



Agenda

Scheduled Council Meeting

Tuesday 16 April 2024 at 6pm

You are advised that a Meeting of Council has been called by the Chief Executive Officer on Tuesday 16 April 2024 at 6pm for the transaction of the following business.

This meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang and will be [livestreamed via Council’s website](https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings/).

**C Lloyd**

**Chief Executive Officer**

Administrators

Lydia Wilson Chair of Council

Peita Duncan Administrator

Christian Zahra AM Administrator

On 19 June 2020 the Acting Minister for Local Government appointed the Panel of Administrators for the City of Whittlesea and appointed Lydia Wilson as Chair of the Panel. The Panel of Administrators comprises of Lydia Wilson, Peita Duncan and Christian Zahra who will undertake the duties of the Council of the City of Whittlesea until the October 2024 Local Government Election.

Senior Officers

Craig Lloyd Chief Executive Officer

Emma Appleton Director Planning & Development

Agata Chmielewski Director Community Wellbeing

Sarah Renner Director Customer & Corporate Services

Debbie Wood Director Infrastructure & Environment

Janine Morgan Executive Manager Public Affairs

Jacinta Stevens Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

Order of Business

[1 Opening 5](#_Toc163739108)

[1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions 5](#_Toc163739109)

[1.2 Apologies 5](#_Toc163739110)

[1.3 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement 5](#_Toc163739111)

[1.4 Diversity and Good Governance Statement 5](#_Toc163739112)

[1.5 Acknowledgements 6](#_Toc163739113)

[2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest 6](#_Toc163739114)

[3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s 6](#_Toc163739115)

[4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters 7](#_Toc163739116)

[4.1 Public Question Time 7](#_Toc163739117)

[4.2 Petitions 7](#_Toc163739118)

[4.3 Joint Letters 7](#_Toc163739119)

[5 Officers' Reports 8](#_Toc163739120)

[5.1 Audit and Risk Committee Report on Activity 8](#_Toc163739121)

[5.2 Informal Meetings of Administrators 11](#_Toc163739122)

[5.3 VR Michael Reserve Draft Master Plan 12](#_Toc163739123)

[5.4 Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan 21](#_Toc163739124)

[5.5 Draft Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) - Endorsement for Community Consultation 28](#_Toc163739125)

[6 Notices of Motion 33](#_Toc163739126)

[7 Urgent Business 33](#_Toc163739127)

[8 Reports from Council Representatives and CEO Update 33](#_Toc163739128)

[9 Confidential Business 33](#_Toc163739129)

[9.1 CEO Employment Matters - Mid-term Review 33](#_Toc163739130)

[9.2 Appointment of acting Chief Executive Officers 33](#_Toc163739131)

[10 Closure 33](#_Toc163739132)

**Note:**

At the Chair of Council’s discretion, the meeting may be closed to the public in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The provision which is likely to be relied upon to enable closure is set out in each item. These reports are not available for public distribution.

**Question Time:**

Council will hold public question time for up to 30 minutes at each Scheduled Council Meeting to allow for public questions, petitions or joint letters from our community to be read out by the Chief Executive Officers delegate and responses will be provide by the Chief Executive Officer.

Questions are required to be submitted in writing no later than 12 noon on the day prior to a Scheduled Council Meeting.

Priority will be given to questions or statements that relate to agenda items. Any questions submitted after 12 noon the day prior will be held over to the following Council Meeting.

The Public Question form can be downloaded from Council’s website. Refer: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings/>

Council is committed to ensuring that all residents and ratepayers of the municipality may contribute to Council’s democratic process and therefore, if you have special requirements, please telephone the Governance Team prior to any Council Meeting on (03) 9217 2170.

**1 Opening**

**1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will open the meeting and introduce the Administrators and Chief Executive Officer:

Administrator, Peita Duncan;

Administrator, Christian Zahra; and

Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd.

The Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd will introduce members of the Executive Leadership Team:

Emma Appleton, Director Planning and Development;

Agata Chmielewski, Director Community Wellbeing;

Sarah Renner, Director Corporate and Customer Services;

Debbie Wood, Director Infrastructure and Environment;

Janine Morgan, Executive Manager Public Affairs; and

Jacinta Stevens, Executive Manager Office of Council and CEO.

**1.2 Apologies**

**1.3 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will read the following statement:

*“On behalf of Council, I recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.*

*I would also like to acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging.”*

**1.4 Diversity and Good Governance Statement**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will read the following statement:

*“At the City of Whittlesea we are proud of our diversity and the many cultures, faiths and beliefs that make up our community. We strive to be an inclusive welcoming City that fosters active participation, wellbeing and connection to each other and this land. We commit as a Council to making informed decisions to benefit the people of the City of Whittlesea now and into the future, to support our community’s vision of A Place For All.*”

**1.5 Acknowledgements**

**2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

**3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s**

# Recommendation

**THAT the following Minutes of the preceding meeting as circulated, be confirmed:**

**Scheduled Meeting of Council held on 19 March 2024.**

**4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters**

**4.1 Public Question Time**

**4.2 Petitions**

No Petitions

**4.3 Joint Letters**

No Joint Letters

**5 Officers' Reports**

5.1 Audit and Risk Committee Report on Activity

**5.1 Audit and Risk Committee Report on Activity**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Report Author:** Compliance & Audit Officer

**External in Attendance:** Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee

# Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an overview of key activities undertaken by the Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) during the period   
6 September 2023 to February 2024.

The Committee’s Biannual Report (Attachment 1) provides Council with information on:

* The progress of its Annual Work Plan and activities for this reporting period.
* Activities that the Committee monitors and reviews to ensure it complies with the requirements under the Committee Charter.
* Details of discussions and recommendations made relating to the key activities of risk management, financial and performance reporting, systems of internal control, internal assurance, internal audit, external audit, compliance and governance.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council note:**

**1.** **The Audit and Risk Committee’s Biannual Report for the period 6 September 2023 to February 2024 at Attachment 1.**

**2.** **The Audit and Risk Committee have provided valuable support to Council and discharged their responsibilities under the Audit and Risk Committee Charter including providing oversight on financial and performance reporting, systems of internal control, risk management and audit and assurance activities.**

# Background / Key Information

The Committee is an independent advisory committee of Council whose role is to report to Council and provide appropriate advice and recommendations on matters presented to it. The Committee acts in this capacity by monitoring, reviewing and advising on issues within its scope of responsibility and assisting Council’s governance obligations to its community.

In accordance with s54 (5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Committee is required to prepare a biannual report on its activities. A copy of the report was provided to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at this Council Meeting.

At its 12 November 2020 meeting, the Committee determined that it would prepare a report for Council on its activities following the March and September Committee meetings each year.

The bi-annual report was approved by the Chair on behalf of the Committee out of session, who is in attendance to present the report to Council.

# Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**High Performing Organisation**

We engage effectively with the community, to deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, and to make decisions in the best interest of our community and deliver value to our community.

# Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

Financial Management

The cost is included in the current budget.

Community Consultation and Engagement

The Audit and Risk Committee is a non-delegated Committee of Council and therefore, no community consultation and engagement are required.

# Other Principles for Consideration

**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

(e)  Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

Public Transparency Principles

(b)   Council information must be publicly available unless— (i) the information is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act; or (ii) public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest.

(c)   Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community.

(d)  Public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated.

# Council Policy Considerations

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

No implications.

Social, Cultural and Health

No implications.

Economic

No implications.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

There are no implications with the presentation of the biannual report. It is a legislative requirement under s 54 (5) of the Act.

# Implementation Strategy

Communication

This report is one method by which Council is informed of the activities of the Audit and Risk Committee and is made publicly available to members of the community through the Council meeting agenda and minutes.

Critical Dates

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the Audit and Risk Committee Charter, the Audit and Risk Committee’s Biannual Report is to be tabled at the subsequent Council Meeting.

# Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

# Attachments

1. Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report 6 September 2023 to [**5.1.1** - 8 pages]

5.2 Informal Meetings of Administrators

**5.2 Informal Meetings of Administrators**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Report Author:** Coordinator Governance Administration

# Executive Summary

Chapter 5 of the Council Governance Rules requires a summary of the matters discussed at a meeting of Councillors (Administrators) that:

* is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors (Administrators);
* is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
* is not a Council meeting or Delegated Committee meeting

The summary of matters discussed at the meeting must be:

* tabled at the next convenient Council meeting; and
* recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

The record of Informal Meetings of Councillors (Administrators) at Attachment 1 is reported to Council in accordance with this requirement.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council note the record of Informal Meetings of Administrators at Attachment 1.**

# Attachments

1. Informal Meetings of Administrators Report [**5.2.1** - 1 page]

5.3 VR Michael Reserve Draft Master Plan

**5.3 VR Michael Reserve Draft Master Plan**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Report Author:** Open Space Planner

**In Attendance:** Coordinator Open Space Planning

# Executive Summary

* The VR Michael Reserve Master Plan project is the result of a council resolution, at the Council meeting on 12 December 2022, in response to a petition requesting an increase to car parking spaces and accessible parking at VR Michael Reserve in Lalor. The Council resolutions were to:
* Undertake a park masterplan in the 2023-24 Financial Year for a more comprehensive approach to park planning for existing and future uses;
* Upgrade the offsite parking (east of entrance of VR Michael Reserve) and provide all weather pedestrian connection from the parking to the clubrooms as part of the 2023-24 capital works program.
* The Open Space Planning Team has developed the draft VR Michael Reserve Master Plan which provides the City of Whittlesea with a vision, objectives, recommendations and prioritisation for future development over the 10 years.
* As per the Council resolution, a plan to upgrade the existing gravel parking lot located in the southeast of VR Michael Reserve has been completed. The upgrade includes the construction of a Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant shared path from the car park to the Lalor Bocce Social Club within the reserve, the extension of the existing footpath along High Street as well as the provision of 24 car parking bays.
* Phase One of community consultation and internal stakeholder engagement have been completed, and the community feedback has shaped the draft master plan.
* The master plan will enhance our preparedness for advocacy, contributing to better open space and urban design outcomes. This includes addressing challenges such as rail corridor land acquisition and ensuring a balanced approach to open space loss.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

1. **Note that the draft VR Michael Reserve Master Plan has been informed from feedback gathered during the phase one consultation, undertaken from 26 June to 24 July 2023.**
2. **Endorse the draft VR Michael Reserve Master Plan to be presented for community consultation from 22 April 2024 to 20 May 2024 to gather additional feedback and comments to refine and finalise the Master Plan.**
3. **Resolve to refer the draft VR Michael Reserve Master Plan to the Youth Council for feedback prior to the final Master Plan coming back to Council for adoption.**

# Background / Key Information

* The VR Michael Reserve Draft Master Plan (the Master Plan) guides and provides direction for future upgrades and improvements to VR Michael Reserve. The Master Plan responds to insufficient car parking (on days of Bocce Club gatherings), safety issues, connectivity and community needs along with recommendations to improve the natural environment.
* VR Michael Reserve (the Reserve) is outlined in the City of Whittlesea Open Space Strategy as a Municipal Open Space Reserve in Lalor which is characterised as a predominantly non-sporting reserve. The Open Space Strategy recommends maintaining the park and providing exercise equipment, more seating and shelters with BBQs.
* The Reserve was identified as one of the most popular in Lalor and Epping in the community survey undertaken in 2014 for the Whittlesea Open Space Strategy. The reserve has an area of approx. 7.4 hectares which is characterised by open grassed areas, groups of trees and several facilities including a play space, Lalor United Bocce Social Club, basketball court, picnic facilities, public toilet and car parking. The Playground equipment was upgraded in 2018. The site exhibits varied topography, particularly noticeable on the eastern side, with an approximate elevation difference of 4 meters between High Street and the Bocce Social Club.
* Key data for Lalor include:
* 23,587 residents in 2021
* 46.5% of households are couples with children
* 32% of households are couples without children
* 23.4% of population are 60+ years of age
* 30.2% of population are less than 25 years of age
* Median age is 37
* 53% were born overseas
* 70% Speak a language other than English at home
* 35-39 is the dominant age group forming 7.9% of Lalor population
* Italian and Indian are the dominant cultures/groups in Lalor after Australians
* 6.51% canopy cover (Greening Whittlesea City Forest Strategy, 2020-2040)
* 24 square meters provision of usable (unencumbered) open space per resident (Open Space Plan, 2016)
* 19 square meters projected provision of usable open space per resident (projected population 2041)
* The Dog off-leash Area Policy & Management Plan 2016-2026 proposes VR Michael Reserve as future dog off-leash area. It is outlined as 'open unstructured' dog off-leash area with an allocation of 1.353 ha of 7.07ha reserve.
* The Epping Central Structure Plan 2023 outlines a proposed off-road shared path and two options for the alignment of the future Wollert Rail Corridor that passes through VR Michael Reserve. Council Advocacy Prospectus 2023-25 advocates for the construction of the rail corridor by 2030, however at the time of writing this report, the Victorian Government has not committed to the timing or funding of this project.
* Geotechnical investigations were completed in 2012, revealing a history that includes basalt quarrying prior to 1960. Subsequently, during the 1960s and 1970s, the area served as a municipal tip, likely operated by the City of Whittlesea. The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has confirmed its recognition as a former municipal landfill, operational from 1974 to 1978, spanning 7.5 hectares and accumulating approximately 250,000m3 of waste.

The vision of the Draft Master Plan is:

VR Michael Reserve is an accessible, inclusive and vibrant reserve that offers a variety of informal recreational opportunities for individuals and families, catering to the diverse interests of our community. This reserve is a hub of inclusivity and engagement, where residents can celebrate and share cultural identity and diversity.

The objectives are:

* Promote inclusivity and accessibility
* Enhance recreational opportunities
* Improve aesthetics and environmental sustainability
* Provide meaningful and safe play
* Activate and enhance spaces and interfaces of the Future Wollert Rail Overpass

The Master Plan sets out recommendations which are articulated through the key themes of Movement and Access, Informal Recreation and Park Infrastructure and Environment and Landscape, and will achieve the following outcomes for the community (Refer to Attachment 1 - VR Michael Reserve Master Plan Report (draft) and Attachment 2 - VR Michael Reserve draft Master Plan).

**Movement and Access:**

**Enhanced Accessibility:** The realigned and upgraded concrete paths will make the park more accessible to a wider range of community members, including those with mobility challenges.

**Improved Parking Convenience:** The integrated and upgraded car parks, along with the proposed lighting and a proposed drop-off area adjacent to the Bocce Social Club, will enhance convenience for park users, ensuring a safer and more accessible parking experience.

**Welcoming Entrances:** Upgraded entrances with wayfinding signage, feature paving, improved accessibility and landscaping will create a more welcoming atmosphere, guiding visitors and enhancing the overall park experience.

**Enhanced Accessibility for Bocce Club Users:** Upgraded path connections between the central car park and the Bocce Social Club, proposed drop-off area, and DDA-compliant path from the lower car park to the Bocce Social Club, will significantly improve accessibility for Bocce Club members, ensuring a seamless and inclusive experience for all users. This enhancement will promote ease of access and participation in club activities.

**Informal Recreation and Park Infrastructure:**

**Increased Recreational Opportunities:** The proposed outdoor gathering spaces, fitness stations, and diverse informal recreational facilities beneath the future rail overpass including multi-use ball court, table tennis tables, skate features and bouldering wall will increase opportunities for social interaction, and physical activity within the reserve for young adults

**Safe and Diverse Play Experiences:** The play space enhancements, including relocation to space further-away from roads, and the addition of nature-based areas, will provide a safe and enjoyable environment for children, fostering community engagement.

**Improved Park Facilities:** The addition of park furniture, signage, and regulated dog park areas will improve overall amenities, creating a more comfortable and informative park experience.

**Upgraded Public Toilet:** The proposed medium-term action to relocate the public toilets closer to the existing and proposed play space and picnic area, along with the short-term action of upgrading the access path to the existing public toilet, ensures immediate improvements in accessibility but also creates a more inclusive and convenient public toilet experience in the future.

**Environment and Landscape:**

**Enhanced Visibility and Safety:** The reduction of dense vegetation, improved lighting and activation of the southwest area of the reserve, will enhance visibility, and reduce visual barriers, ensuring a safer environment for park users. Additionally, the proposed bocce court offers passive surveillance opportunities, enhancing public safety for the play space, picnic area, toilet, and exercise station within the vicinity.

**Ecological Sustainability:** The careful management of vegetation, including planting shade trees and maintaining buffer planting, will contribute to ecological sustainability and create a more environmentally friendly park.

**Aesthetic Improvements:** Replacing overgrown understory planting with low-maintenance plants will lead to aesthetic improvements, creating a visually appealing and inviting park.

# Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**Connected Communities**

We work to foster and inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported.

**Liveable Neighbourhoods**

Our City is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play. Well-planned, accessible open space is proven to have preventative health benefits including opportunities for the community to socially interact and undertake physical activities. The W2040 Liveable Neighbourhoods goal includes an indicator to increase use of open space. Providing additional value in existing open spaces and increased accessibility to these facilities is important to the health of the community.

# Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

Financial Management

The estimated budget required to implement the Master Plan is subject to further design development. The initial high-level costing estimates the total cost of Master Plan implementation at $4.3m. The inclusion of CPI adjustments over the life of delivery estimates overall implementation to be $5.4m.

Master plan implementation is subject to the Council annual budget process. Of the required $5.4m of funding, approximately $1.5m will be funded by existing asset renewal programs including the playground renewal program and additional tree planting through the Greening Whittlesea program. Items requiring additional funding will be referred to Council’s annual budget process and external grant opportunities.

The plan also justifies the council's advocacy for the proposed facilities beneath the rail to be funded by the state government, with the estimated current cost for these facilities being approximately $520,000.

The operational and maintenance estimate to maintain the fully implemented master plan is $14,605p/a. This figure is in addition to maintaining existing elements proposed to be retained.

The master plan ensures our preparedness to advocate to State Government for better open space and urban design outcomes. This includes addressing challenges such as rail corridor land acquisition and ensuring a balanced approach to open space loss or restriction.

Community Consultation and Engagement

Phase one of the consultation was undertaken from 26 June to 24 July 2023 to collect information on the needs of current and future users of VR Michael Reserve. The consultation was accessible online through City of Whittlesea Engage Page.

In person consultation and engagement activities include conversations with retailers along Deveny Road and High Street. The United Lalor and Bocce Social Club users, visitors to the reserve and residents within 400 meters of the reserve and a pop-up consultation (Refer to Attachment 3- Technical Engagement Summary Report).

Feedback was received from 172 participants with the majority (131 people) participating in person at our community pop-ups by filling out a survey and/or sharing ideas on the map activity.

The top two reasons that visitors use the reserve are to use the playground facilities (50%) and attend events/activities at The United Lalor Bocce and Social Club (20%).

According to the total responses, the top six (6) priorities for improvement are as follows:

* General safety
* Public toilet
* Walking track
* Pedestrian access
* Greenery
* Central lawn area

Respondents shared potential future opportunities for VR Michael Recreation Reserve which have been grouped below.

Inclusive Recreation Facilities

* Extension of the playground with age-appropriate equipment
* More regular grass and tree maintenance
* Outdoor fitness & exercise station
* Vehicle drop-off area
* Jogging/running track
* Concrete all-weather track

Park Support Facilities & Safety

* More picnic and undercover areas to socialise
* Bench seating next to the basketball area
* Off Lead Dog Park
* Lighting and security cameras

Community Spaces

* Information board featuring historical details
* Community herb garden and sensory garden
* Areas to socialise and better facilities for families to meet and have fun

The next phase of the consultation involves the exhibition of the draft master plan (Refer to Attachment 2, VR Michael Reserve Draft Master Plan) and key recommendations to the broader community. This consultation seeks to:

* Inform the local community of the project and encourage them to share their feedback.
* Confirm Council’s understanding of how the broader community use the reserve and how they would like to see the reserve in the future.
* Receive feedback on the draft master plan concept, confirming whether it caters to the ongoing and future needs of the community.

Community consultation is scheduled to commence on the 22 April 2024, lasting for a period of 4 weeks. A range of engagement activities are planned, including an online engagement page with a survey, direct mail outs, pop-up sessions onsite and around VR Michael Reserve, and meetings with target groups including the United Lalor and Bocce Social Club users, local youth and culturally diverse women groups. This engagement will confirm that the draft master plan caters to the needs of the community. Feedback will be used to refine the master plan and create a priority list of actions.

# Other Principles for Consideration

**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

(b)  Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

(c)   The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

(d)  The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Public Transparency Principles

(a)   Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act.

# Council Policy Considerations

Environmental Sustainability Considerations

The VR Michael Reserve Master Plan will contribute to a healthier and more sustainable environment through increased tree canopy cover, biodiversity, and sustainable infrastructure including integrated water management in the car park and new infrastructure.

Social, Cultural and Health

The VR Michael Reserve Master Plan will provide opportunities for physical activity, recreation, and relaxation. It will foster a sense of community and provide spaces for residents to come together, leading to improved social cohesion.

Economic

Upgrade of existing facilities in VR Michael Reserve and activating underutilised spaces will attract more people to the local area, enhance passive surveillance, improve perception of safety of the precinct, boost property values, and provide a positive impact on local economy contributing to economic growth.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

No implications.

# Implementation Strategy

Communication

A Communication Plan has been developed in line with the Engagement Plan. With the support of the draft master plan recommendations for community consultation from Council, a variety of communication activities will be undertaken to promote community consultation. This will include social media posts, direct mail outs to the local community, media releases and school newsletters.

A variety of engagement activities are planned, including an online engagement page with survey, direct mail outs, pop-up sessions onsite and around VR Michael Reserve and meetings with target groups including the United Lalor and Bocce Social Club users, local youth and culturally diverse women groups.

Critical Dates

22 April to 20May 2024: Community consultation

June to July 2024: Finalise Master Plan

# Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

# Attachments

1. VR Michael Reserve Master Plan Report (Draft) [**5.3.1** - 21 pages]
2. VR Michael Reserve Draft Master Plan [**5.3.2** - 1 page]
3. Technical Engagement Findings Report [**5.3.3** - 14 pages]

5.4 Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan

**5.4 Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Report Author:** Coordinator Open Space Planning

**In Attendance:** Coordinator Open Space Planning

# Executive Summary

This report is to present and seek Council’s endorsement of the Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan.

The Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan was initiated to provide a cohesive and succinct plan to manage and improve this valuable open space asset for the continued use by sporting clubs and to increase provision of facilities for use by the broader community. Proposals for the reserve include the improvement and increase of informal active recreation facilities such as play spaces, exercise equipment, walking and running paths, and public amenity lighting. Council’s continued support of the sporting clubs is reflected in the formalisation of car parking, increased opportunity for weather protection, and new interfaces with the pavilion.

The master plan has undergone two phases of community consultation to assist and inform the development and refinement of the Master Plan. The community has also contributed to the prioritisation of actions implementation. The master plan has had meaningful key stakeholder involvement throughout its development, with opportunities to provide feedback and suggestions at different stages. Stakeholders will be invited to participate further to shape each discrete project, such as pavilion refurbishments and car park improvements.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

**1.** **Note the community engagement activities undertaken, as outlined in the body of this report, that have assisted and informed the finalisation of the Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan.**

**2.** **Endorse the Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan at Attachment 1 for implementation.**

**3.** **Acknowledge and thank the community members and key stakeholders that provided feedback on the Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan.**

# Background / Key Information

**Background**

Lalor Recreation Reserve is identified as a Municipal Open Space in the *City of Whittlesea Open Space Strategy*. The reserve has an area of 5 hectares with a lengthy frontage to Sydney Crescent. The main vehicular entry to the reserve is from Sydney Crescent and parking is time limited by an electronic gate. Secondary pedestrian access points include a laneway off Edmondson Street and through the tennis club carpark on Sydney Crescent. The reserve is surrounded on three sides by residential properties, with back fences facing the reserve.

The reserve is predominantly used by formal sporting clubs (Lalor Football and Netball Club, and Lalor Warriors Cricket Club) for training and competition of Australian Rules Football and Cricket. The two clubs share a sports pavilion, full-size competition oval with perimeter fence, sportsground lighting and a circuit road. The recreation reserve has additional infrastructure for cricket with a set of 3 bay cricket nets in the southeast corner of the reserve, and a cricket pitch in the centre of the oval. The southwest corner of the reserve services the Lalor Tennis Club with four tennis courts and support facilities, including a dedicated carpark, tennis pavilion and barbeque facilities. A privately run lawn bowls club is adjacent to the tennis courts and is accessible from Sydney Crescent.

***Previous Plans***

The most recent master plan for the recreation reserve was completed and adopted by Council in 2005, and the management of the reserve is guided by a more recent *Asset Renewal and Implementation Plan* completed in 2018 (used at a department level to capture immediate management issues).

***Related Council Resolutions***

Recommended actions to address community concerns at Lalor Recreation Reserve had been presented to Council at the 6 April 2021 Council Meeting, resolutions items 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 were actioned to reduce late night activities in the vicinity of the pavilion. The draft master plan aims to further mitigate these concerns with structural change to the pavilion surrounds.

An earlier draft master plan was presented to Council at the 19 September 2023 Council Meeting, seeking endorsement to commence community engagement activities to further inform and refine the master plan, changes resulting from the outcome of the consultation and engagement are outlined below.

***Revised master plan***

Changes to the draft master plan following community and stakeholder engagement include:

* Removal of parking and general vehicle access to behind the pavilion, maintenance vehicle access only via locked vehicle exclusion fencing. To further mitigate the anti-social vehicle-based gatherings behind the pavilion.
* Realignment of southern portion of loop path, moving further away from neighbouring properties to maintain privacy of residents.
* Retention of car parking between tennis courts and pavilion as requested by tennis club users.
* Retention of irrigation header tanks in current location, retaining the existing functional irrigation system.
* Low fence between play space and Sydney Crescent, to maintain physical separation between the park and the street for children whilst allowing for good visual permeability into the reserve.
* Investigate retractable weather protection awning to the pavilion, to improve spectator and sporting club user comfort and weather protection during training and competitions.
* Investigate integration of public facing toilets to the pavilion on northern edge, to allow for longer stays for park users.
* Investigate formalisation of pedestrian crossing across Sydney Crescent, to improve connectivity from the Rochdale Square shops to the reserve.

***Final master plan***

The final master plan prioritises recommendations and actions required to achieve the ultimate master plan. For detailed information please refer to Attachment 1.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **High Priority** | **Medium Priority** | **Low Priority** |
| * Play space * Car parking * Pathway network (including loop path) * Public amenity lighting * Vegetation (ongoing tree maintenance) * Interface with adjacent land uses * Indigenous engagement | * Sydney Crescent (on street parking and park frontage) * Pavilion refurbishment * Public toilet * Wayfinding strategy * Water and drainage (integrated water management) * Sustainability alignments | * Integrated art |

***Master plan implementation***

The master plan implementation will be phased across multiple years commencing in the 2025-26 financial year. The design of each discrete project will occur a year before the planned construction year and will be coordinated with resource availability. The master plan will be converted into a business case to support the budget bid for each discrete project and to allow for a balanced approach to Capital Delivery of all adopted master plans.

# Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**Connected Communities**

We work to foster and inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported.

**Liveable Neighbourhoods**

Our city is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

**Sustainable Environment**

We prioritise our environment and take action to reduce waste, preserve local biodiversity, protect waterways and green space and address climate change.

The master planning of Lalor Recreation Reserve is a direct measure in the Liveable Neighbourhood Strategy, *Increased planning and design of public spaces.* In addition, the implementation of the master plan will foster a more connected community with publicly accessible social spaces for the community, and local and regional sporting groups. The master plan also provides guidance on how to better utilise the public open space to increase sustainability outcomes such as increase tree canopy, biodiversity and integrated water management.

# Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

Financial Management

The master plan forms the business case for the future discrete projects and allows for effective budget forecasting and planned delivery over 10 years.

The overall estimated cost for implementation is $4,670,508.00 exclusive of GST and CPI adjustments for multi-year delivery. The implementation is subject to annual Capital Works project prioritisation and external grant funding opportunities. Apportioned budget from existing renewal programs are to fund recommended works that include the replacement and upgrade of existing assets, such as play equipment, car parks, fencing, and paths.

The overall estimated ongoing cost for maintenance of the new facilities is estimated at an additional $18,000 per annum to current costs for the existing reserve.

Community Consultation and Engagement

The master plan has undergone two rounds of open community engagement:

* Phase 1 – 5 July to 31 July 2022
* Phase 2 – 26 September to 12 October 2023

*Draft Master Plan Consultation and Engagement*

The draft Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan was available for community review and feedback between 26 September to 12 October 2023. A total of 339 unique visitors interacted with the project Engage page. The draft master plan received 74 contributions, 35 of which were captured at community-based pop-ups and the remaining 39 contributions were made on the Whittlesea Engage Platform. A wide range of community members participated and contributed, with ages ranging from under 15 years to over 75. Of those that participated, 32% spoke a language other than English at home and identified predominantly as female (64%).

Stakeholder sessions were held on 26 July 2022 and 5 October 2023 to gain insights into the specific needs of the sporting clubs, to discuss the draft master plans, and the recommended actions for implementation. Stakeholders will be provided opportunities to continued contribution in the implementation of the master plan.

The draft master plan received strong support by the community, with 69.2% ‘Liking’ or ‘Liking it a lot’, and 10.3% indifferent with the proposal.

Changes to the draft master plan following community consultation are outlined in the Key Information Section of this report.

*Community Priorities*

Participants were asked to prioritise their top four proposed improvements recommended in the draft master plan. The top four community defined priorities are:

1. Upgrade playground and nature play.
2. Replace road around oval with walking path/running loop and terraced seating.
3. New public amenity lighting.
4. Improve park entry and street frontage.

Those under 15 years old that participated in the engagement prioritised upgrading playground and nature play (100%), replacing the road around the oval with walking path/running loop and terraced seating (100%), new exercise equipment (100%), and sport field improvements (60%).

Participants older than 15 years prioritised upgrading the playground (56%), new exercise equipment (40%), replacing the road, and new public amenity lighting.

These priorities are reflected in the future planning for implementation of the master plan and is outlined in the Key Information section.

Refer to Attachment 2 for Phase 2 consultation summary, and attachment 3 for technical response.

# Other Principles for Consideration

**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

(i) The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act.

# Council Policy Considerations

Environmental Sustainability Considerations

Recreation Reserve master plans define the management needs of the green and blue assets in the reserves with the aim of increasing environmental benefits such as enhancing tree canopy coverage, increasing biodiversity with native plantings and habitat creation, and the implementation of water sensitive urban design principles to assist in improving our waterways.

Social, Cultural and Health

The recreation reserve master plans aim to create more social spaces for all community members enabling social gatherings whether affiliated with sporting clubs or not, in addition the master plan ensures continued support of established sporting clubs with the improvement of facilities. Quality public open space has been studied to increase community health and social cohesion in the locality.

Economic

The recreation reserve master plan aims to increase patronage of our recreation reserves by creating welcoming public open space for the local and broader community. Increased visits to the recreation reserves will in turn increase visits to local shopping precincts to facilitate extended stays at the reserves. In addition to the direct economic impact on local businesses, the improvement of public open space has been studied to increase the property values of the locality.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

The recreation reserve master plans provide a robust way to plan for the next 10 years of asset management and improvement, ensuring the community has the infrastructure to engage in active and passive recreation through organised sports and informal recreation.

# Implementation Strategy

Communication

The Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan followed a communication and engagement plan. Pending Council endorsement, the plan will be published on the Engage page where followers of the page will be notified of the update.

Additional communications activities will be undertaken to close the loop through Council’s communication channels, including a media release, social media platforms, and direct emails. Further community consultation and communication may be undertaken for discrete projects during the implementation of the Master Plan, such as the proposed pavilion refurbishment investigations, and the circuit path works.

Critical Dates

N/A

# Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

# Attachments

1. Lalor Recreation Reserve Master Plan [**5.4.1** - 49 pages]
2. Lalor Recreation Reserve Engagement Technical Response [**5.4.2** - 2 pages]

5.5 Draft Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) - Endorsement for Community Consultation

**5.5 Draft Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) - Endorsement for Community Consultation**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Report Author:** Senior Transport Planner

**In Attendance:** Manager Urban Design & Transport

# Executive Summary

The draft Integrated Transport Plan 2024 (ITP) sets out a vision for transport planning in the municipality over the next ten years. It will allow Council to strategically plan for, and respond to, future challenges and opportunities, inform advocacy for our transport needs and guide the development and expansion of the transport network in Whittlesea.

The draft ITP will demonstrate Council’s leadership and commitment to improving transport outcomes in the municipality. It is also envisaged to guide and influence future investment decisions.

The draft ITP will support the Whittlesea 2040 vision as an action item in the Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy Action Plan and will be a Level 3 document within the Integrated Planning Framework. It will supersede the existing Integrated Transport Strategy 2014.

If the draft ITP is fully implemented, the community can expect to benefit from:

* Improved and increased travel choices (especially for short trips)
* Improved walkability and public transport
* Reduced congestion and trip distances
* Greater social connections
* Improved access to employment and recreation

Council endorsement is sought to undertake community consultation on the draft ITP.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

1. **Note the community consultation held between 11 December 2023 and 15 February 2024, which helped inform the strategic direction of the draft Integrated Transport Plan at Attachment 1.**
2. **Resolve to endorse the draft City of Whittlesea Integrated Transport Plan provided at Attachment 1 for community consultation between the period 22 April 2024 to 19 May 2024.**
3. **Note a subsequent report will be provided at the 16 July 2024 Scheduled Council Meeting for consideration and adoption of the Integration Transport Plan.**

# Background / Key Information

The draft ITP will supersede the existing Integrated Transport Strategy 2014, which facilitated the delivery of the Road Safety Strategy 2017, the Roads and Public Transport Plan 2017, the Whittlesea Bicycle Plan 2016-2020 and its successor Walking and Cycling Plan 2022-2027. The Mernda Rail Extension Project was delivered in 2018 and a number of arterial road and intersection upgrades have been delivered.

The draft ITP has been informed by the prior development of a Background Paper and Directions Paper as well as community consultation undertaken between December 2023 and February 2024.

The Background Paper provided an assessment of the current transport patterns, including population growth and the ongoing prevalence of car dependency, traffic congestion and long commutes.

The Directions Paper has helped to shape the vision, guiding principles and objective statements for the draft ITP. It has also offered a number of potential future scenarios based on alternative transport and land use approaches.

The draft ITP has been established to set a vision for transport planning in the municipality over the next ten years. It will also allow Council to plan strategically for future challenges and opportunities and to inform Council’s transport advocacy portfolio.

The draft ITP has identified eight focus areas (see below) with corresponding objectives and actions for each area:

* Land Use Integration
* Walking and Cycling
* Public Transport
* Road Network
* Travel Behaviour Change
* Technology and Innovation
* Freight
* Parking Management

Council’s advocacy priorities have been updated and reinforced in the draft ITP to reflect our future infrastructure needs and associated delivery timings.

The draft ITP will promote alternative transport choices, with a particular focus on delivering sustainable transport (walking and cycling) options for local trips.

# Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**Liveable Neighbourhoods**

Our city is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

The draft ITP is an action item in the Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy Action Plan.

The draft ITP is proposed to contain actions to implement Level 4 documents, including both the Walking and Cycling Plan 2022-2027 and Northern Trails 2022, and to prepare a new Road Safety Plan.

**Strategic Alignment**

Transport Policy in the City of Whittlesea is influenced by all levels of Government. The Federal and State Governments have significant control of transport planning outcomes through the control of Land Use Planning and implementation of infrastructure. At the regional level, the City of Whittlesea is a partner member of the Northern Councils Alliance (NCA).

Plans and policies at the Federal, State and Regional level all influence transport outcomes in the City of Whittlesea.

# Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

Financial Management

The cost is included in the current operating budget.

Community Consultation and Engagement

There is an approved Communications and Engagement Plan in support of community engagement on the draft Integrated Transport Plan.

Community Consultation was undertaken on the Background Paper and Directions Paper from 11 December 2023 to 15 February 2024. The feedback received helped to shape and influence the development of the draft ITP and its actions. This was promoted to a wide range of stakeholders as well as the general public. During this round of consultation, there were 346 contributions, 92 of which were captured at community-based pop-ups and 254 contributions made on the Whittlesea Engage platform. There was also a focus group held with Council officers and one held with members of the community.

Consultation for the development of the Liveable Neighbourhood strategy (LNS) in July 2023 also produced a number of findings in relation to community concerns and priorities around transport provision in the municipality.

# Other Principles for Consideration

**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

(d)   The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

Public Transparency Principles

(c)   Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community.

# Council Policy Considerations

Environmental Sustainability Considerations

Greater walking and cycling participation and fewer car trips.

Social, Cultural and Health

Higher densities will allow greater numbers of local and shorter trips by walking and cycling and provide more opportunities for social connections and health benefits.

Economic

Improved accessibility to employment opportunities will lead to reduced commuting levels and reduced car usage.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

No implications.

# Implementation Strategy

Communication

The draft Integrated Transport Plan is proposed to be exhibited to the community between 22 April 2024 – 19 May 2024.

Critical Dates

22 April 2024 – 19 May 2024 (proposed consultation period).

# Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

# Attachments

1. Draft Integrated Transport Plan 2024 [**5.5.1** - 58 pages]

**6 Notices of Motion**

No Notices of Motion

**7 Urgent Business**

No Urgent Business

**8 Reports from Council Representatives and CEO Update**

**9 Confidential Business**

**Close Meeting to the Public**

Under section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* a meeting considering confidential information may be closed to the public. Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

# Recommendation

**THAT the Chair of Council recommends that the meeting be closed to the public for the purpose of considering details relating to the following confidential matters in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as detailed.**

9.1 CEO Employment Matters - Mid-term Review

**9.1 CEO Employment Matters - Mid-term Review**

9.2 Appointment of acting Chief Executive Officers

**9.2 Appointment of acting Chief Executive Officers**

**10 Closure**