Vic and the CoM have, where diners receive 20% back.

The BAG is seeking a commitment from Council for an extension of the budget to allow significant input into infrastructure with capital funds allocated for High St and commercial projects. It also seeks funds for the destination management and marketing of the business precincts.

## Conclusion

In framing the 2021-22 Budget, Council has failed to acknowledge the commercial and industrial ratepayers who contribute around 20% of Council rates.

The Budget has halved the allocation to Economic Activity from the previous Budget in a time of economic emergency, which makes no sense.

This is a very disappointing budget that fails to support many businesses within the municipality that were finding it difficult pre-COVID-19 and have since been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We call on Council to address this Economic Emergency and seek an internal reallocation of funding to support the legitimate role of the municipality in economic development.

Attachment - Survey of BAG members priorities for Business Support by Council



**CBR-239**

# Prosperous Port Phillip Business Advisory Group

16 March 2021

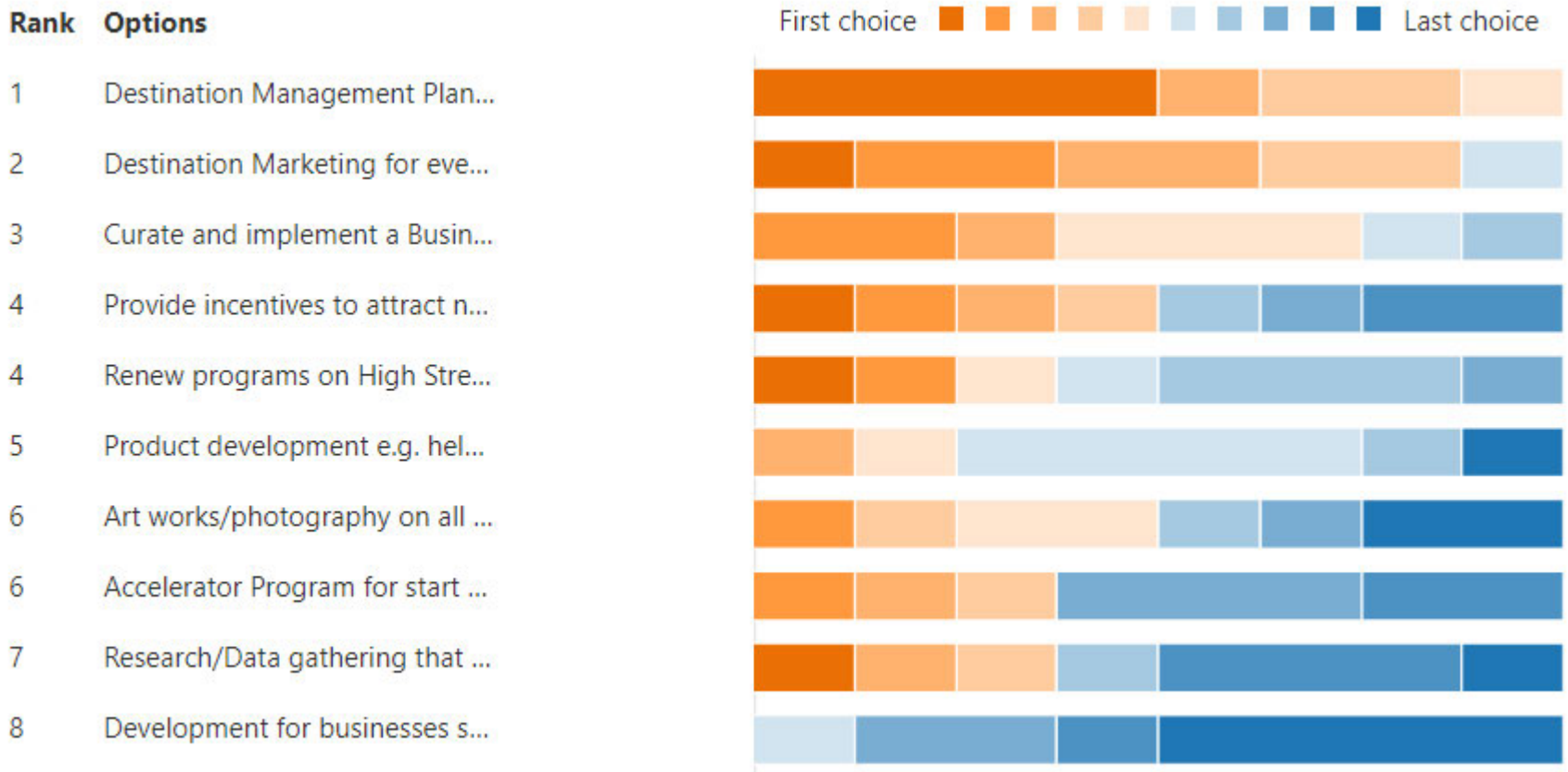
8am – 9am





# 2021/22 Budget Feedback – Question 1

Business Support (order from top to bottom, with the highest ranked option your preferred option).



## 2021/22 Budget Feedback – Question 2

If you have other Business Support considerations not listed in question 1, please provide details.

*“Rate freezes and discounted parking in St Kilda to bring the suburb into line with other competitor high streets”.*

*“Coordinate with Leasing Agency(s) who specialise in 'retail leasing' to promote an entire 'High Street' as 'destination leasing' to targeted quality businesses. Creating interest/demand for an entire strip - this could potentially assist in filling vacancies”.*

*“Free parking in St Kilda and more car parking. More signage from beach to business streets behind the beach. Rate reductions or freeze”.*

*“Free car parking, cleaning up Fitzroy St and assisting to re-locate or house homeless to make Fitzroy St more attractive for business operators and the broader community. Currently no one benefits from Fitzroy St, as most shops are vacant and people are scared to walk down the street. It doesn't do much for confidence or the perception of St Kilda/Port Phillip as a destination to visit. It's hard to paint a positive picture with this in mind. I'm not sure if any of the other initiatives will be overly successful in the long term if this is not addressed”.*



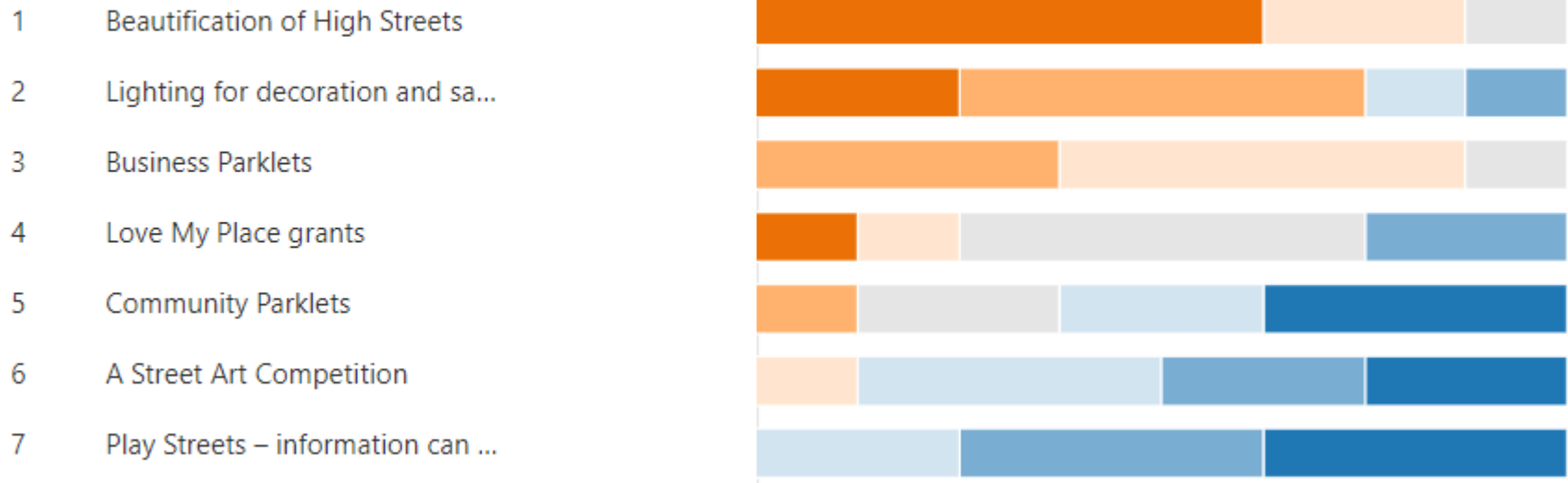
**CBR-239**

## 2021/22 Budget Feedback – Question 3

Activation (order from top to bottom, with the highest ranked option your preferred option).

**Rank Options**

First choice ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Last choice





## 2021/22 Budget Feedback – Question 4

If you have other Activation considerations not listed in question 3, please provide details.

*“Just that street closures are considered as this affects the local community and accessibility to venues and houses”.*

May 21, 2021

To the City of Port Phillip Mayor and Councillors,

Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre has been communicating with the Transport Engineers and Transport Safety Engineering Team about possible road safety measures on Liardet St, Port Melbourne since March 11, 2020. This was as a result of an external risk assessment at the end of 2019/beginning of 2020 that identified a risk in relation to road safety on Liardet St and in particular directly outside Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre. One of the road safety measures that has been requested is the installation of a wombat crossing from Lagoon Reserve to Edwards Park to further slow vehicles, give priority to pedestrians crossing and enhance driver awareness of the sensitive area. The advice we received at that time was that a wombat crossing is an appropriate measure to reduce speed and improve pedestrian safety and amenity however there was no funding available in the 2020/2021 financial year.

A petition requesting to reduce significant risk of child being hit on Liardet St, Port Melbourne by vehicles was presented at the February 3, 2021 council meeting. The following action was carried unanimously at the meeting:

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the Petition.
2. Notes that Council officers will conduct pedestrian surveys to determine the pedestrian demand along Liardet Street adjacent to Esplanade East.
3. Subject to the outcome of the pedestrian surveys Council will,
  - a. Seek Department of Transport support to move the PTV bus stop
  - b. Seek Department of Transport approval for the wombat crossing
  - c. Undertake community engagement, and
  - d. Subject to the outcome of discussions with Department of Transport and the community engagement, seek funding through the Council budget process.
4. Will provide a further update to Council in June 2021.
5. Request Victoria Police continue to undertake targeted police enforcement activities on Liardet Street.
6. Notes that Council Officers will notify the head petitioner of Council's resolution.

As the City of Port Phillip is in the process of finalising their 2021/2022 budget I request that the City of Port Phillip prioritises the installation of a wombat crossing from Lagoon Reserve to Edwards Park.

The safety of our children, families and the wider community is of utmost importance. We believe the risk associated with traffic management in Liardet St is too great to leave unmitigated.

Kind regards,

██████████

██████████



Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre  
85 Liardet Street  
Port Melbourne, 3207  
03 9676 8400

May 21, 2021

To the City of Port Phillip Mayor and Councillors,

**Re: Proposed Reduction of the Quality Subsidy Rates**

We were concerned to receive notification of the proposal to reduce the amount of Quality Subsidy paid to community-managed childcare centres from 5% to 4% of total educators' salaries, effective from quarter one of the 2021/22 financial year.

As recognised in the City of Port Phillip's Every Child, Our Future Children's Services Policy the first 1000 days are a crucial stage in every child's life and that all children and families can benefit from accessing children's services. Evidence shows that the quality of early education and care is directly linked, among other things, to:

- Educator:Child ratios
- Qualifications of educators
- Resources provided to educators
- Ongoing professional development opportunities for educators

The City of Port Phillip's Every Child, Our Future Children's Services Policy also recognises that children in vulnerable circumstances have the most to gain from participating in children's services.

The City of Port Phillip Quality Subsidy directly supports families and young children in our community, especially those most vulnerable, by enabling community-managed childcare centres to provide high quality education and care while maintaining affordable fees for all families.

We appreciate the support provided by the City of Port Phillip over the years however it is important to note that reducing the Quality Subsidy funding to community-managed services has the potential to impact the quality of early education and care provided to children and families attending those services.

If the proposed reduction in Quality Subsidy is approved, it is anticipated that the amount of Quality Subsidy received in 2021/2022 will see a reduction of \$22,300. Salaries have mainly remained stagnant in the past 18 months therefore the Quality Subsidy has remained at a similar rate however normal everyday expenses to operate early education and care services have increased.

Reducing the Quality Subsidy goes against one of the Policy Commitments that states the City of Port Phillip will "Advocate to other levels of government to increase investment and ensure all children have access to high quality and accessible children's services". It also goes against the statement recognising that "investing in early years is cost-effective and moderates the impact of social disadvantage in early childhood, promoting health and wellbeing in adolescence and adulthood and reducing later demand for services".

It should also be noted that the amount paid by Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre to Council in the form of Infrastructure and Maintenance levies far exceeds the Quality Subsidy received. For example, in 2021/2022, we anticipate combined Levies to total \$300,000 while the Quality Subsidy (if calculated @ 5% of salaries) would total \$120,000. This would reduce to \$97,700 if the proposed reduction was approved.

We appreciate that Council has limited resources, and many demands on those resources however now is not the time to reduce the support provided to early education and care services and, through them, to local families and children. As we are all recovering from the impacts of COVID-19, priority in this budget should be given to investing in the education and care of our youngest citizens and to

CBR-268



supporting families to access the best possible early education and care services for their children.

We respectfully urge Council to reconsider the proposed reduction to the Quality Subsidy in the 2021/2022 draft budget and, instead, resolve to retain the current rate of 5% of total educators' salaries.

Kind regards,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted signature]



Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre

85 Liardet Street

Port Melbourne, 3207

03 9676 8400



Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC)

Submission on the Draft Council Plan and Budget 2021- 2031

1. We welcome the priority that is given to inclusivity. Our particular remit relates to ethnic diversity and multiculturalism. In this context we would like the section titled 'Our City Our People' to expand on the statement; 'Port Phillip has a proud history of inclusion and everyone is welcome here.' The CoPP has been shaped by generations of migrants who have settled here, at various times, including as refugees after World War Two. Station Pier is a visible marker of this history. Jewish people, many of whom came from Poland and Russia, Italians and Greeks remain concentrated here and their contributions have provided the area with important elements of its character. This migration continues through our more recent Latin American, Indian and Chinese communities. Migration and ethnic diversity warrant explicit mention, particularly given, that for many people, 'inclusion' does not signal the spirit of honouring migration history and an on-going commitment to multiculturalism.
2. The MAC has as an on-going aim: the development of a coherent and sustained approach to developing intercultural understanding. This has several elements as follows:
  - Ensuring services provided are linguistically and culturally appropriate.
  - Making the CoPP welcoming, including through developing positive programmes that enable migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to thrive, and also offering programmes that combat discrimination and racism.
  - Providing all residents with the ability to celebrate their identities and importantly share their cultures and positive sense of self with members from other communities.Thus, we recommend that the vision statement include a statement about the importance of social cohesion and the role that intercultural understanding has in building and sustaining this cohesion.
3. We note that there are statutory requirements to honour reconciliation, gender equity and older persons through policy. Nonetheless we strongly advocate that policy frameworks are established in relation to ethnic diversity through, for example, the Welcoming Cities Standard. The MAC is committed to intersectionality, whereby diversity issues are not placed in silos and in competition with each other. Instead, we advocate an approach that explicitly describes the various elements of diversity and provides structural frameworks that are complimentary to each other.

With specific regard to the budget we make the following recommendations:

1. That refugees and asylum seekers and others on various short-term visas (e.g. international students) have access to programmes related to housing. These groups need to be considered explicitly if CoPP is to be truly inclusive.
2. That a coherent communication strategy be developed for migrant communities. This is particularly pertinent at a time when understanding messages about the current crisis can save lives.
3. That emphasis is given to employment and retraining opportunities for those who have lost jobs, many of whom are migrants.
4. That support is provided for migrant businesses as a priority, as many of these provide employment opportunities for vulnerable people.

5. That any programmes related to housing and homelessness are provided in culturally inclusive ways. This is a critical issue for minority communities whose members can often remain invisible in related discussions.
6. That programmes, which assist members of minority communities with digital literacy, are retained after outside funding ceases. This is particularly important for older people and those isolated, many of whom are women.
7. That priority is given to developing culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies that assist those already facing social isolation, exacerbated by the current health crisis.
8. That Council fund positive forms of messaging about our diverse community and does so in a range of ways, for example, banners about welcoming refugees.
9. That the review of ASSIST Counter Services in Port Melbourne and South Melbourne take account of the large percentages of minority residents, many of whom are older, have limited English language skills and access to technology.
10. That proposed cuts to library funding do not affect the continued support of resources available in languages other than English.
11. That proposed changes to the funding of child-care do not threaten the ability of migrant children from families with limited resources to participate.

[REDACTED]



## **Progressive Port Phillip Submission on the City of Port Phillip Draft 2021-22 Budget and Plan**

Progressive Port Phillip welcomes Council's continuing investment in important community services outlined in the draft 2021/22 Budget and the opportunity to contribute to Council's finalisation of it.

### **Overview**

We commend the Council for maintaining and bringing back important community investments reduced in last year's budget.

In particular, we support:

- Restoration of a decent library acquisitions budget (\$950,000)
- Restoration of significant funding for greening the city (\$740,000) to increase tree canopy cover significantly
- Continued funding commitment to flood mitigation works and storm water harvesting at Elsternwick Park Nature Reserve
- A \$46m capital investment in parks, open spaces, bike and foot paths and libraries
- Continued support for the EcoCentre and its redevelopment, subject to partner/State Govt funding
- An initial response to the climate emergency
- Achieving carbon neutrality in Council operations and services
- \$35m in operational & capital funding for the arts and culture over the next four years
- Continued investment in community, family and childrens services
- Keeping the South Melbourne market in Council ownership and management
- Significant rate relief measures for people doing it tough.

This Budget is being developed at a time when considerable uncertainty exists about the short and medium future and the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is framed by twin emergencies – a pandemic-induced economic emergency that has negatively affected Council's finances and many of the City's residents and businesses; and a damaging climate emergency which calls for urgent action to reduce carbon emissions, increase the City's tree canopy and use water more efficiently and sustainably.

Our further response is laid out in four detailed sections:

- Shifting priorities – for equity and fairness
- Responsible financial management
- A rate freeze would cut services for all to benefit only a few
- A higher level of ambition and a stronger vision.

## Shifting priorities – for equity and fairness

The draft Budget includes small but important cuts to some programs including free entry to Rippon Lea Estate Gardens for Port Phillip residents [\$50k], the community childcare subsidy [\$141k], arts programs [\$56k], the Port Phillip Urban Fresh Food Network [\$18k], Sport Port Phillip and Community programs [\$107k], reception services at South Melbourne Town Hall potentially on a long-term basis and embeds changes to bike education programs including Ride2School Day, Healthy Tracks, Ride2Work, and Festival of Everyday Riding. And Council is proposing to reduce footpath renewal over the next ten years.

Let's go through a few of them:

- The community childcare quality subsidy: supports families and young children in our municipality, especially those most vulnerable, by enabling community-managed childcare centres to continue to provide high quality education and care while maintaining affordable fees for all families. Quality childcare provision is not a 'tick and flick' exercise but a constant challenge that needs to be resourced.
- Rippon Lea Estate Gardens: Ripponlea, Balaclava and East St Kilda are the most poorly served with open space in the municipality – five percent compared with 19 percent in other areas [Open Space Strategy 2009]. Yet for a relatively small cost to Council, Port Phillip residents currently have access to open space equivalent to the St Kilda Botanic Gardens for a tenth of the cost. We all benefit from a smart deal negotiated by the previous Council which should continue, especially for open space-poor residents of Ripponlea and East Kilda.
- Arts programs: are vital to the cultural life, identity and economic base of Port Phillip. The sector is attempting to recover from a disastrous 2020 pandemic year and a cut of this magnitude at this time will set local artists and venues back further.
- Loss of triennial funding for six key arts organisations: Phillip Adams Ballet Lab, Australian Tapestry Workshop, Red Stitch Actors Theatre, The Torch, Rawcus, and Theatre Works. This measure will hit the local arts sector just as it begins to get back on solid ground. The impact of these cuts and funding uncertainty will mean loss of jobs, decreased opportunities for artists and simply less on offer for audience and participants. Meanwhile, a further rent waiver for the commercial operator of The Palais is being proposed.
- Sport Phillip and community programs: Council will no longer provide a resource to run and support sporting and recreation community programs or funding to subsidise enrolment costs for underrepresented groups. These programs aim to eliminate barriers to participation by providing low cost, flexible options to all members of the community, including underrepresented groups such as females, all abilities, seniors, indigenous and CALD communities. This is self-evidently part of the mission of local government.
- Urban Fresh Food Network: provides access to working bees and community activities including the urban gardens of the Port Phillip EcoCentre. The program provides friendship, meaningful activities, learning about plants and food, social activity as a group, tidying of the EcoCentre grounds, compost processing tons of community waste each year, thus reducing landfill. It is a cost effective means of improving community mental well-being and increasing active living in Port Phillip.
- Funding support for the Friends of Suai is proposed to be phased out over time. This is not a charity or a community group, but in fact a Council program formed over 20 years ago between the municipalities of Port Phillip and Suai, and with a recently re-signed MoU with Suai. Timor Leste has recently experienced the worst floods in 40 years. It remains highly vulnerable to COVID-19 outbreaks. Withdrawing support in these circumstances is harsh and unwarranted.

**There is no policy logic behind these cuts.**

**These cuts and others could be reversed at no cost to Council through a small shift of some proposed operational spends: for example, not proceeding with increased pressure cleaning on main streets [\$400k this coming year].**

Other modest steps are also available including:

- Reductions in the use of contractors [up \$1.3m in the coming year to nearly \$5m]
- Transitioning the St Kilda Festival [est. cost more than \$1.5m per year] over time from an annual one-off event to an authentic community festival of arts, music and culture running over a longer period.

Savings from these measures could also be applied to areas that desperately need more support including childcare, aged care and affordable housing, which collectively total just \$3.61 of every \$100 in rate income spent by Port Phillip Council.

A shift is needed over time to a more equitable infrastructure investment across the municipality, in particular to address the relative lack of open space, community amenity and greening in Balaclava/East St Kilda. Just \$3m will be invested in Balaclava/East St Kilda over the 2021/24 period, while all other areas will see double or triple more spent on similar infrastructure. This inequity must be tackled through re-considering priorities in future budgets of this Council to improve the amenity of this part of the municipality.

- Proposals such as gradually but methodically building a \$10 million open space fund dedicated to greening East St Kilda and Balaclava over time should be seriously considered.

Efficiency savings equivalent to one per cent [approximately \$1.9 million] of operating expenditure [less depreciation] per annum are mentioned in Vol 2 of the 2021-31 Plan.

Initiatives to deliver these savings include *a service review program to better define service requirements and target support, a commitment to better-practice procurement and asset management, the sale of surplus properties and investment in business process and system improvement.*

Council must be much more transparent with the community about these reviews, asset sales and 'systems improvements'. Why is this savings process not subject to the same community consultation as the measures listed above? To deliver these savings, does this explain in part the proposed increase in external contractors and consultants in 2021-22?

## **Responsible financial management**

The draft Budget is fiscally responsible with Council budgeting for a modest surplus to cover an operating loss [\$13.6m] during the pandemic and to build a foundation for capital investment in open space and improved community amenities in the future.

A 1.5% rate rise provides scope to maintain programs and avoid major cuts to community services. This increase is in line with inflation, commensurate with increases flagged by other local governments for the coming financial year and equates to an average rise of \$27 a year to \$1818.

Residential rates in Port Phillip remain among the lowest in metro Melbourne noting Port Phillip is one of the few Councils that doesn't impose a waste/recycling charge on residents.

### How does Port Phillip Compare?<sup>1</sup>

Local Government	Rate Rise	New Borrowing	Residential rate/tax base	Average property value	Average Council Rates <sup>2</sup>	No. of residential properties
Glen Eira	1.5%	\$65m over 2 yrs.	\$72.8 billion	\$1.045m	\$1763	69,648
Stonnington	1.5%	\$15m	\$82 billion	\$1.372m	\$1793	59,757
Port Phillip	1.5%	Nil	\$58 billion	\$872k	\$1818	66,632
Bayside <sup>3</sup>	NA	NA	\$63.4 billion	\$1.474m	\$2190	42,998
Yarra <sup>4</sup>	1.5%	\$20m	\$43.3 billion	\$898k	\$2484	48,152
Melbourne <sup>5</sup>	NA	\$200m over 4 yrs	\$62 billion	\$610k	\$2528	101,719
Hobsons Bay	1.5%	\$7m	\$31.6 billion	\$798k	\$2717	39,573

Port Phillip has a lower residential rate base than its immediate municipal neighbours because average property prices or values in Bayside, Stonnington and Glen Eira are higher in these areas. This means Port Phillip's residential rate base is \$24 billion lower than Stonnington, \$15 billion lower than Glen Eira and around \$5 billion lower than Bayside. And is reflective of quite different housing types and rateable properties in Port Phillip, more typical of other inner municipalities such as Yarra and Melbourne.

Rates are property taxes to enable delivery of local services and infrastructure for all within a municipality, not a local government 'fee for service' charge on home-owners.

Benchmarking municipalities is a difficult exercise given diverse populations, infrastructure requirements and revenue sources. This is definitely not a case of one size fits all. Just taking the 'rate in my property value dollar' as the key measure of performance or efficiency is a gross distortion given that each municipality must balance its residential property or revenue base with particular infrastructure requirements, ageing assets, the needs of its residents and businesses and duty to ensure a truly socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable community.

The basket of municipalities chosen by one local group as comparators for Port Phillip is quite narrow and, perhaps, deliberately so. Glen Eira, Stonnington and Bayside are essentially dormitory municipalities with few of the capital city-type planning responsibilities and economic and social services required of Port Phillip, which include the biggest urban renewal project in the nation at Fisherman's Bend; hosting major arts, hospitality and cultural venues; and servicing significant centres of employment.

Crucially, Port Phillip is home to a more diverse population in terms of:

- Housing and property type [many more flats and apartments than freestanding homes]
- Composition of households [including more people living on their own]

<sup>1</sup> Sourced from draft Council Plan and Budget Fair Go reports 2021/22

<sup>2</sup> Includes waste charges where applicable

<sup>3</sup> 2021/22 Budget not yet released - figures relate to 2020/21 Budget

<sup>4</sup> Residential property values relate to 2020/21 Budget

<sup>5</sup> 2021/22 Budget not yet released - figures relate to 2020/21 Budget

- Education, income and cultural background.

No comparison is sufficient without considering home ownership and wealth.

Around half of all households in Port Phillip are renting [44 percent in private rentals and five percent in social housing], one of the largest proportions in the nation. Councillors need to recognise the gulf between many people trapped in the private rental squeeze and property investors advantaged by rising property values. A rates freeze would come at a big social cost: disproportionately advantaging some while resulting in cuts to services for the most vulnerable in our community.

These factors place particular infrastructure and service delivery demands on Port Phillip.

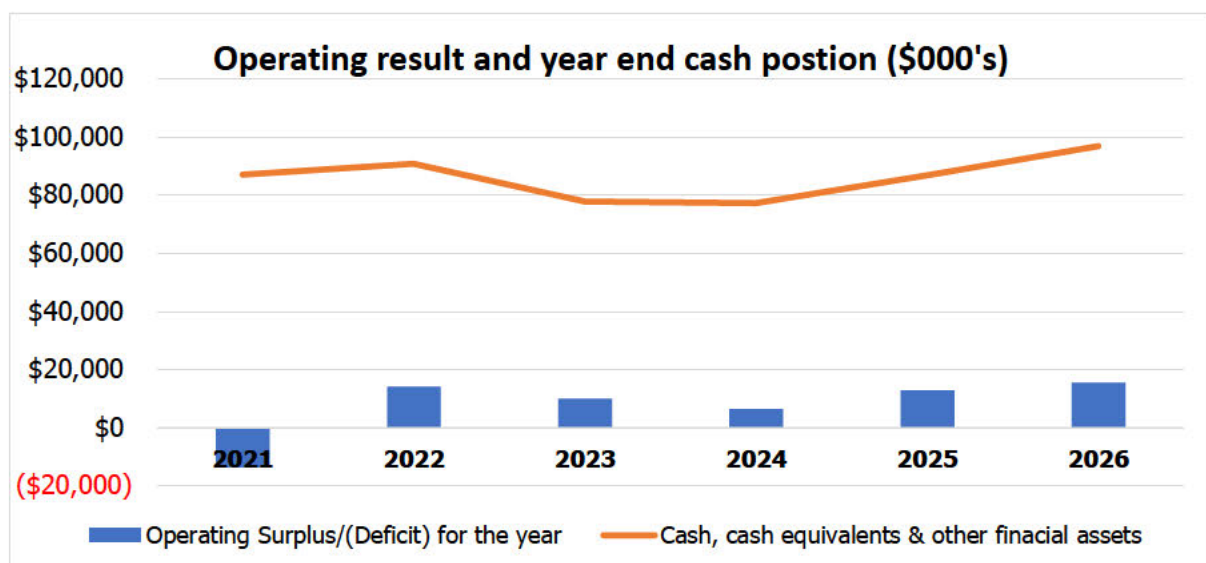
Unfortunately, while many other municipalities are borrowing to fund new infrastructure Port Phillip is proposing to retire \$7.5m of debt in the coming year. We think this is too timid at a time when the City's balance sheet is strong, ageing assets require renewal and improvement and the cost of borrowing is at historically low levels.

Council has identified a host of projects and facilities that need investment – from libraries to childcare centres to bike paths - that could be addressed more quickly and that, well-managed and procured, would provide local economic stimulus.

These could be brought forward and funded through judicious borrowing or a modest increase in drawdowns from reserves.

Council has a capacity to borrow up to \$80 million and still achieve a low-risk rating by the VAGO [Victorian Auditor-General's Office] financial sustainability risk assessment. To be clear, Council must hold reserves at levels sufficient to ensure operational liquidity and for contingencies - but it can also apply cash reserves to at least part fund major capital works. Over the next four years Council is forecasting a net drawdown of \$4 million from reserves.

Predicted operating results and year end cash position indicates that outyears operating surpluses will increase as will the year end cash balances, therefore increasing the funds available for future investment in the City of Port Phillip community.



	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	-\$13,561	\$14,084	\$9,910	\$6,561	\$12,764	\$15,599
Cash, cash equivalents & other financial assets	\$86,917	\$90,786	\$77,740	\$77,208	\$86,825	\$96,804
Source:						
<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive Income Statement - COUNCIL PLAN 2021-31 Draft Document April 2021 For Public Release. Page 66						
<sup>2</sup> Balance Sheet - Current Assets - COUNCIL PLAN 2021-31 Draft Document April 2021 For Public Release. Page 69						

Fast-rising property values in Port Phillip are a function of a 'hot' property market with historically low interest rates and what even economists now call FOMO: fear of missing out. Real estate agents confirm that local property prices and values are driven significantly by the amenity that can be found in Port Phillip: a legacy of decades of improvement and liveability undertaken by previous generations. Parks and open spaces, great foreshore, high quality streetscapes and outstanding community services that make this place so attractive are the result of past borrowing and investments made through rates by previous Councils.

The task of our generation is to invest in a better environment for future generations, not to depreciate the community assets and amenity we have inherited for our own private benefit.

### **A rate freeze would cut services for all and benefit only a few**

At least one councillor has advocated an intriguing vision for Port Phillip: that it become the Monaco of Victoria. That's right, a tax haven for the rich and famous to indulge, right here in Port Phillip.

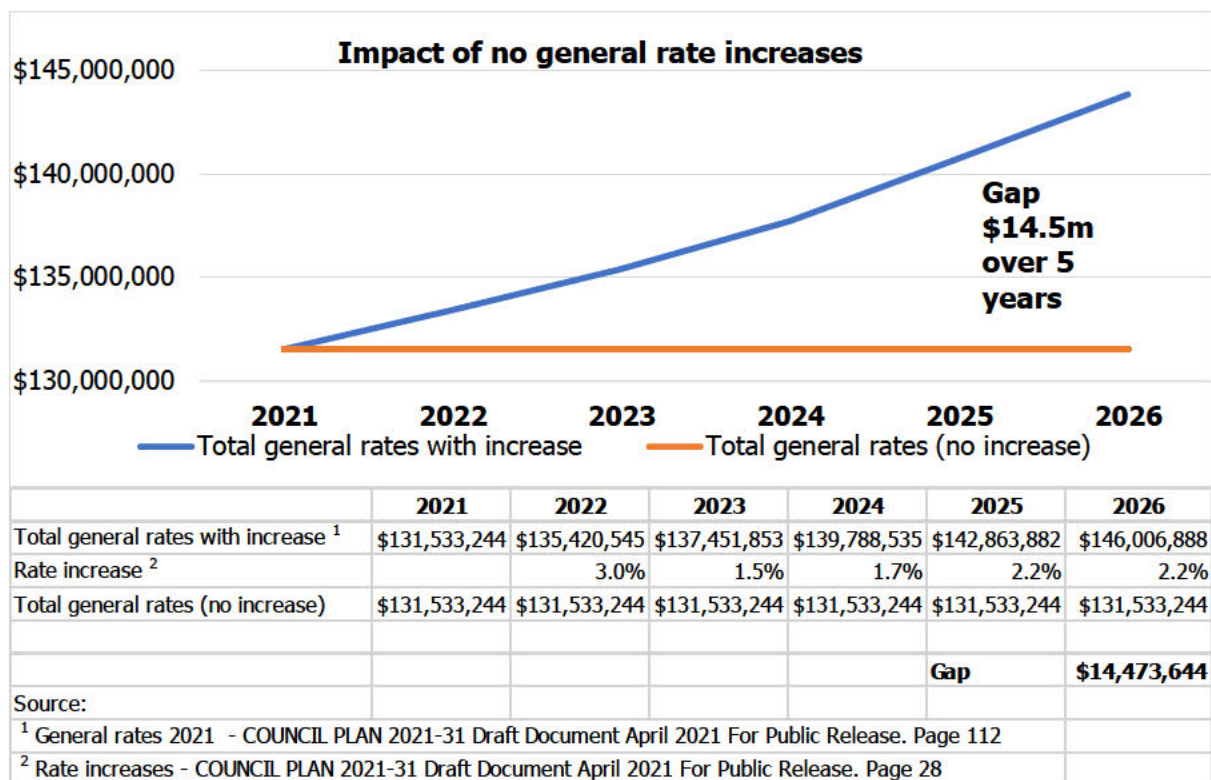
In the first six months of the new Council, four councillors voted against re-purposing already existing expenditure to support for our local shopping strips hard hit by the pandemic; against assistance to small live music venues; and opposed funding for safer bike paths.

Now they want a rates freeze for 2021/22: a cut in community services that we all rely on and enjoy – only to advantage wealthy property owners.

A rates freeze may sound seductive, but the immediate impact would be a \$3.9m hole in the 2021/22 Budget and Council's ability to fund vital community services, to meet rising waste management and recycling costs and other above CPI cost increases.

Due to the complexities of Victoria's rating system, a rate freeze now would leave a compounding funding gap of close to \$14.5 million over the next five years.





The onus is on those seeking a rate freeze to identify how they would balance the books: we know some councillors have a hit list of cuts that include the currently free hard and green waste rubbish collections; support for local arts including live music, Linden Gallery and Gasworks Arts Park; local action on climate change; and Council’s investments in social housing.

Councillors supporting a rate freeze or a reduction in the proposed 1.5% increase need to be upfront and transparent with the community about what they would cut.

Some residents are asset rich but relatively income poor. They are proud members of their local community. But the best response to residents in these circumstances is not to freeze rates for all but to offer targeted relief to people facing difficulty. Port Phillip provides one of the most generous and effective rate relief programs in Victoria. We applaud Council for that and hope it may consider further steps.

### **A higher level of ambition and a stronger vision**

This is a time to build back differently from a devastating pandemic. The pandemic, despite the deep trauma and pain it has inflicted, has also opened our eyes to really important features of our community that perhaps we too often took-for-granted: our neighbours; open space and skies; childcare, carers, schools and teachers; bike paths and safe foot paths; our local businesses; our artists and musicians; our health services and much more.

More than ever, we need a Council that reflects these times, especially the importance of community and shared connection - and that has a vision for all its citizens, not just a few.

Stronger and more consistent engagement with the community is required, especially through quarterly Ward meetings.

Port Phillip Council can and must aim higher to meet the environmental, social and economic challenges ahead. Equity, fairness, creativity and sustainability must be at the heart of our Council and reflected in its ambition and vision for this community.

As we have shown, these challenges can be met through responsible financial management, including shifting some operational priorities, prudently drawing down from reserves and judicious borrowing for inter-generational capital projects [but not operational matters].

We have identified four key areas that need to be elevated.

#### Climate Change, Waste and Environment

There is an uneven understanding of the climate emergency in the community. Council can and should play a crucial role in equipping citizens to address the climate and environmental tasks ahead - in ways that can reduce costs to them, local industry and our environment. Continuing local environmental community education and action is crucial. That's why supporting the Port Phillip EcoCentre is so important.

Another important step is to start is with what we all do every week: putting out the bins. Over the next four years, Council must move from food organics and garden organics (FOGO) bin trials in neighbourhoods to a municipal-wide rollout of the program. This sends a strong signal about how local citizens can contribute to a better environment and a more responsible supply chain but it is also good for Council as it will reduce waste going to landfill and thus reduce exposure to landfill charges and fees.

While Council intends to explore working with other councils to increase awareness and access to renewables, funding is not identified for this. The next Council Budget should include a leading role for Council in addressing the main source of local greenhouse emissions – local industry. Council should fund a project to facilitate a power purchase agreement for industry which makes up 80% of community emissions in Port Phillip.

With more extreme weather events, better use of storm water must be systemically integrated with greening and open space strategies. Those events also prompt the need for higher tree canopy targets and planting. Urban shade areas, already important, will be increasingly vital in coming years and must be a key focus over the remaining Council term.

#### Active transport connections: for people and for bikes

We have learned through the pandemic that safe, active transport connections through cycling and walking are critically important to community well-being. Therefore, the cuts in active cycling participation programs is especially disappointing.

Council's 2018 integrated transport strategy, *Move, Connect, Live* proposed to complete eleven cycling corridors by 2027/8. In the proposed Council Plan there are only three major cycling infrastructure projects listed, including the proposed completion date of 2026 for the Inkerman Street bikeway, after the next Council Election.

These capital projects should be brought forward through prudent infrastructure funding as outlined above.

And rather than reducing the spend on footpath maintenance over the forward estimates, pedestrian safety needs urgent improvement.

## Housing

While Council acknowledges the deep housing crisis within the city, much more needs to be done to address it.

As Council's Draft Plan says:

*Port Phillip has some of the most expensive housing in Victoria, with only a small proportion identified as affordable. The problem of housing affordability has broadened in Port Phillip, from affecting the lowest 50 to 60 per cent of the income range in 1995 to affecting the lower 70 per cent of the income range in 2015. While 44 per cent of Port Phillip residents are renting their homes, less than one per cent of private rental housing is affordable to low-income households.*

Despite this situation, implementation of the flagship *In Our Backyard* strategy is at risk. Council must inject cash or properties or other equity to take advantage of the Victorian Government's \$6 billion Big Housing Build investment to grow affordable housing.

This Council cannot rest on the municipality's history of national leadership on local social housing projects and investments. The diversity, affordability, vibrancy and liveability of our community is at stake. It must act on the *In Our Backyard* strategy and if this is not now achievable, it must develop a new roadmap to ensure Port Phillip has homes for more people who need them.

## Maintaining and rebuilding community infrastructure

The systems and assets built in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are ageing and in need of renewal. These include our town halls, libraries and childcare and aged care centres. Deferring these projects is not necessary, given Council's strong financial position. There is scope to bring a number of projects forward over the remaining term of this Council.

## **Summary**

In summary, Progressive Port Phillip supports the City of Port Phillip's draft 2021-22 Budget.

We do not support the proposed cuts and have especially highlighted the community childcare, Rippon Lea Estate Gardens, Sport Port Phillip, Urban Fresh Food Network and arts program cuts, which could all be addressed through an adjustment in operational priorities including not proceeding with increased high pressure water hosing of main streets, cuts to the contractor/consultant budget and other measures.

There is an urgent need for much greater transparency with the community about a proposed 'service review program' expected to deliver savings of \$1.9m per annum.

A rate freeze is not justified and indeed would punch a major hole in Council's finances in coming years.

There is a need for regular Ward meetings between Councillors and citizens to ensure stronger information flows and improved community engagement.

We call on Council to have a higher level of ambition and boldness to address the challenges facing Port Phillip in future Budgets, especially in relation to action on climate, environment and waste; local bike and foot paths and walking routes; affordable housing and infrastructure renewal.



21 May 2021

## CBR 274 – CBR 463

Dear Cr <<Surname>>,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposal to discontinue triennial funding for Key Arts Organisations in the City of Port Phillip.

The City of Port Phillip's draft 2021 – 2031 vision aspires to create a “legacy for generations to come,” stating: “We are renowned as a cultural hub from live music to our creative industries ... Port Phillip... [is] admired as a creative hub that continues to evolve and innovate.”

The current Key Organisations, including Red Stitch Actors Theatre, Theatre Works, Australian Tapestry Workshop, Rawcus, The Torch, and Phillip Adams Ballet Lab at Temperance Hall, have a combined history of more than 150 years within the City, and have contributed enormously to local arts and culture during that time. Through their arts practice, these organisations contribute to the mental health and well-being of local residents, foster community spirit and promote innovation and creative thinking. Many of these organisations, including Red Stitch, have a history of proudly representing the City by presenting world-class work nationally and internationally, made locally and fostering local talent.

Yet the draft 2021/22 budget and draft 2021 – 2031 Plan propose no ongoing support provided for these critical cultural contributors.

Since 2018, triennial core funding has been vital to the sustainability of these organisations, enabling them to give voice to diverse communities, provide employment opportunities, bring visitors to the City, and offer unparalleled cultural opportunities to residents and visitors alike.

Requiring these organisations – which have been so hard-hit by COVID-19 and are still on the road to recovery – to compete for a reduced pool of project-based funding will greatly impact on their sustainability. Not only does this greatly increase the administrative burden on small organisations, but it has been proposed that grant rounds for festivals be reduced from four to two, with no increase in opportunities through the Cultural Development Fund.

Ongoing funding provides security for these organisations, enabling them to leverage funds to attract other supporters, and to keep benefiting the community in the City of Port Phillip and beyond.

I strongly urge you to reconsider the cancellation of ongoing financial support for these cultural institutions, which play such a vital part in our community.

Yours Sincerely,

Your Name.