

Attachments

Special Council Meeting

Monday 6 June 2022

3.1	Draft Budget 2022/2023 Submissions	
	Attachment 1 Budget 2022-23 Submissions	3

3.1 Draft Budget 2022/2023 Submissions

Attachment 1 Budget 2022-23 Submissions

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions



**WHITEHORSE
CITY COUNCIL**

Whitehorse City Council

2022/2023 BUDGET SUBMISSIONS

**Community consultation responses
29 April 2022 – 15 May 2022**

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Proposed Budget 2022/2023 : Budget Submissions

Feedback provided to Council via Your Say webpage:

Submission #1

4/29/2022 04:09 PM

A dedicated dog park at Bob Saker Oval.

Submission #3

4/29/2022 04:15 PM

I think it is a lot of rate payers money to spend on the golf club for a select group who access the facilities. Why are we not spending more money on supporting the vulnerable in our community with services which are necessary to everyday survival not recreational purposes. So many carers of children and ageing can not get the support they need to continue to provide the best support to their family member due to lack of funds and services in this community. Let's provide funding for necessary everyday services before we spend on recreational services for a minority group in the community

Submission #2

4/29/2022 04:25 PM

Since the sports building at Bob Saker Oval will be getting rebuilt can the people who walk their dogs at BSO use the area where the current scout hall is currently located.

Submission #4

4/29/2022 06:36 PM

I refer to p.30 where you describe Open Space Management. The last sentence should read: The service also provides an education program on ecological and environmental issues largely centred on Blackburn Lake Sanctuary and Yarran Dheran Nature Reserve. This change will bring the document up to date with changes that are some five years old

Submission #5

5/02/2022 09:55 AM

I would like to understand more information regarding the proposed traffic improvement to Alwyn Street Mitcham, and how the \$150,000 figure has been determined. In December of last year I provided a response to a community survey being conducted re this. At the time, after speaking with some locals, I initially supported the view that speed humps were an appropriate solution to the identified traffic problem (trucks knocking down tree branches, speeding cars). While my family and I share the opinion that something needs to be done to stop the large trucks damaging our trees and to ensure the safety of residents, particularly the large number of children in the area, I no longer believe that speed humps are the ideal solution. Rather, a better outcome for all involved would be i) a reduction in speed limit (e.g. as has been applied at Glenburnie Road) and ii) a large truck ban, as they would: -stop large vehicles coming through and damaging the trees, and -encourage drivers who wish to speed between Mitcham and Rooks roads (and will inevitably do so between

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Proposed Budget 2022/2023 : Budget Submissions

speed humps anyway) to pursue alternate routes on the main roads. This article highlights many of the reasons I've had a change of heart on speed humps. <https://www.smh.com.au/opinion/crude-dangerous-and-bad-for-the-environment-speed-humps-must-go-20170815-gxwnvw.html#:~:text=Research%20from%20the%20UK%20National,if%20they%20were%20driving%20smoothly>. If speed humps were added to Alwyn Street I believe they may: -distract drivers (more focused on the speed hump than the surrounding environment e.g. pedestrians) -increase noise (from vehicles constantly breaking and accelerating rather than driving smoothly - three speed humps as proposed would be seven 'hurdles' in the street when taking into account the existing traffic island, slow points and chicanes) -increase pollution (for the same reason above) In the event that speed humps were to be added (I acknowledge some residents in the street want them), my strong preference is that only two be built (rather than three) - just one at either end of the street. Adding one at either end of the street may at least signal to drivers entering that they need to slow down, and if it's true that GPSs would no longer direct truck drivers down the street because a speed hump is detected (which is one apparent argument for having them) then it serves that purpose too. But still - I believe a reduced speed limit and truck ban would solve the problem without the need for them. I hope this can be considered as part of the feedback you're receiving on the matter.

Submission #6

5/03/2022 04:59 PM

I would like to know if any funding is going towards a Greyhound off lead area as many of the off lead areas are not fenced and unsuitable for greyhounds. I feel that given the increase in greyhound adoption in recent times it would be good to know if there are any plans to make this happen. I believe Elgar Park was being considered but unsure if this was the case or simply a proposal.

Submission #7

5/03/2022 07:45 PM

Yet again money being spent on the arts but not capital funds towards basketball which the council region has thousands of players playing every weekend. Council promised a review of facilities but yet hasn't happened. Not good enough to just support the arts - again!

Submission #8

5/04/2022 12:51 PM

Dear Councilors... do we really need to spend the following during these difficult times.... \$2.51 million for continued development at Morack Golf Course Pavilion, Driving Range and Mini Golf Facility, \$1.65 million towards the extension of Vermont South Club Pavilion and \$1.22 million for the redevelopment of Mahoneys Reserve Pavilion.... I prefer rate relief rather than spending money on golf courses and reserves...

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Proposed Budget 2022/2023 : Budget Submissions

Submission #9

5/11/2022 07:23 PM

As a planning consultant having dealt with various matters between Council and the Business Park, I definitely welcome the commitment to the preparation of a new structure plan for Tally Ho.

Submission #11

5/13/2022 09:26 AM

In relation to the recently announced funding from both the the Liberal and Labor Parties - for the Mirrabooka Pavilion upgrade. Can it please be referenced somewhere in the budget to reflect this funding is for this project. thank you

Submission #12

5/13/2022 05:13 PM

We note that in the Whitehorse urban Forest Strategy, objective 3 "Enhance Biodiversity" talks of developing master plans for the Creek corridors in Whitehorse. As a group that is committed to enhancing the biodiversity of a section of Gardiners Creek we are strongly supportive of this aim and have long advocated for the value of the creek system as a wildlife corridor. We would like to suggest that Whitehorse commit appropriate funds in the 2022/23 budget not only to immediately to start the process of developing the master plan of the Whitehorse section of Gardiners Creek but more critically to be part of a collaboration with Stonnington and Boroondara Councils and the Kooyongkoot Alliance in planning a joint strategy for the whole catchment. We think it is important for Whitehorse Council to help drive this initiative and to have a seat at the table in light of the State Government's commitment of \$250,000 in this year's budget to the Gardiners Creek catchment and the financial and facilitation commitments already made by Stonnington, Boroondara Councils and Melbourne Water.

Submission #15

5/15/2022 06:11 PM

The presentation given of the proposed 2022/23 budget in the May 22 Whitehorse News is confusing! Is the \$213 million operational budget the full expenditure for 22/23? The key highlights given on page 8 amounts to \$153 million, so where will the additional \$63 million go? The capital works program for 22/23 is \$97.62 million. How does that fit into the \$216 million budget, or the \$153 million to be spent on key highlights for 22/23. \$97.62 is a significant chunk of \$216. When people are presented with figures, surely there should be a simple reconciliation of the amounts given!

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #10

Submission to Budget

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2022-23 City of Whitehorse Budget

We refer to the action in the Urban Forest Strategy:

Objective 3 – Enhance Biodiversity

Action 3.2

- Develop Master Plans for the **Gardiners Creek**, Dandenong Creek, Mullum Mullum Creek and Koonung Corridors to improve connectivity for both biodiversity and active modes of transport.

We believe that this is listed as a medium to long term action – 3-10 years listed as an action for Leisure and Recreation at the moment. It is further understood that the exact timeframe will depend on priorities for that department and funding available as this project would be a new bid for capital.

As you will be aware the KooyongKoot Alliance is committed to having a masterplan for the whole of KooyongKoot/Gardiners Creek. We are made up of 21 Friends Groups and advisory Groups from along the Gardiners Creek Catchment and we have been a key stakeholder in a wider collaboration the Gardiners Creek Regional Collaboration. This had been well supported by the council in terms of staffing, but we are now urging council to add its financial support.

We suggest that Whitehorse commit appropriate funds in the 2022/23 budget, not only to immediately to start the process of developing the master plan of the Whitehorse section of Gardiners Creek, but more critically to be financial partner in the collaboration with the other councils and Melbourne Water in planning the big picture strategy for the whole catchment.

We think it is important for Whitehorse Council to help drive this initiative and to have a seat at the table in light of the State Government's commitment of \$250,000 in this year's budget to the Gardiners Creek Strategic Plan and in light of the financial and facilitation commitments already made by Stonnington, Boroondara Councils and Melbourne Water. We have also met with Terri Butler the Shadow Environment minister regarding the KooyongKoot and advised that urban waterways such as ours are central to their Urban Waterways Programme. She has already pledged \$1m towards a wetland at Tooronga adjacent to the creek.

We think a commitment of \$100,000 would not be inappropriate given the importance of this critical piece of existing green infrastructure and its benefits to the wider community.

We encourage you to be bold in your financial support of this legacy project

Boroondara as part of their consultation regarding the Climate Action Plan that research identified 96% of respondents identified Sustainable water use and healthy waterways as important to very important, A huge figure.

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions



3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #13

Budget Submission- Whitehorse Council
15.5.22

OPEN SPACE

**To provide funds to acquire open space in the area of Whitehorse
to the west of Station Street.**

BACKGROUND

Poor Open Space Ratios

1. Box Hill Central population will be almost that of a new suburb with its projected population, yet there is no accompanying new open space.
2. Surrey Hills has no oval or large open space. Even in 2009 the open space ratio per capita was 5 sq m per capita [London was 40 sq m per capita].*¹ With regular subdivisions in the meantime this ratio has dropped even further.
3. The LXP has highlighted this deficiency, where Lorne Parade Reserve, the only open space in the area that was larger than 2 house block, has been decimated.

RATIONALE

Green open space is important both for passive and active recreation.

It has been shown to be particularly important for children*², including their mental development.

Yet the western part of Whitehorse, with its ever increasing population density, appears to have no initiatives for improvement in the budget.

Yet there are many dollars allocated for e.g. *driving ranges* in other areas.

[This highlights the fact that there is nowhere to safely hit a golf ball in Surrey Hills or Mont Albert].

Through developer contributions, especially in Box Hill, the Council has sufficient 'special' funds to acquire land for open space.

SUMMARY

There is an uneven distribution of open space across Whitehorse.
Council is requested to address this inequality in its budget

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

1.



Surrey Hills Progress Association Inc
C/O 157 Union Road Surrey Hills, 3127
Email: shpa3127@gmail.com

25 September 2020

The Committee Manager
Legislative Assembly Environment & Planning Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
East Melbourne Vic 3002

ejj@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

**PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY
COMMUNITY ACCESS TO PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**

We are an active community group within Mont Albert & Surrey Hills and are pleased to have the opportunity to make this submission to your inquiry.

1.0 BACKGROUND

SURREY HILLS PROGRESS ASSOCIATION (SHPA) is an incorporated, non-profit association. Its aim is to promote and represent the community – residents, ratepayers and traders.

MONT ALBERT-SURREY HILLS [MA-SH]: is a middle-ring suburb. It grew outwardly from the railway line, which was established in the 1880s. **Postcode 3127** is composed of **Mont Albert**, which is situated entirely within the City of Whitehorse, and **Surrey Hills** which is divided between the City of Boroondara to the west and Whitehorse to the east.^[1 & 2 MAPS]

Postcode 3127 has a population of some **22,000**. [DHHS data 2020]

The original residential subdivisions in the area were relatively generous, with front and back gardens. Little public open space was provided.

REDEVELOPMENT: Many of these homes are now being replaced by 2-storey units, each with 2-3 to the block. Further, in small activity centres like Union Road and along Whitehorse and Canterbury Roads, higher density residential buildings and offices are being erected.

2.0 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE (MONT ALBERT – SURREY HILLS)

LIMITED OPEN SPACE: Historically, little forethought was given to the provision of parkland during the development of this area. As a result, it has a very low open space ratio per capita.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN 3127 / Per Capita

Mont Albert [Whitehorse] [3]	3.3 ha	or 2% open space
Surrey Hills [Whitehorse] [4]	2.7 ha	or 1.5% open space
Surrey Hills [Boroondara] [5]:	11.6 ha.	or 4.3% open space
TOTAL:	17.6 ha.	or 2.4% open space

It should be noted; these are ~2007[WH]& 2013[Boroondara] figures

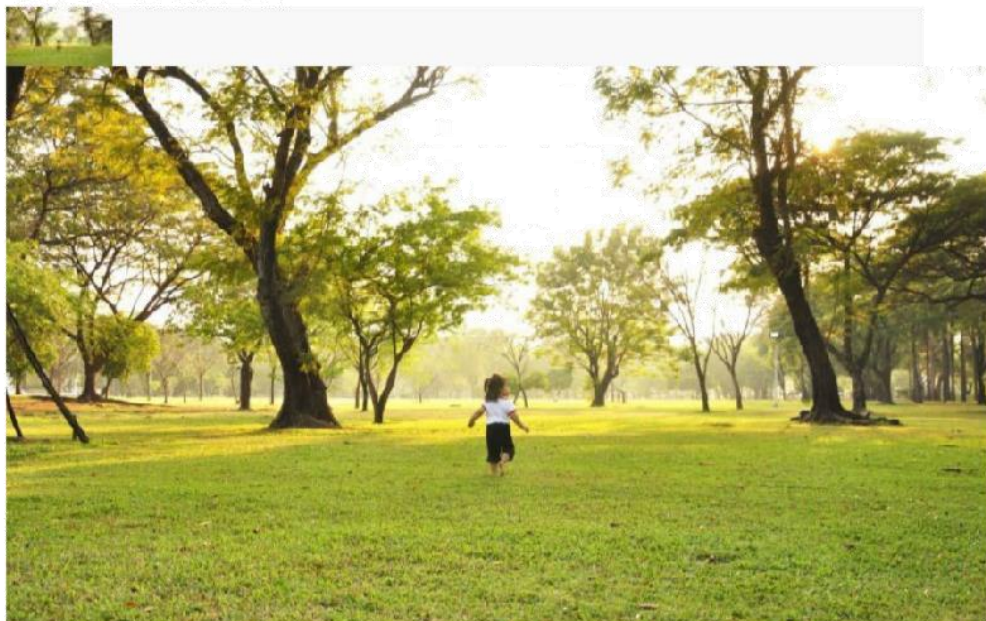
1

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

LIFE WELLBEING

10:45PM, APR 7, 2019 **UPDATED: 11:19PM, APR 7**

LIFE'S EASIER BEING GREEN: NEW STUDY FINDS LINK BETWEEN ACCESS TO PARKS AND RISK OF MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS IN CHILDREN



A NEW STUDY OF MORE THAN A MILLION PEOPLE HAS FOUND THAT CHILDREN WHO GREW UP WITH THE LOWEST LEVELS OF GREEN SPACE – PARKS, GARDENS AND SPORTS FIELDS – HAD UP TO A 55 PER CENT HIGHER RISK OF DEVELOPING A PSYCHIATRIC DISORDER. THESE [FINDINGS](#) SUPPORT A GROWING BODY OF EVIDENCE – INCLUDING PIONEERING WORK BY AUSTRALIAN RESEARCHERS – THAT LINKS HEALTH AND WELLBEING TO URBAN GREEN SPACES.

STUDIES HAVE FOUND THAT LIVING IN GREENER NEIGHBOURHOODS IS ASSOCIATED WITH [SLOWER COGNITIVE DECLINE](#) IN ELDERLY PEOPLE, [REDUCED STRESS](#), MITIGATING [CANCER RISK](#), AND – BY SIMPLY GREENING VACANT LOTS – [LESSENING FEELINGS OF DEPRESSION](#) IN CITY DWELLERS.

MENTAL HEALTH AND GREEN SPACE AN EMERGING ISSUE

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #14



BLACKBURN VILLAGE RESIDENTS GROUP INC.

Protecting the distinctive features of Blackburn since 1987

Post: PO Box 406, Blackburn. 3130

Whitehorse City Council Draft Budget 2022-2023

Budget Submission – Blackburn Village Residents Group Inc. (BVRG)

Please see below BVRG's submission on the draft Budget 2022-2023

BVRG endorses the City of Whitehorse Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) and its objectives. However as good as the UFS objectives are, unless they are part of the Whitehorse Planning Scheme, tree canopy loss in Whitehorse will continue at the alarming rate. The draft Budget seems to make no allocation for progressing the UFS. This is very concerning.

Council needs to financially commit to the adopted UFS and Action Plan so that tree canopy loss in Whitehorse can be arrested and then turned around in line with the UFS Action Plan.

Council must include funding into the 2022/23 budget to quickly move on the implementation of the UFS.

To that end funding must be set aside for work to prepare a planning amendment that either inserts relevant clauses from the UFS into the planning scheme or makes the UFS or the key components of the UFS a reference document. Planning amendments can take 1-2 years. It is imperative that work is commenced in 2022/23.

BVRG therefore urges adequate funding is allocated in the 2022/23 budget for Whitehorse Planning Department to prepare a planning amendment that embeds the UFS objectives into the Whitehorse Planning Scheme.

BVRG also supports the objectives of the Environmental Sustainability Reference Group (ESRG). We urge Council to increase community representation, with suitably experienced people from 4 to 8, in line that envisaged with the establishment of the ESRG.

Yours Sincerely

Michael Taafe
President Blackburn Village Residents Group Inc.

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #16

From:
Sent: Friday, 13 May 2022 2:30 PM
To:

Subject: RE: Council Budget and availability for comment

Hello Chris

As per our recent communication I'd be delighted to catch up with yourself (and others) to discuss future budget process in the context of our engagement policy and your feedback.

For sake of completeness I have attached officer response to your note below:-

Dear Mr Trueman,

Thank you for your very thoughtful comments and feedback.

You're absolutely right to note Council's ongoing commitment to engagement, including funding for this function within our budget. For reference, we conducted 30 surveys or engagements through our "Your Say" platform in the 2020-21 year, and we've done or commenced 85 in the 2021-22 year to 30 April, which is significantly higher than in previous years.

Quantity isn't everything, but it certainly reflects a widespread commitment to seeking community input on a vast range of projects, in line with our Community Engagement Policy and our soon to be released Community Engagement handbook which implements and brings to life our Policy. I hope this reflects the spirit and intention you're looking for, and our genuine commitment to seek input and feedback. We've also noted greater and more relevant participation in our engagements this year, which hopefully reflects that our approach has not been half-hearted or formulaic.

Council also undertook comprehensive engagement processes to help inform our key strategic documents including the *Community Vision 2040*, *Council Plan*, *Asset Plan*, *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan* and *Financial Plan*. These processes, based on community consultation, directly informs the setting of the annual budget including initiatives and major initiatives.

We agree, and we do intend to review the development of future budgets and how/when we undertake community engagement on the budget; along with a review in engagement more broadly for future budgets. Our budget reflects the key strategic documents mentioned above, and so we feel that a great deal of community input has already gone into the process.

You are also correct that Councillors and officers commence work on the budget very early in the financial year including several meetings to develop this fiscally responsible four year budget in a time of significant external and internal pressures and challenges. The budget document itself is a complex piece taking a range of technical factors into account. Whitehorse's budget is detailed and is designed to communicate as much information as possible to our community to assist the community in understanding how Council allocates resources to achieve the objectives in the Council Plan and our overall Vision.

We've checked with other neighbouring Councils in our eastern region, and find that most are taking a similar approach to Whitehorse. That said, we are considering when the valuable opportunities for community input arise into the future, so that we can plan for these.

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #16

You've also made some observations about the timelines. While we might seem to be giving ourselves plenty of time, in fact the space between various milestones is tight. Reports are circulated to Councillors well in advance before each meeting, and they need to time to reflect and ask questions of officers well before each meeting. This may result in Officers to carefully model and project financial impacts, and identify what other consequences might arise. What appears to be a luxuriously long period for Officer and Councillors to consider submissions is actually not too much time to genuinely reflect and test submissions and ideas.

Again thank you for your comments, I hope this gives you comfort about the good-faith intention of Council officers and Councillors to undertake meaningful, proportionate and relevant community engagement.

Regards, Stuart



Stuart Cann
Director Corporate Services

379-399 Whitehorse Road Nunawading VIC 3131 | www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au

From:

Sent: Thursday, 5 May 2022 2:27 PM

To:

Cc:

Subject: RE: Council Budget and availability for comment

Hello Stuart

Thank you for the explanation.

It's good to know there it is no 'non-conformity' as expressed in my question.

The intent of the question was not to 'wedge' on a technicality, (though that unfortunately seems to be a common strategy politically these days), but to seek to have as long a period as possible for residents to read the document and make comment so the community can have meaningful input.

I note that apparently Darebin has a 32-day public consultation/submission period for the proposed budget, which started on 30th March, and Banyule council is for 3 weeks – just two examples of a greater time being allowed than by Whitehorse.

I understand that time frames as a result of deadlines to pass the budget, and scheduled Council meetings, makes it essential that there are deadlines for comment.

But these need to be reasonable deadlines to allow for thoughtful comment.

Two and a half weeks is a very short time to do this, especially for individuals and small organisations that don't have the same significant numbers of staff to work on this as enjoyed by Council.

There has been a year-long process by officers to develop the Proposed Budget. I am not aware of Community Engagement activities appropriate for such a major document having been being employed to do this. So the document and what guides it was totally unknown to the community until after it was passed by Council on 26th April and made available for the public to see on 29th April.

So the timelines are:

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #16

- a) Budget preparation by officers: **Many months – up to a year** or more for ongoing items
- b) Community written comment: **Two & half** weeks until 15th May
- c) Further consideration by officers for **three weeks** until public spoken submissions are made at Council meeting on 6th June
- d) Further review by officers for **three weeks** to prepare the final budget for passing by Council on 27th June.

After only **two and half weeks** for written comment before the meeting for public spoken submissions on 6th June, why does Council need **three weeks** to prepare for this, when **another three weeks** is allowed to consolidate all the comment and put together a final document? However I acknowledge that it's too late to change things for this year.

I request that Council review the whole budget development and comment process for future years.

Community Engagement is the latest buzz-word. The words appear **fifteen** times in this proposed budget compared with **two** times last year and **one** the year before.

Some of the references in this Proposed Budget are:

- 1. Community engagement on the 2022/23 Budget will be conducted in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.
- 2. \$2.71 million Community Engagement and Development
- 3. A review of community engagement activities will be undertaken for future budgets in line with policy and Council's commitment in engaging with the community.
- 4. Creation of a dedicated Community Engagement function \$0.14 million funded within operational budget
- 5. An expense item of \$1.060m for Community Engagement

Item 3 above is good.

I ask that Council apply this specifically to the overall budget preparation as well as for its general activities.

Item 3a could be:

- 3a. A review of community engagement activities will be undertaken for future budget **preparation** in line with policy and Council's commitment in engaging with the community.

I think that the whole process of budgetary comment has in the past been somewhat of a ritual observed by all parties but having no impact on the budget at all with one or two very minor changes being made in the last decade. It's been a process that has diminished the community's perception of dealing with a Council that actually listens and takes note what the community suggests and requests. I know that many agree with me.

It's been a process of "We'll tell you what we are going to do, and you find fault with it". In the spirit of community engagement, I don't think that is very consultative or engaging.

I hope that Council's budgetary provisions for Community Engagement truly reflects an **attitude change**, so that the term is more than a 'buzz-word' to be liberally sprinkled through all documents to meet the requirements under the Local Government Act 2020. This is especially so for such an important task as budget preparation.

Many thanks

Regards
Chris Trueman

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #16

From:
Sent: Thursday, 5 May 2022 8:36 AM
To:
Cc: Councillors Distribution Group; Simon McMillan
Subject: Council Budget and availability for comment

Dear Mr Trueman

Thank you for your question regarding public consultation and feedback on Council's Proposed Budget 2022/23.

We are unable to comment on the frequency of updates on MAV's website however the content appears to be outdated and does not reflect the provisions under the new *Local Government Act 2020* (LG Act 2020). The MAV's website refers to provisions under the *Local Government Act 1989*, in particular section 223 (right to make a submission) and section 129 (public notice period) that either no longer apply or have been repealed for the budget process. (We have also corresponded with MAV this week and they have responded to the effect they will update their website)

To clarify in reference to your email, the following sections of the Act were repealed on 24 October 2020:

- **Section 129 (Public notice)** - Each council adopts a draft budget, which is advertised and open to public comment for a minimum of 28 days including a right to make a submission under section 223
- **Section 130** - Each council must submit a copy of their budget to the Minister within 28 days after adopting their budget.

The LG Act 2020 has changed how we engage with our community on the development of key strategic documents including our Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan (which underwent specific engagements last year) and the Annual Budget. In line with legislative requirements, community engagement on the 2022/23 Budget will be conducted in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy. There is no longer a public notice period or set days required for the budget to be made available for public comment under the new Act. Rather, the Engagement Policy takes a principles-based approach. Engagements and consultations are designed to take into account the significance and scale of the matter, ensuring that interested and affected stakeholders have sufficient opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way. Implementing tailored community engagement processes, ensures that Council is engaging with the local community in the most effective way.

In line with Council's ongoing commitment to effectively engage with the Whitehorse community, the 2022/23 Budget will be made available for community consultation for a period of two and half weeks allowing members of the community an opportunity to provide feedback on the budget. Consultation closes 15 May 2022.

To assist you further I have provided the following link [Local Government Act 2020](#) on Local Government Victoria's website which provides up-to-date information for your reference.

I hope this answers your questions.

Kind Regards



Stuart Cann
Director Corporate Services
Email:

379-399 Whitehorse Road Nunawading VIC 3131 | www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #16

Begin forwarded message:

Subject: Council Budget and availability for comment

Mr Simon McMillan
CEO, City Of Whitehorse

Dear Simon

I have noted the reply to the question I put to the Council Meeting on Tuesday night:

“Mr Stuart Cann Director Corporate Services read out the question submission on behalf of Council and advised that Officers intend to engage the community in a two and half week consultation period commencing Friday 29th April, 2022. Copies of the Proposed Budget 2022/23 will be made available at Council’s customer service centres (Box Hill, Forest Hill and Nunawading), at the four Whitehorse library branches (Blackburn, Box Hill, Nunawading and Vermont South) and will be placed on Council’s website for public comment by the community. Information will be provided to the public via a spread in the May 2022 Whitehorse News, a Your Say Whitehorse page and via Council’s social media channels. The closing date for written submissions will be Sunday 15th May 2022.”

This appears to be at odds with information on the [MAV website](#) in relation to the time given to the public to make comment:

‘Council Budget

Victoria has a common legislated framework for setting a budget that each council must follow.

Local government budget-setting processes are open and transparent, seeking community discussion and input before a budget is adopted.

The budget process involves a council setting its priorities, identifying measures and allocating funds that will show how the key strategic objectives outlined in its Council Plan are to be achieved in the coming year.

Through the budget process, a council also specifies the annual maintenance, upgrade and renewal needs of its assets and any new or replacement infrastructure, as well as the community services and facilities it will provide in the next financial year, and how much these will cost.

A council budget also estimates the revenue to be collected from other sources such as fees and charges, State and Federal Government funding, and from loans. By using these estimates, a council can determine the amount it needs to collect in rates to meet its financial commitments for the coming year, which must not exceed the State Government’s rate cap.

- **Each council adopts a draft budget, which is advertised and open to public comment for a minimum of 28 days**

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #16

- All councils must adopt their budget by 30 June each year (or another date fixed by the Minister and published in the Government Gazette)
- Each council must submit a copy of their budget to the Minister within 28 days after adopting their budget.'

I note that the Proposed Budget is now available online.

Mr Stuart McCann's reply to my question says that there will only be a ***"two and half week consultation period commencing Friday 29th April, 2022"*** not a 28 day minimum period as noted by the MAV which would indicate that the consultation period should close on 27th May 2022.

Can this non-conformity be rectified please, and residents notified?

Kind regards
Chris Trueman

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #17

**BLACKBURN & DISTRICT
TREE PRESERVATION SOCIETY INC.**
P.O. Box 5, Nunawading, 3131



15 May 2022
Mr. Simon McMillan
Chief Executive Officer
Whitehorse City Council
C.c Councillors, customer service.

Tree Society Submission re the Whitehorse City Council Draft Budget 2022-2023

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the draft Budget 2022-2023 on behalf of the committee and membership of the Blackburn & District Tree Preservation Society Inc.

The Society requests to be able to speak to this submission at a Special Committee of Council.

The Tree Society sees the Council's Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) as the overarching policy that is expected to guide council's response to the climate emergency and planning pressures on the city's natural environment for the next decade. We make the following recommended improvements to the draft budget. We believe, if adopted they would improve the outcomes the UFS seeks to achieve and see a positive return on funds invested in the UFS to date:

1. Implementing the Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2031 for Whitehorse (UFS)

The Society congratulates council for adopting the UFS and encourages its rapid implementation.

However, it is disappointing to note that, the allocation for parks, open space, and streetscapes, over the next 4 years, will decline in real terms, hardly an endorsement of support for council's Urban Forest Strategy.

Whitehorse City Council – Proposed Budget 2022/2023

Budgeted Statement of Capital Works

For the four years ending 30 June 2026

Notes	Forecast	Budget	Projections		
	2021/22 \$'000	2022/23 \$'000	2023/24 \$'000	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000
Parks, open space and streetscapes	7,839	5,026	4,651	4,605	5,093

Adequate resourcing is needed for the Urban Forest Strategy's five Objectives and an Action Plan to achieve 27% tree canopy cover for Whitehorse by 2031 and 30% by 2050. The city's tree canopy cover is in rapid decline at less than 18% and will be less than 10% by 2040 unless the UFS is activated across all council portfolios.

The Tree Society's view is that the adopted UFS should be rolled out as a matter of urgency. Two matters need to be addressed with funding in the 2022/23 budget.

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #17

Firstly, priority funding must be provided in the 2022/23 budget to determine the best way to align the UFS objectives with the Whitehorse Planning Scheme to ensure planning outcomes are consistent with the UFS. A number of options are possible including adopting reference or incorporated documents into the scheme or inserting specific clauses.

Adequate funding of the UFS will make a significant contribution to Council achieving Strategic Direction Five - Sustainable Climate & Environmental Care Objectives, particularly:

- Take a leadership role in tackling climate change
- Consider our natural environment when making decisions including creeks, wetlands, lakes, bushlands, flora, and fauna. To increase canopy cover by 2031 there must be a generous ongoing budget commitment coupled with allocation of personnel to achieve this goal.

Secondly, funding for an education program to engage and empower the community to support the UFS objectives led by Council

1. We recommend increasing funding and resources for:

The highest priority - a Strategic Planning review of options for incorporating UFS objectives into the CW Planning Scheme. Planning amendments take many months or years. An early start on this study is critical.

A UFS education program.

2. The Whitehorse Environment and Sustainability Reference Group (ESRG)

The Tree Society congratulates Whitehorse Council for establishing a community-based panel - the Environment and Sustainability Reference Group (ESRG).

We recommend ongoing funding and resources for the ESRG committee.

3. The Whitehorse Tree Assistance Fund

The Tree Assistance Fund supports residents to manage the health of trees on their property that have been identified as exhibiting significant features and protected via a Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) 1, 3 or 5. Owners of eligible trees, which are protected by the VPO, can apply for a small grant for works that support the health of the tree.

We recommend continuation of this important fund into the future.

4. Managing Trees on Private Land.

Issues of illegal tree removal and developers gaming the VicSmart planning application process have raised community concerns about compliance and enforcement issues for protected trees on private land. Council planners, compliance officer arborist resources are being stretched.

Council is limited in its response to impose fines and other penalties. There is in need for a 'fit for purpose' tree management database system that allows for individual tree information from planning applications and other sources to be recorded and easily retrieved. We understand that

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #17

recently tested, **tree management software has been** purchased by Council to monitor total tree cover in Whitehorse and on Whitehorse managed land.

We believe that if adopted, there are significant efficiencies, (\$'s and time) to be gained such as:

- Planning applications, decisions and conditions relating to trees would be available online to council officers and the public for individual sites. This would provide timely information to council officers and concerned residents and result in less phone calls to planners and less compliance visits related to tree removals.
- Free up compliance staff for the more important illegal tree removal cases.
- Allow monitoring of planning permit conditions by council officers, and in the name of transparency, the public, and for triggers that flag important dates such as when site compliance milestones are reached, and compliance inspections are due.

We recommend funding for a digital Tree Management Database to keep records of trees on private land, which are the subject of a range of Planning Applications, including the migration of the current manual paper-based records.

5. The Whitehorse Street Tree Program

\$5.0 million is allocated for parks, open spaces and streetscapes in the 2022/23 budget papers. The street tree line item should be reinstated. To continue the enhanced planting program seen in the last 12 month the allocation for street trees needs to be maintained well above the unchanged \$300,000 allocated for street tree renewal annually over most of the past 2 decades.

Many local streets are still relatively devoid of street trees, in fact some streets have barely half the desired number of at least one reasonably sized tree on each nature-strip.

We recommend funding in excess of \$300,000 per year to ensure street tree planting aligns with UFS objectives.

6. Whitehorse Council's Public Open Space Reserve Fund (POSR)

It is disappointing to note that Council has allocated \$4.17 million (a reduction) from the Public Open Space Reserve Fund to part fund qualifying capital works projects (refer page 81) and specifically the provision for strategic land acquisition. Details of the proposed amount for land acquisition is not stated however is inadequate to address the need for more public open space highlighted by the pandemic, particularly to achieve positive quality of life outcomes for open space-impooverished suburbs and communities.

The POSR fund is around \$52 million, and the Society urges Council to utilise more of the fund for those areas within the city with a severe shortage of open space including Box Hill.

Specifically, we urge Council to seek co funding through the State Government for acquisition of the historic Box Hill Brickworks site. The SRL Community Grant Fund¹ which has \$250m available may be an avenue to be explored.

¹ <https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/library/suburban-rail-loop/planning/srl-community-projects-fund-grant-guidelines>

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #17

We recommend an increase in the allocation for POS acquisition from the public open space reserve fund, to seek an equal contribution from the state government for the acquisition of the historic Box Hill Brickworks site as a municipal park and recreation centre by amalgamating the park with Surrey Dive, Surrey Park, and Aqualink Box Hill.

7. KooyongKoot Master Plan.

The Tree Society supports development of a KooyongKoot master plan and encourages Whitehorse, as a key stakeholder to take an active role. Repairing and bringing life to the Gardiners Creek corridor, is a worthy goal and with genuine commitment from key stakeholders including Boroondara and Monash Councils, Melbourne Water and Yarra Valley Water, can be achieved. Improvements that provide a wildlife and habitat corridor as well as highly valued open space, providing green respite from the urban surrounds will benefit the community and the environment.

We recommend resources for Council to take an active role in in the KooyongKoot project.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, we encourage council to review its draft budget and increase funding for the important strategies that underpin councils Urban Forest Strategy.

We recommend adequate funding and resources are allocated in the 2022/23 budget for:

1. The highest priority - a Strategic Planning review of options for incorporating UFS objectives into the CW Planning Scheme. Planning amendments take many months or years. An early start on this study is critical.
2. A UFS education program
3. Ongoing funding and resources for the ESG committee.
4. A digital Tree Management Database to keep records of trees on private land, which are the subject of a range of Planning Applications, including the migration of the current manual paper-based records.
5. More than \$300,000 per year to ensure street tree planting aligns with UFS objectives.
6. An increase in the allocation for Public Open Space acquisition from the public open space reserve, to seek an equal contribution from the state government for the acquisition of the historic Box Hill Brickworks site as a municipal park and Recreation Centre by amalgamating the park with Surrey Dive, Surrey Park, and Aqualink Box Hill.
7. Council to take an active role in in the KooyongKoot project.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

David Morrison

President, Blackburn & District Tree Preservation Society Inc.

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #18

1

**Combined Residents of Whitehorse
Action Group (CROWAG) Incorporated.**

ABN 40385662637 Inc. No A0104002C

Email - crowag.inc@gmail.com

Web - www.crowag.org



Mr. Simon McMillan
Chief Executive Officer
Whitehorse City Council

Dear Mr. McMillan

CROWAG Submission on the Whitehorse City Council Draft Budget 2022-2023

CROWAG appreciates the opportunity to respond to Council's *2022-2023 Proposed Budget* and commends much of it, especially the focus on *Council Transformation* (p.7) and each of the elements therein. Much is needed to further build customer experience, stronger internal messaging, (including across-department communications and information sharing) and good governance by way of honouring existing policy. Council needs to be agile and ambitious in organisational change.



Transformation. Matters of transformation are relevant to how all officers build knowledge and work for the environment, climate change action and urban forest enhancement. Notwithstanding the reality of tree loss caused by *State Government* infrastructure projects and in-fill developments within state legislation, we believe that Council could adopt numerous projects in support of its *UFS* implementation without amendment to state legislation. In other words, there is substantial scope for *Council* alone, to create the changes required to respect the environment and turn around the frightening decline in canopy and urban forest across the municipality. That is, *CROWAG* believes that Council is simply not doing enough to honour its policies. Despite our good relations with Council and valuable information sharing, we respectfully suggest that obstacles to change include internal attitudes, culture, the need for more education across departments about Council policy and the priorities set principally by Council officers, (not just elected Councillors).

Not all Communication and Engagement Strategies are Fit for Purpose. Further to matters of culture and education, before we make recommendations in relation to the budget, we note the very unsatisfactory two-week window for allowing community submissions on the Proposed Budget. This is hardly consistent with Council's claimed will to improve

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #18

2

communications and engagement with its community. Unless this two week window was required by state government, it might be highlighting a serious flaw in Council's understanding of its community, the structures and consultation processes required of community groups (especially if Incorporated) and that normally, meetings are needed to endorse formal government submissions. Council's timings always cause a rush and do not allow fair and reasonable times for engagement, nor enable the extent of widespread representative feedback, which competitive, world-class organisations would usually seek to achieve.

Gaps in Leadership for the Environment. We note also, that in 2022 at least, various senior Council Officers have stated clearly in discussions with CROWAG members and/or affiliate members and in correspondence, that *'Council's adoption of the Urban Forest Strategy is a significant step forward'*, but that step is of no value if *'the document cannot be given significant weight in decision making on planning permit applications, as the strategy is neither a 'reference' nor an 'incorporated' document within the Whitehorse Planning Scheme.'* This same point is referenced in Council Meeting Papers (28th Feb) at 11.1, 'Strategic Alignment', p. 6, of Report, but we note that it was no recommendation in that report that a process to Incorporation should begin. And we cannot see in the draft budget that Council has sought to make provision in its plans to incorporate the *UFS* into the *Planning Scheme*, in 2022/23 or the three years beyond.

Now, we acknowledge that in recent months Councillors and Council Officers, yourself included, have made it known to CROWAG that you either support or have sympathy for Council seek incorporation of the Urban Forest Strategy. This has been prompted, it would seem, by the urging of community groups. In light of the well-known negative consequences of the *UFS* not being incorporated, why wouldn't Council have acted previously to begin the process of incorporation? At the outset we express disappointment at Council's seeming lack of leadership on this matter.

With this in mind, we urge Council to review its proposed budget so that it genuinely provides for action to implement its own *Urban Forest Strategy*. (See our **Recommendation 1**). This is the vehicle to set clear targets and strategies for public, Council, developer education as well as clearer policy direction. We look to you for leadership. This action will require some tweaking of priorities, and no doubt some trimming (albeit small) across numbers of other areas. The current imbalance between funding for the environment, for tree protection, for better consultation and collaboration with the community and the spend on major capital works projects, sports pavilions and grounds, swim centres and the Morack golf course, for example, is notable. (Operational Budget p.4) We support funding in all of these areas, but these and numbers of others could be amended to ensure fairer and more genuine spending consistent with Council's lofty ideals as per the *Urban Forest Strategy*.

We make eight recommendations in this submission, some requesting more funding. And we request that CROWAG be able to summarise its recommendations at its June Meeting and at any other Special Committee(s) of Council which deal with the budget.

1. Incorporation of the Urban Forest Strategy into the Planning Scheme.

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #18

3

Recommendation 1 :

That Council allocate full and adequate funding within the 2022-2023 Budget to ensure that the *UFS* is incorporated into the *Planning Scheme*, such that it has the maximum capability to support Council aspirations for the urban forest and especially for it to guide decisions at *VCAT*. In that endeavour, we also urge Council to engage actively with relevant environment and conservation organisations within the community, including *CROWAG*, who have the skills and expertise to assist in this matter so as to affect some economy in its allocation of funds for this project. This is called collaboration.

2.

Strengthening Community Engagement: (p.3 and *Operational Budget*, p.5 and p. 16)

Council has allocated extra funding for implementation of its Community Engagement Policy which *CROWAG* supports. Yet, it could make other significant progress in this area without spending a cent, by changing its mindset and understanding of genuine communications. To achieve its vision of an 'empowered collaborative community' (*Community Vision* p. 17) significant changes in how Council actually relates to community groups will be critical. More genuine openness to criticism and being very welcoming of new ideas 'in partnership' with creative, innovative and active community groups is needed. Too often community groups are left with the feeling that they are a nuisance, are interfering and couldn't possibly have the level of competence that Council officers have. We refer Council to its



principles of collaboration, excellence, trust and accountability which are at the heart of all it does and suggest that there are gaps in their implementation.

Among many suggestions we could and will later make, on all these cultural issues, is one very practical priority which requires minimal additional extra funds, just deeper listening, more understanding and more will. It is this -

Recommendation 2:

That Council conduct a review of its timing of communications with the community, the time it allows for responses to *YourSay* surveys, as well as the crafting of these surveys such that they are not heralding a fait accompli and are more extensive and open-ended. In addition, high targets should be set for the number of responses, or participation in, all surveys, invitations for comment, submissions and attendance at 'drop-ins', seminars and the like. (The recent May, *Volunteering Consultation Meeting* facilitated by a consultant, apparently had eight community participants!).

3. Parks, Open Space, Streetscapes and Environment Objectives

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #18

4

CROWAG notes Council's Vision for a Sustainable Climate and Environment Care (p.17) and the seemingly contradictory reduction in funding for work on parks, open space and streetscapes in this budget for the next four years.

CROWAG reminds officers and Councillors that Council has allocated an average of \$300,000 for **street tree planting** over the past 16 consecutive years. The 2022-2023 Budget does not state a specific financial allocation. Our argument, along with others, for many years, is that funding must be increased. One reason is that tree canopy is declining not increasing! The other is that inflation has rendered a decline in the average allocation over all these years. An increase in real terms is clearly justified.

Whitehorse Budgeted Funds for City-wide Street Tree Planting Program (source Whitehorse Budgets 2003-04 to 2021-22)

Year	Amount	Comments
2003-04	\$235,000	
2004-05	\$200,000	- \$35,000
2005-06	No Figures found	-
2006-07	\$300,000	+ \$100,000
2007-08	\$300,000	No Change
2008-09	\$310,000	+ \$10,000
2009-10	\$320,000	+ \$10,000
2010-11	\$300,000	- \$20,000
2011-12	\$340,000	+ \$40,000
2012-13	\$350,000	+ \$10,000
2013-14	\$300,000	- \$50,000
2014-15	\$300,000	No Change
2015-16	\$300,000	No Change
2016-17	No Figures found	-
2017-18	\$300,000	No Change
2018-19	\$300,000	No Change
2019-20	\$330,000	Increase due to concerted community lobbying
2020-21	\$300,000	Cut \$30,000
2021-22	\$300,000	No Change

The total street tree planting expenditure for the 17 years in this table was ~ \$5.1M. (or ~\$300,000 per year). By way of comparison, *City of Whitehorse* spent (from 2003-04 to 2018-19 excluding years 2005-06 and 2016-17):

- Over \$2M on the Morack Golf Club and more planned.
- Over \$3M on car parks.
- Around \$4.5M on the Box Hill Gardens and
- Over \$50M on Box Hill Aqualink.

(Source: David Berry *BDTPS, Newsletter 251*, March 2019, p. 4-5 reviewing WCC Budget Briefing Session Feb., 2019 -updated).

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

5

Recommendations 3:

That Council allocate an additional \$100,000 to its previous average \$300,000 street tree planting. \$400,000 would be a fair and reasonable increase to make up for declining expenditure for 16 years. If Council is serious about its tree canopy and UFS aspirations, this should be made possible without reducing funding elsewhere in the Parks, Open Space and Streetscapes and Environment components of the Budget.

Recommendation 4:

That Council demonstrate its advocacy for its own *UFS Implementation Plan* by substantially increasing funding to parks, open space and streetscape in other areas of the budget in ways that will contribute to its UFS goals.

Council's *Strategic Direction 5* says that it will '*take a leadership role in tackling climate change*'. The work of Council officers, and Councillors in this area will be commensurate with their personal sense of urgency and belief in what is now indisputable science. The *April 2022 IPCC Report*, its sixth, makes 'crisis' the key word, let alone an emergency. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-3/>

Recommendation 5:

That Council allocate resources to revisit the case for seeking unanimity on Council and within its staff, that there is a **climate emergency**. It should also devote more funds and energy to do more to educate residents to better understand this foundational principle which seems to logically underpin the *Urban Forest Strategy*. The Climate Emergency Plans adopted by (Moreland and Nillumbik Councils might be a good model.

Furthermore, other wording in Council *Strategic Direction 5* in the Budget (p. 29), says that Council will '*Consider our natural environment when making decisions including creeks, wetlands, lakes, bushlands, flora and fauna*'. This is a weak, unclear and seemingly non-committal statement. We request that it be strengthened.

Recommendation 6:

That the statement at p.29 be altered to '*Give reasonable priority to our natural environment when making decisions including creeks, wetlands, lakes, bushlands, flora and fauna, in accordance with our Urban Forest Strategy.*'

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #18

6

4. Education and Engagement

CROWAG is 100% supportive of using education as an essential means to progressively shift community, Council officers and developers appreciation of urban forest, tree canopy etc. and greater awareness of there being a climate emergency.

Recommendation 7:

That Council significantly increase its budget allocation to public education, to better inform residents about the value of trees, tree maintenance, and also to diminish perceptions of the risks of trees. *Council* should conduct many more environment-based seminars, lecture series, forums and discussion groups for residents and its own staff and developers. In so doing, it might consider forming alliances with sufficiently expert community groups to assist in this work.

Recommendations 8:

CROWAG endorses the recent establishment of Council's *Environment and Sustainability Reference Group (ESRG)* and recommends expansion of its membership numbers to include further expertise and experience in environmental and sustainability matters and including a full voting representative from CROWAG.

We hope that the adoption of our recommendations will be seriously considered by Council.

Yours sincerely, on behalf of CROWAG and its affiliates, individual members and other supporters whose own submissions we support.

Ross Gillespie
President, CROWAG

Bellbird Residents' Advocacy Group, (BRAG) Glenburnie Road Residents Association Inc, (GRRRA) Jefferey Street Residents Association Inc., (JSRA) Holland Road Residents – Blackburn South Raiders, Friends of Blackburn Lake, Significant Landscape Overlay Group (SLOG), Surrey Hills-Mont Albert Progress Assoc. Inc. (SHMAPA), Blackburn & District Tree Preservation Society (BDTPS), Whitehorse Active Transport Action Group (WATAG), Glengarry Avenue Group (Burwood), Blackburn Village Residents Group. Inc. (BVRG) and the ACF Community Chisholm (ACFC).

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #18

**Melbourne Metropolitan Councils' Community Engagement
Timelines for 2022-23 Draft Budgets**

Reference Sources: Individual Council Websites (Note – not all metropolitan councils had community engagement timelines published on their websites as of 12 May 2022, hence some metro councils have not been included)

Metropolitan Council	Community Consultation Period for Draft Budget 2022-'23	Number of Days
Whittlesea	21 March - 26 April 2022	36
Hobsons Bay	12 April - 15 May 2022	34
Darebin	30 March – 1 May 2022	33
Moonee Valley	26 April – 27 May 2022	32
Greater Dandenong	May 2022	31
Brimbank	21 April – 19 May 2022	29
Maribymong	13 April – 11 May 2022	29
Yarra Ranges	10 May – 7 June 2022	28
Kingston	1 – 25 March 2022	24
Bayside	27 April – 17 May 2022	21
Banyule	N/A	21
Hume	27 April – 16 May 2022	20
Frankston City	6 – 24 May 2022	19
Whitehorse	29 April – 15 May 2022	17

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #19

WHITEHORSE RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
SUBMISSION ON DRAFT BUDGET 2022/2023
CITY OF WHITEHORSE

Whitehorse Ratepayers and Residents Association has examined the Whitehorse Council 2022/2023 Budget and submit the following observations.

We again note that the community has just emerged from a once in a century pandemic which has affected many people's lives and yet the council still considers that it has the right to spend over \$40 million on one project, namely the Whitehorse Centre, in this year's budget. We believe that given the situation with regards to increases in building costs, as evidenced by the recent matter of the Morack Golf course redevelopment and the current inflation rate of 5.1%, this project will end up costing a lot more than budgeted. We believe that there has been inadequate community consultation on this project and it has gone under the radar during two years of continuous lockdowns when people's attention was focused on merely surviving.

We again note that ratepayers' groups are concerned in relation to the small percentage of council funds which are being utilised for road and footpath maintenance which for many residents is the bread and butter of council activities and we note that in this council's budget, the same can be said of Whitehorse Council. In contrast to this a large percentage of council funds is spent on salaries especially executive salaries and on the finance department. We note that salaries are budgeted to increase year on year. We understand that there has been a large amount spent on consultants who came up with a plan to streamline council activities. Council has called this going to Greatness. Surely if the consultants' plan to streamline the working of council and make it more efficient this should mean a leaner structure, therefore implying reduced salaries not increases in salaries for the foreseeable future. It would appear that given this, the council may have wasted its money on consultants' recommendations if this is not improving the situation.

In relation to this Transition to Greatness Implementation, we note that there are millions of dollars to be spent over the next four years and query why this needs to take so long and cost so much. In fact we would like to point out that we are aware of a number of cases where Council has appeared not to act in a timely matter in relation to residents' concerns and query whether what is being suggested is actually working. In particular, we are aware of one such matter which council was notified about in December, 2021 and which had detrimental impacts on a number of residents in an area in relation to a building project and we understand that it has still not been satisfactorily resolved.

We again note the issue of the proposed Waste Management Charge on which hundreds of thousands of dollars have been budgeted for in past budgets and many more dollars budgeted in this year's budget, even though we understand that the council may not agree to it after community consultation. It would appear that this is not effective use of ratepayers' monies. We also understand that there was to be a proposed joint venture between a number of councils to find a solution to the issue of how to dispose of waste, given that landfill will be problematic and current government levies are unsustainable. We understand that a number of councils have pulled out from this venture and request that council advise the community what it proposes to do about waste management in the future.

We note the start of the FOGO system which should reduce waste greatly as much of the waste relates to food scraps which can be recycled into fertiliser etc. We believe that schemes like this will vastly reduce the amount of waste to go into landfill and this should be factored into any consideration of a Waste Management charge which is a rates increase by stealth. In relation to this we would like to mention that a number of other councils provide bins for food and green waste as part of their service and understand that Whitehorse is now looking to increase charges for its green bin. We strongly

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #19

disagree with this as food scraps being recycled into fertiliser etc will reduce emissions from methane and help our environment.

The Council has produced an Urban Forest Strategy which touts the planting of more trees in the municipality yet we understand that street trees are being continuously removed due to an edict in relation to power lines etc. We believe that given the Council Urban Forest Strategy Plan, there should be more monies allocated in this budget to street tree planting of appropriate trees and that the Victorian Government should be called upon to help fund these given the number of trees that are being removed from the municipality via the North East Link, Mont Albert Surrey Hills Railway Crossing etc. We note that since last year hundreds of trees have been removed due to the Mont Albert / Surrey Hills Railway Crossing Removal Project including hundred year old trees and that hundreds more are slated to be removed in the course of the Suburban Rail Loop construction.. We call upon Council to also pressure the Victorian State Government to utilise State Government monies, rather than ratepayer monies to replace any open space taken away from the municipality as is contemplated by some of its major projects.

Another point which is not well addressed in this budget is the issue of the handling of rates for people in financial distress. This has been mentioned by the Ombudsman who has criticised councils for only offering ratepayers in financial distress payment plans or deferrals but not waivers of part or all of the rates. Given that we have been through a pandemic which has affected many businesses and people's lives we feel that the budget should take account of this situation by allowing leeway for a decrease in monies collected from rates by way of waiver of all or part of the rates for people who are in financial distress..

We hope that the council will consider our observations and make appropriate adjustments to the Council Budget for 2022/2023.

Tanya Tescher

President-Whitehorse Ratepayers and Residents Association

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #20

From:
Sent: Tuesday, 17 May 2022 12:44 PM
To:
Subject: Budget Submission - Annual Budget 2022

Good Afternoon Mr McMillan,

As you know, I am currently Secretary of the Heatherdale Creek Parklands Advisory Committee and on behalf of a local resident I am writing to you with regard to a Budget Submission this person asked me to follow up with you.

Last year this resident put in a request to Councillor Prue Cutts to have a Drinking Fountain/Dog Bowl installed close to the Garden Avenue entry to Simpson Park Oval. At that time we had a meeting with one of the Council Officers at the proposed site and were informed that this might be possible when the Budget for 2022 was finalised. I have not been able to find any reference to this request in the Budget papers and there appears to be no specific allocation of funding set aside for this particular item.

May I please request that funding be made available for the installation at that site. This would be of benefit to walkers, runners and dogs in that particular area of Simpson Park. There have been a number of similar requests from park users since the suggestion was first raised last year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Valerie Turnbull

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #21

From:
Sent: Monday, 9 May 2022 11:39 AM
To: Annual Budget
Cc: Cr Andrew Davenport; EMDRC Committee
Subject: Capital Works Submission

Greetings,

I wish to make a submission on behalf of the Eastern and Mountain District Radio Club (EMDRC), a group of amateur (ham) radio enthusiasts presently leasing a former Scout hall in McCubbin St Burwood from Council.

The EMDRC is a member of the Wireless Institute of Australia, the national body and in turn a member of the IARU (International Amateur Radio Union) that represents amateur radio interests to the ITU (International Telecommunications Union) the international representative body.

The club, formed in 1967, has a membership of around 250 members sourced essentially from the eastern suburbs of Melbourne and is one of the strongest clubs of its type, certainly in Victoria. It is a hobby club ranging in age from 15 to 90+. Whilst we are attracting younger members from the maker and hacker space, our typical member demographic is close to or beyond retirement age.

The rooms are used exclusively by the club for monthly meetings where we see around 60 people during the warmer months. Other activities include a regular Thursday group for retired and non-working members, Weekend training classes for members wishing to satisfy examination requirements for licencing, practical manufacture in our workshop, regular use of our radio room and BBQ events attended by a range of members and likeminded people. It is worth noting we are open to likeminded and compatible groups to join us as tenants of Council.

The rooms are warm and comfortable having been improved by our membership and more recently by Council in the areas of upper level bathrooms, kitchen and meeting area.

The essence of this submission is to seek assistance on behalf of the small number of members using walking assistance in the form of motorised wheel chairs and walkers who are unable to use any of the bathroom facilities within the building. It is unfortunate that those people have difficulty accessing the lower level areas due to a narrow doorway or via double doors negotiating a step up into the rooms by wheel chair. The bathrooms (toilets) are very small, impossible to negotiate for those wheelchair bound and do not have any hand washing facility within. Upstairs is our primary meeting space and unfortunately it is impossible for wheelchair bound people to access the area and difficult for those using walker frames.

Our submission requests the following -:

1. The creation of a disabled bathroom in the lower area suitable for wheelchair access.
2. A suitable concrete pad to the south of the building enabling access via wheel chair into the lower area via existing double doors ideally extending past the roller door to the south east corner which will assist with drainage and provide a BBQ pad.
3. A ramp enabling access for wheelchairs and walkers to enter the upstairs meeting area. It is suggested the ramp might run from the carpark across the north side of the building entering via the existing landing and door located on the north east corner.

As Secretary of the Eastern and Mountain District Radio Club, I am happy to be named as such on the public record. I believe this submission is self-explanatory, however I am prepared to present to Council if it is deemed necessary.

Regards
David Williams

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Secretary EMDRC

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions

Submission #22

From:
Sent: Thursday, 19 May 2022 9:52 AM
To: Annual Budget
Subject: budget - have your say

Hi,

Sorry, missed the deadline, but wanted to say that I was sorry to see that we forfeited the budget for a dog park (280K) last year and that this year there is hardly anything that the almost 5000 dog owners in Whittlesea can look forward to.

Warm regards,

Erik van Vulpen



Centre for Technology Infusion

Deputy Director, Centre for Technology Infusion
College of Science, Health and Engineering
La Trobe University,
2 Research Avenue, Bundoora
Melbourne 3086, Australia

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions



Attn: Ms Callista Clark
Finance Manager
Whitehorse City Council

01st June 2022

Dear Ms Clark,

Heatherdale Preschool is seeking assistance from Whitehorse City Council to deliver an additional room to its existing building. This expansion is needed to deliver on the State Government's commitment the Early Childhood Reform Plan, committing to funding 15 hours per week for 3-year-old kindergarten programs.

In light of the expected increasing demand for 3-year-old kindergarten programs, we have spent the past several years planning an expansion project. This would increase our licensed capacity by 22 places and allow the Preschool to both deliver the required curriculum and to maintain financial viability beyond 2029.

As part of our planning, the Committee applied to the Victorian State Building Authority Building (VSBA) Building Blocks Capacity grants program in August 2021, requesting funding for our project. As part of our submission the Committee engaged professionals to prepare concept designs of the proposed expansion, submitted a Quantity Surveyor's (QS) assessment of the expected project costs. At the time this was estimated to be \$660,000 excluding GST.

In December 2021 the VSBA confirmed its contribution of \$600,000 in funding towards the project, with the Preschool committing to contributing the remaining \$60,000.

As project will be undertaken on Council land, we have sought actively to engage Council as a stakeholder in delivering the build, particularly in relation to project management and delivery of a sound asset to Council.

In early 2022, our Committee engaged with Whitehorse Council officers to seek advice in progressing the project. Council officers reviewed the QS report and have identified a shortfall in the project financing due to escalated costs of construction (a trend emerging across all industries), contingencies and other items that would be required to deliver the project.

A revised QS report prepared by Whitehorse Council now estimates the total gross project cost to be \$870,000 exc. GST, with a 15% project management fee of \$130,500. The revised costing now leaves the project underfunded, with a shortfall of \$340,500. T

The Committee has so far spent over \$30,000 on professional advice and design work required to demonstrate the viability of this project and our credibility as stakeholders in the expansion to the VSBA and Council. We remain passionate about this project and can confirm that we stand by our commitment of an additional \$60,000 to the build.

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions



While we intend to continue to seek sponsorship through our tax-deductible building fund, we cannot commit any additional funding from our other income streams without risking the financial viability of our service.

Therefore, we seek the consideration of Whitehorse City Council to allocate funding from the 2022/2023 budget towards this project of a total of \$210,000, with an additional 'in kind' contribution of the project management fee of \$130,000. Without this assistance, our project will not be able to continue.

To continue as a single room Preschool would result in the service being compromised to the point where the future financial viability of the service would be in doubt. This would mean the loss of teaching jobs and a service which is at the heart of the local community.

The Preschool has been in the community for 70 years and is a key touchstone for many residents who have raised children in the area, or who have attended the service and still return for our annual craft market, or to get a 'Democracy Sausage' from us on Election Day. We know from speaking to these families that Heatherdale has been a huge part of their lives.

The loss of the service would mean that new families in our area would have one less opportunity for connection with the community.

We have done all the right things to ensure our future viability – and now we face an enormous challenge to deliver this build. We believe Whitehorse can provide us with the support we need to ensure this beloved institution can continue to thrive.

In considering our request for funding we urge you to consider the following:

- completing the Whitehorse Kindergarten Infrastructure Service Plan (KISP) was presented to Council earlier this year. The draft KISP highlights a need for infrastructure investment in Whitehorse, but more specifically the Mitcham & Nunawading areas. The Heatherdale Preschool expansion will assist in meeting the forecasted unmet demand for kindergarten places, which could be realised as early as 2025.
- We note that the draft KISP also highlights the age of building stock. This project would renew an ageing building while addressing a shortfall of places in Mitcham beyond 2025. Therefore, we believe this project is strongly aligned with the KISP.
- With uncertainty in the construction market, we have an opportunity to partner with VSBA to deliver a project that would satisfy demand for kindergarten spaces before this need becomes critical. While the commitment sought from Council is not insignificant, it represents a reduced cost to compared to the establishment of an equivalent service.

3.1 – ATTACHMENT 1. Budget 2022-23 Submissions



- The Preschool has a long history of financial security. We have demonstrated our commitment to the long-term viability of the service by forward planning for this build. We have established a not-for-profit building fund to assist with sponsorship – which is very rare for a community run Kindergarten – and seeking VSBA funding. We have been proactive in independently seeking out alternative locations for service during construction. We believe in this project and in the future of our service and feel we have shown that we are credible partners in this endeavour.
- We believe many families prefer a sessional Kinder to long day care. We feel our service is unique in the area as it provides a 'long day' of sessional 3- and 4-year-old kinder (7.5 hours x 2 days for 4 year olds, and 1 x 6 hour day for 3 year olds). This is compared to shorter sessions run over multiple days in other nearby Kindergartens. The longer day is attractive to working families, particularly working mothers, who would prefer to send their children to a sessional kindergarten but find the shorter hours offered by most kindergartens difficult to balance with work. With an additional room, the kindergarten can continue to offer this service to both 3- and 4-year-old cohorts, with additional potential to offer services such as After School Care or playgroups.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time to read our submission and we hope that you can take our request into consideration.

Regards,

Muhammad Al Fasha Abdul Latiff
President
Heatherdale Preschool